A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE-BASED ROMANTIC ADULT

ATTACHMENT ARTICLES: HOW MARITAL SATISFACTION IS IMPACTED BY

COUPLE REPORTS OF SPIRITUALITY/RELIGIOSITY

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BY

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Craig. You're the best man I know. Your amazing love, support, and encouragement have enriched my soul and inspired me to be a better person, work on becoming more securely attached, and pursue my passions. Someone like you is good for someone like me. To my precious smiley LoveJoy, Anna, you hug my heart. Every. Single. Day. You are a gift and I am blessed by you! "I thank my God every time I think of you both (Phil. 1:3)!"

To all my family, friends, and church family. Thank you! Thank you for your prayers, for believing in me, for inspiring me, for babysitting, and for being a steady calming presence! Thank you for being my village!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this research was to examine romantic adult attachment theory and how marital satisfaction is impacted by spirituality/religiosity, while also exploring how spirituality influences conflict and communication in marriages. A content analysis was used to further investigate these variables by comparing ten articles from scholarly peer-reviewed journals. The researcher created a Coding Form and taught two coders to code the data by using a Coding Guide.

This dissertation was guided by the research questions: "How have research-based articles published in scholarly journals addressed how romantic adult attachment, marital satisfaction, communication, and /or conflict are impacted when spirituality/ religiosity is added as a variable to these studies?" and "What are the gaps and limitations in the research based on romantic adult attachment, marital satisfaction, communication and/or conflict plus spirituality/religiosity when articles from 1992–2017 are considered?"

Currently, there is no review of how spirituality/religiosity and romantic adult attachment interact with marital satisfaction, conflict, and communication in a therapeutic environment. Having the knowledge of this interaction will help therapists better use spirituality/religiosity as a factor in their therapeutic process. When the researcher examined the variables in the ten articles, it became apparent that the journal articles

insufficiently supported conflict and communication. The prominent variables in this content analysis then became spirituality/religiosity and marital satisfaction. It was found that anxiety attachment is not related to some religious coping such as praying or attending faith services. Those with avoidant attachment demonstrated both higher and/or lower religious coping. Another finding was how attachment to God mirrors romantic adult attachment. Marital satisfaction correlated with commitment level and couple's attitude. Some factors identified as risks or resilience were community, attitude towards divorce, willingness to seek help, commitment, church attendance, prayer, and forgiveness.

      Future research is needed on how gender affects both spirituality and attachment. Several of the articles determined that gender affected attachment, but had inconclusive findings due to limited attention and/or research. Another area where more research is needed is with intercultural/cultural relationships. Family of origin and the impact it has on an adult's spirituality/religiosity is also needed to be studied more in depth.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Romantic adult attachment (Fraley & Shaver, 2000) is derived from Bowlby's attachment theory with the notion that adults in a romantic relationship act upon learned feelings from their childhood (Powers, Pietromonaco, Gunlicks, & Sayer, 2006). Ainsworth (1989) proposed that attachment theory is the foundational theory supporting romantic adult attachment because it extends the developmental changes in attachment a child has with their parent to the adult's affectional bonds throughout their life cycle. Main, Kaplan, and Cassidy (1985) were the first researchers to begin measuring attachment theory in adulthood. Main (1996) developed the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI), which assesses attachment patterns and ways adults identified, are influenced, and collaborate with their caregivers as children.

Bowlby (1988) defined attachment behavior as a person remaining close to a caregiver whenever that person is distressed, sick, or needing comfort. This person's attachment behavior is an affectional bond one person has with another and seeks to maintain the interaction, communication, and close physical contact with the attached person (Ainsworth & Bell, 1970). Attachment theory attempts to the way human beings function in their attachment behavioral system (Ainsworth, 1989).

When secure attachment is positively expressed (needs are met) by the caregiver, the infant will feel secure and want to be with the caregiver and thus, in adulthood, with other significant others (Crowell & Treboux, 1995). However, if there is insecure attachment with the caregiver, the individual will either be prone to patterns of anxious resistance or avoidant resistance. Individuals who are anxiously attached have the

uncertainty of whether their caregivers or partners will be consistent in meeting their needs, whereas individuals who have avoidant attachment have been consistently rejected by their caregivers or partners for comfort or protection (Bowlby, 1988).

Ainsworth (1977) researched attachment through a study of mother-infant interaction called The Strange Situation was developed to observe how 18–24 month olds used their mothers as a base for exploring. As the infant grows into an adult, according to Crowell et al. (2002), their foundation of attachment is shaped by specific interactions and later by transitions in adult relationships that he or she has developed, especially in their romantic adult relationship. Their childhood foundational relationships set a precedence over how adults will respond to their romantic partners. Secure, anxious, and avoidant relationships are generational and, oftentimes, intergenerational (Johnson, Makinen, & Millikin, 2001). In other words, a person forms their attachment (secure or insecure) as an infant/child, brings this same attachment with them into their adult relationship, and when those attachment styles do not change, the adult will continue the cyclic patterns with their children.

Wei, Vogel, Ku, and Zakalik (2005) wrote that how a person chooses to behaviorally respond to conflict through positive (secure) or negative (insecure) emotions, defenses, and/or expectations is shaped by that person's childhood or by their attachment experiences. These individuals have learned how to handle conflict through watching or engaging in conflict with their parents/caregivers. Since the person has learned to behaviorally respond or adapt to these experiences, according to Fraley and Shaver (2000), at the heart of romantic adult attachment is a tug-of-war about how each

partner handles conflict; a person's inner attachment style can become resolved, remain unsteady, or greatly intensify during a conflict.

Secure and Insecure Attachment Styles

Individuals with secure attachments maintain self-regulation, acknowledging bad feelings while handling their negative feelings constructively (Feeney, 1999; Mikulincer, Florian, Cowan, & Cowan, 2002). In order for infants and toddlers to feel secure, they must depend upon their caregiver to consistently meet their needs. Ainsworth and Bowlby (1991) observed that when the child becomes frightened or uncertain about a situation, their security comes from their confidence in knowing that they are able to rely on their caregiver who provided comfort (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991).

Anxious-attached individuals oftentimes have experienced inconsistency, rejection, and unresponsiveness, according to Crowell and Treboux (1995). When anxiously attached infants were observed in the home, Ainsworth (1977) noticed that caregivers were inconsistent in responding to the infant's signals of distress. When an infant would cry, the caregiver would attend to the baby and at other times, dismiss the baby. Repeated abandonment or a consistent threat of abandonment lead to separation anxiety, which is common in anxiously attached individuals (Bowlby, 1988).

For avoidant-attached infants, Ainsworth (1989) observed that caregivers deflected their baby's needs for comfort by ignoring the baby whenever he or she cried or showed signs of needing comfort or attention. Individuals who have avoidant attachment can appear to be inexpressive, disliking physical contact, and angry (Bowlby, 1988). Fear of intimacy, a repressive coping style, and distance are all descriptions of an avoidant-attached individual (Feeney, 1999). Avoidant individuals consistently have been rejected or have experienced insensitivity by their caretakers; negative feelings and

expressions are restricted in these individuals to avoid conflict with their partner or other attachment figure (Feeney, 1999).

Every infant during their first year develops an internal working model of attachment where he or she learns behaviors about when their caregiver will attend to their needs and follow a routine within their physical environment (Bowlby, 1969/1982). For example, a person's internal working model will allow him or her to hold certain beliefs and expectations about their own and other's behavior, whether he or she is lovable, and whether their caregiver is available or is willing to help. This concept illustrates that adults are constantly acting upon either their childhood attachment style or a learned attachment style in adulthood. An individual learns to adapt to their environment and live within their family system, and can also self-differentiate and adapt into having a healthy, loving, and secure relationship with their partner (George, 2009).

Theorists

Romantic Adult Attachment

Hazan and Shaver. Hazan and Shaver were the first researchers to take Bowlby's ideas about attachment and apply them to romantic relationships. They proposed that romantic love is an attachment process (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). "This attachment process, or emotional bond, develops in similar ways that infants and caregivers emotionally bond in the attachment behavioral system" (Fraley, 2010, p. 3). Hazan and Shaver (1987), through longitudinal studies, extended Main's adult attachment interview, and applied it to romantic relationships, parenting, and peer relationships.

Hazan and Shaver (1994) discovered how romantic relationships are developed utilizing attachment theory. Adults in romantic love look for signs with their partner very

much like infants who look for emotional and responsive signs from their caregiver through eye contact, reliability and availability, and closeness. When there is responsiveness, emotional security is felt, and when there is unresponsiveness, anxiety, and distress are evoked. Four possible features that are shared between infant-caregivers and adult romantic partners are as follows: 1) feelings of safety when the other partner is near; 2) close intimate contact; 3) insecurity when the partner is not accessible; and, 4) both share in confidence with one another (Fraley, 2010). Emotional bonds are also formed in romantic relationships through attachment, caregiving, and sexual mating (Shaver, Hazan, & Bradshaw, 1988).

Bartholomew and Shaver. Bartholomew discovered that that there were two patterns of avoidant attachment: 1) self-sufficiency, which is motivated by defensiveness; and 2) fear of rejection, which is motivated by an anticipated fear of rejection (Bartholomew & Shaver, 1998). In addition, two types of internal working models were also hypothesized—one of self and one of others (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). A person both has a positive or negative view of themselves and sees other people as either available and trustworthy or as unavailable and fearful of them (Bartholomew, 1990). This new expansion of the model led to subsequent changes in both the interview and self-report measures. Four styles and two dimensions were manifested to better measure and organize the adult attachment interview and self-report measures: secure, preoccupied, dismissing, and fearful (see Figure 1; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).
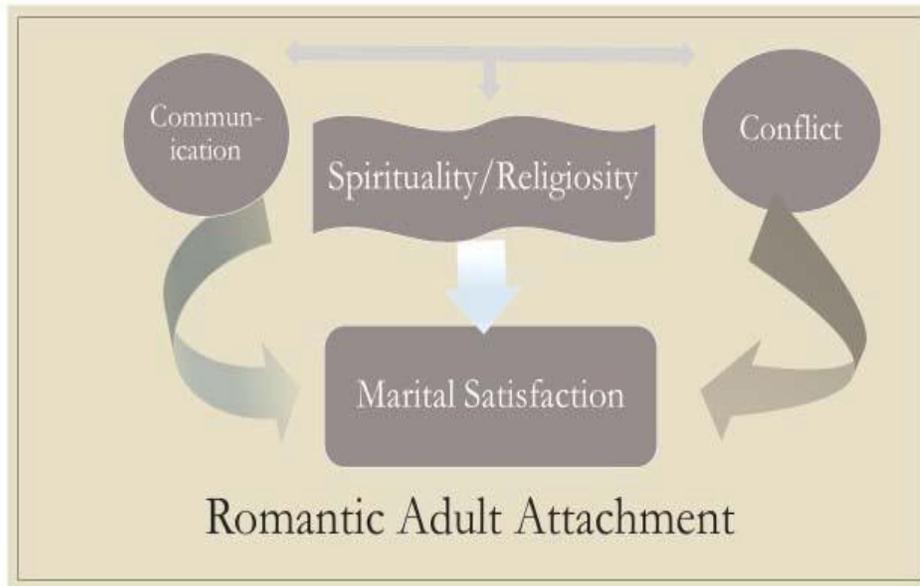
Figure 1. Romantic adult attachment.

Variables Included in This Content Analysis

Marital Satisfaction

According to Selcuk, Zayas, and Hazan (2010), *marital satisfaction* can incorporate a couple or a couple's turning towards one another during life's challenges and stress buffering, which are, when spouses soften one another's reaction towards stressful life events, enabling a felt security both psychologically and physiologically. The level of marital satisfaction provides stability and stronger conflict management since boundaries have been established to maintain an autonomous self (Kerr, 1984).

A predicament that couples face with marital satisfaction, according to Mehta, Cowan, and Cowan (2009), happens when partners express their emotions when trying to resolve disagreements. Hazan and Shaver (1994) wrote that when partners have trust in one another's ability to meet each other's needs, there is greater marital satisfaction. Nevertheless, since needs change over time, those authors suggested that it was

imperative that partners' expectations need to adapt and/or change for satisfaction to remain stable.

Conflict

Feeney and Karantzas (2017) defined *conflict* as "the presence of disagreement, difference or incompatibility between partners" (p. 60). The security of the relationship becomes threatened whenever there is conflict (Marchand, 2004). Unmet expectations, financial struggles, intimacy, bad habits, family responsibilities, and powerlessness are all sources of conflict within romantic relationships (Overall & McNulty, 2017). According to Feeney and Karantzas (2017), there are three responses to conflict: One, constructive engagement (positive willingness and negotiation to address the issue). Two, destructive engagement (negatively addressing the issue with contempt). Or three, conflict avoidant (not addressing the issue; Feeney & Karantzas, 2017). These three reactions can also be interwoven with either being securely, anxious/ambivalent, or avoidant attached.

Gottman and Driver (2005) wrote that how both partners solve conflicts and cope with struggles predicts whether the couple will remain together or break up. Personal attacks and withdrawal have been found to negatively affect the quality of the relationship whereas compromise and functional conflict resolution contributed to marital satisfaction (Marchand, 2004).

Communication

Internal working models are developed through communication (Feeney & Noller, 1996). Securely attached spouses, according to Bouthillier et al. (2002), engage in conflict by communicating their feelings and acknowledging their partners' feelings and concerns as well. Bouthillier et al. (2002) defined and referred to *communication* with

behaviors like assertiveness, self-disclosure, clarification requests, as well as nonverbal behaviors such as eye contact and how partners act around one another.

Securely attached individuals can turn towards their partner and discuss their frustrations (Feeney, 1999). Individuals who are anxiously attached tend to communicate with hypersensitivity and overreactions, whereas avoidant attached individuals deactivate communication (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2002). In other words, anxiously attached individuals intensify and instigate communication wanting to respond quickly, while the avoidant-attached individuals slow down communication and/or stop. An individual within a romantic relationship also with an insecure attachment style conveys may demonstrate destructive conflict communication, unresponsive behavior, and ineffective self-disclosure.

Spirituality/Religiosity

The last aspect that this study will research is how couples use their spirituality/religiosity to handle and/or resolve conflict. Dudley and Kosinski (1990) found that couples who participated in religious events had a greater ability to resolve conflict. The partners who spent time praying together and attending religious services were more likely, according to Dudley and Kosinski (1990), to work through conflict and attempt to repair disagreements. Partners who shared a common spirituality together also tended to believe in forgiveness, which affected how they resolved conflict (Lambert & Dollahite, 2006). Forgiveness has been linked to a psychological closeness and an increase in marital satisfaction, which leads to a rebuilding of trust.

Demographic Characteristics

The intent of this researcher is to explore the findings from peer-reviewed articles based on romantic adult attachment theory and the variables of marital satisfaction,

spirituality/religiosity along with conflict and communication. While this content analysis will focus on evidence-based findings, it will be important to also examine sample size, gender, race/ethnicity, religious affiliation, and education.

Statement of the Problem

Although numerous studies from 1987–2017 have been published that examine heterosexual marital romantic adult attachment relationships, there is still a need for an understanding of the research findings concerning marital satisfaction, spirituality, conflict, communication as seen through the lens of romantic adult attachment. Second, while previous research prior to 1998 provided insight into how well couples handled conflict and/or resolved conflict, current research has limited exploration. Third, there is very little review of the research from 1987–2017 that explored or explained how spirituality influences conflict and contributes to marital satisfaction; current research on spirituality needs review.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to conduct a content analysis of the evidence-based research that focused on couples' marital satisfaction and how it is impacted by conflict and communication with the influence of spirituality between 1987–2017. This qualitative and inductive content analysis gathered and compared the current findings and synthesized the research from studies in this time period based on the romantic adult attachment theory proposed by Hazan and Shaver in 1987. This researcher sought to identify and synthesize the relationship between romantic adult attachment and spirituality/religiosity along with the contribution of marital satisfaction, conflict, and

communication to show both what has been researched and what research areas need to be addressed.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be addressed.

1. How have research-based articles published in scholarly journals, from 1987–2017, addressed how romantic adult attachment, marital satisfaction, communication, and /or conflict are impacted when spirituality/religiosity is a variable in the study?

2. What are the gaps and limitations in the research based on romantic adult attachment, marital satisfaction, communication and/or conflict plus spirituality/religiosity when the past 18 years of research studies are considered? This date was chosen as it represents the year that Hazan and Shaver (1987) first proposed romantic adult attachment theory.

Definition of Terms

Attachment

Attachment occurs when one person has a strong emotional bond with another person (Bowlby, 1988). Hill, Fonagy, Safier, and Sargent (2003) wrote that attachment looked at the individual as both the self and how that self then functions in the relationship. Attachment is both individual as well as systemic.

Secure Attachment

A child's safe attachment pattern developed with his or her mother, or other caregiver, and is based on the mother's, or other caregiver's treatment for the child (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978). Secure attachment occurs when an individual

can self-regulate and handle negative feelings constructively. They are able to express

love and trust openly with their partners. Johnson, Makinen, and Milliken (2001)

described this affection as reciprocated interdependently in the relationship both

psychologically and physiologically.

Insecure Attachment (Anxious)

In childhood, the individual with this pattern is uncertain whether the parent will

be responsive or available in time of need (Ainsworth et al., 1978). This attachment

behavior is focused on unresponsiveness and rejection from caregivers (Crowell &

Treboux, 1995). Individuals who experienced this upbringing may demonstrate a constant

need for reassurance becomes cyclic of incompleteness and anxiety (Kilmann, Urbaniak,

& Parnell, 2006). Anxious individuals pursue partners to fill a void and to seek

completeness.

Insecure Attachment (Avoidant)

Avoidant individuals have experienced rejection and/or insensitivity by their

caretakers, and have no confidence of being helped or cared for (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

To avoid conflict with their partner, the individual possesses negative feelings and

restricts emotions or expressions (Feeney, 1999). Some of the descriptions of an avoidant

attached individual is the fear of intimacy and a repressive coping style with two patterns,

according to Bartholomew and Shaver (1998), self-sufficiency and fear of rejection.

Differentiation

Differentiation, according to Kerr and Bowen (1988), is the ability for a person to

emotionally be close to another while still maintaining their own emotional functioning,

as well as having the ability to self-regulate or not. It is the incorporation of interpersonal

relationships from a person's family of origin through adult relationships. This individual can be interdependent in a relationship, giving and relying on their partner without losing themselves or their identity.

Internal Working Models

How an individual learns to adapt to their environment and live in their family system is their internal working model (George, 2009). These are formed in childhood and carried through into adulthood.

Attachment Styles

Attachment style is the emotional bond a person has with another. There are three attachment styles in romantic Adult Attachment: secure attachment, anxious—insecure attachment, and withdrawing—insecure attachment (Feeney, 1999).

Romantic Adult Attachment

Romantic adult attachment is the emotional bond developed between the adult romantic partners that is a part of the attachment behavioral system (Fraley, 2010).

Marital Satisfaction

"Marital Satisfaction is a mental state that reflects the perceived benefits and costs of marriage to a particular person" (Stone & Shackelford, 2007, p. 1). Selcuk et al. (2010) researched and found that marital satisfaction was linked to a spouses' physical and psychological functioning and contributed to marital satisfaction being dependent upon attachment styles and bonds.

Conflict

Feeney and Karantzas (2017) defined conflict as "the presence of disagreement, difference or incompatibility between partners" (p. 60). Unmet expectations, financial

struggles, intimacy, bad habits, family responsibilities, and powerlessness can all be sources of conflict (Overall & McNulty, 2017).

Communication

Bouthillier et al. (2002) defined and referred to communication with behaviors like assertiveness, self-disclosure, clarification requests as well as nonverbal behaviors of eye contact and how the partners orient themselves to one another.

Spirituality/Religiosity

Spirituality/Religiosity, according to Lambert and Dollahite (2006), defined spirituality/religiosity as a person's religious practices, spiritual beliefs, participation, and giving in a faith community.

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Assumptions

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The following assumptions guided this content analysis:

1. The field of Family Therapy may benefit from having a content analysis of couples' research that investigates the relationship of marital satisfaction, communication and/or conflict plus spirituality/religiosity when considered through the framework of romantic adult attachment.

2. Family therapists will benefit from a study that examines how the elements in romantic adult attachment provide tools that will equip client couples to tap into their own inner resources of spirituality to strengthen marital satisfaction.

3. The size of the sample (10 journal articles) was relatively used overall.

Delimitations

This content analysis is delimited to researching:

1. This researcher reviewed peer reviewed journal articles published from 1992–2017 in this research to explore romantic adult attachment of married heterosexual couples.

2. This study was delimited to the study of romantic adult attachment, marital satisfaction, spirituality/religiosity, conflict, and communication.

3. The study included all the variables with an emphasis on spirituality/religiosity affecting conflict and influencing marital satisfaction.

Summary

Numerous scholarly journal articles described factors that influenced how a couple sustains a satisfied marriage. Chapter 1 introduced romantic adult attachment, secure and insecure attachment styles, and the theorists of romantic adult attachment. It defined the variables conflict, communication, marital satisfaction, and spirituality/ religiosity. The purpose of the content analysis was presented as well as the research questions. Terms were defined, and assumptions and delimitations were addressed.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this content analysis is to consider how the variable spirituality/ religiosity, when added to studies based on romantic adult attachment, has affected couple reports of conflict, communication, and marital satisfaction. This chapter will explore the contributions of attachment theory (Ainsworth, 1989; Bowlby, 1988) and Romantic adult attachment theory (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) to this literature. These findings will illustrate how partners offer one another security and belonging while maintaining companionship, providing an alliance, and offering comfort.

Attachment Theorists

John Bowlby (1907–1990)

Bowlby (1988) was a psychoanalyst who studied an infant's distress after separation from his/her parents. His passion for studying infants and children started while volunteering at a residential school for disturbed children (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). He studied medicine at Cambridge University and specialized in psychotherapy and child psychiatry. Bowlby learned that it was through the child's interaction with their parents that the child's personality began to be shaped. Bowlby did systemic research at the London Child Guidance Clinic where he matched a control group with 44 juvenile thieves (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). He found that the thieves experienced more separation and deprivation from their mothers than the control group.

Bowlby believed that infants were biologically programed at birth to allow them to form an attachment or emotional bond with their caregiver (Holmes & Johnson, 2009).

According to McLeod (2009), Bowlby referred to this as the evolutionary theory of attachment in which Bowlby adapted "concepts from ethology, cybernetics, information processing, and developmental psychology" (Bretherton, 1992, p. 759).

Bowlby (1988) stressed that raising a healthy self-reliant child to adulthood started in infancy and required a lot of time and attention with both parents providing a stable loving home, while meeting needs consistently. The emphasis on the child's environment led to describing an adult's attachment style. In discussing Bowlby's work, Wei et al. (2005), wrote that a person's emotional experiences with their parents and/or caretakers leads to a security or insecurity attachment in their later development. These attachments with parents and caregivers shape future relationships (Larson, Ommundsen, & Van der Veer, 2011).

Mary (Salter) Ainsworth (1913–1999)

Ainsworth was a graduate student at the University of Toronto when she began studying security theory (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). She joined Bowlby at the University of London in studying the interaction between a mother figure with infants and toddlers. Ainsworth strengthened Bowlby's study by helping to not only expand the attachment theory, but also contributed to the concept that infant-mother attachment patterns are formulated by a maternal sensitivity to the signals that their infant provides (Bretherton, 1992).

Ainsworth developed a technique called The Strange Situation (Ainsworth, 1977). This two-part observational research began with an observation of the infant's attachment development during their first year of life. The researchers began by observing the mother-infant behavior in their home environment (Ainsworth, 1989). The second part of

the observational research took place in a laboratory environment that was set up for 12-month olds and their parents. In this observation, the parents were separate from their children briefly and reunited after the child's reaction to their parent's absence was observed. She found those children who were securely attached, were self-soothed and able to play alone or with the worker in the room with contentment and with little to no signs of discomfort or comforted easily by caregiver. When the mother returned, the child happily united with their mother. The anxious children were observed to cling to their mother before the mother left and were not able to be self-soothed and/or comforted while the mother was away. Avoidant children played with toys and when the mother entered the room, these children continued playing with toys, showing little signs of connecting back with their mother, since they were used to consistently not having their needs met. Following Bowlby and Ainsworth, Hazan and Shaver (1987) found similar behavioral patterns in adult attachment behavior, naming it romantic adult attachment.

Romantic Adult Attachment Theory

Romantic adult attachment theory extends attachment theory into adulthood where affectional bonds are formed between two adults (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Affectional bonds, according to Ainsworth (1989), are exclusive emotional ties with another individual. The relationship can provide a secure base offering experiences of security and comfort, even when the partners are not together. This romantic love, according to Hazan and Shaver (1987), is an attachment process for adult romantic partners who become emotionally attached in the same way as an infant becomes emotionally bonded to his or her caregiver. Secure adults feel comfortable in being separated from their partners. While they may not like being away from their partner,

they trust their partner and believe he/she will be returning to them. Anxiously attached individuals, however, cling to their partner, oftentimes worrying when or if their partner will return. In the same way as the infant in the situation room, avoidant attached adults tend to not rely on their partners for support, push their partner away when the other is trying to comfort them, and keeps their distance.

Attachment Style

In addition to looking at the couple's relationship, it is equally important to notice the individual differences. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) tested these attachment styles with self and others in a four-category model: secure, preoccupied, dismissing, and fearful. For adults, according to Sroufe and Waters (1977), a felt security was what mattered. Even though Bowlby (1979/1994) did not name romantic adult attachment, his concept of attachment was a vital component of the human experience "from the cradle to the grave" (p. 129). Attachment relationships are essential throughout the lifespan (Ainsworth, 1989). Each adult in a long-term sexual relationship begins an attachment process that builds on the interaction of their attachment to their caregiver as children (Ainsworth, 1989). Hazan and Shaver (1994) wrote that attachment, caregiving, and sexual mating behavioral systems function according to different environmental cues. They wrote that adult attachment relationships contrast with infant attachment because adults tend to share equally a provider and caretaker role, giving and taking, to meet one another's needs.

Ainsworth et al. (1978) studied infant-mother attachment and first categorized their attachment as secure or insecure with their primary caregivers while Hazan and Shaver (1987) paralleled these attachment styles in relationship with adult partners in the

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same way. These three attachment styles, secure, anxious, and avoidant, continue in adulthood and provide a canvas for the ways in which adults respond in their romantic relationships and how they experience love (Hazan & Shaver, 1994). Attachment style continues into adulthood and is described by the internal working models of the self, based on previous social interaction (Feeney & Noller, 1990). Hazan and Shaver (1987) hypothesized that these three attachment types formed the ways adults experienced and behaved in romantic adult relationships.

Feeney (1999) described securely attached individuals as individuals who acknowledged and voiced frustration during conflict while also turning towards their partner for reassurance. Bowlby (1969/1982) wrote that securely attached adults learned to rely on attached figures for support and protection; thus, their relationships were more positive, trusting, and scored highest in self-confidence than anxiously or avoidant attached individuals (Feeney & Noller, 1990). Bowlby (1988) wrote that healthy self-reliance was fostered when secure attachment was nurtured. Ainsworth (1978) wrote that those who were securely attached were more sympathetic with their peers. According to Kobak and Hazan (1991), securely attached adults reported better marital adjustment and expressed emotions to their partners in an open way (Mikulincer & Nachshon, 1991), and were more intimate than avoidant attached individuals.

Mikulincer and Florian (1998) wrote that anxiously attached individuals address negative feelings and conflict with inconsistency and tend to fixate on negative thoughts; also, these individuals tend to focus on their own anguish, causing their anxiety to be exasperated and showing patterns of mania (Feeney & Noller, 1990). Unlike securely attached individuals, anxiously attached people, according to Mikulincer and Orbach (1995), have negative emotional memories when thinking of painful memories. They

oftentimes focus on what has gone wrong in their lives with little regard to happy and joyful events. These adults lean towards wanting closeness and desire commitment but tend to be bonded together due to self-deprivation and being excessively involved.

According to Mikulincer, Florian, and Weller (1993), avoidant individuals avoid or evade conflict since this was the consistent rejection they experienced from their caregiver as a child and distance themselves, either cognitively or behaviorally from their stress. When avoidant attached individuals were asked to recall experiences, they remembered more negative memories and events and emotions seemed to be rather psychologically shallow, according to Mikulincer and Orbach (1995). These individuals are game players who like the thrill of obtaining a romantic relationship, but avoid intimacy (Feeney & Noller, 1990) and tend to have short-term casual sex (Brennan & Shaver, 1995).

Impact of Romantic Adult Attachment

Feeney (1999) wrote that ways in which individuals dealt with negative emotions with their caregivers shaped how they learned to organize their emotional experiences and those who were able to control their emotions predicted relationship satisfaction. How a couple interacts and responds to one another helps to determine whether the couple will have marital satisfaction. In looking at secure and insecure attachments, integrating the component spirituality while also viewing the variables of conflict and communication will help to deepen the understanding of the theory.

Conflict

Conflict can escalate and cause distress in the couple's relationship, which can manifest itself through ineffective communication, reciprocal negativity, and a negative relationship schema (Halford, Kelly, & Markman, 1997). Gottman (1994) found a link

between confrontational behaviors during conflict in unsatisfactory marital relationships. He also discovered that criticizing leads to contempt, which then leads to defensiveness, which perpetuates into stonewalling or listener withdrawal. These damages caused by conflict inflict hurt, pain, and stress leading to negative attributions of the partner providing a "global negative view of the entire relationship: its history, meaning, and philosophy" (Gottman, 1993, p. 65).

Unmet expectations, financial difficulties, intimacy, power inequality, can be sources of conflict (Overall & McNulty, 2017). When these situations occur, polarized thinking and heightened emotionality escalates (Feeney & Karantzas, 2017). Feeney and Karantzas (2017) described three responses to conflict: constructive engagement or cooperative behavior, destructive engagement or confrontation, and conflict avoidance or detachment. Feeney and Karantzas (2017) defined each of these conflict labels. The way a partner provides support, problem-solves, and accepts responsibility is constructive engagement. Partners who participate in destructive engagement then tend to blame, dominate, and manipulate while the conflict avoidant distances and withdrawals. When conflict arises in marriage, it can shake the foundation of the relationship. Nevertheless, engaging in conflict rather than avoiding conflict allows differences to be resolved, according to Jacobson and Addis (1993) and thus increases marital satisfaction. Marital conflict is inevitable in a marriage and how that conflict is managed can signal how the relationship is functioning (Marchand, 2004).

Securely attached adults use both verbal and listening skills as well as mutuality when engaged in conflict resolution. More securely attached individuals during conflicts were found in romantic relationships to integrate their own position with their partner's

(Levy & Davis, 1988). During conflict, insecure adults tend to possess fewer constructive problem-solving behaviors, according to Kobak and Hazan (1991) while also demonstrating an insecure working model. Consequently, due to this rejection and/or inconsistent response from their caregivers as children over time, triggered these insecure adults to have low self-esteem and low self-worth (Kobak & Hazan, 1991).

Kobak and Hazan (1991) discovered when a partner is not emotionally available, attacking behaviors may emerge, or they may become withdrawn. Avoidant partners can be compared to the avoidant babies in the Strange Situation (Ainsworth et al., 1978), where the babies turned toward toys for support instead of seeking closeness from their caretaker, likewise, avoidant partners turn towards hobbies, work, or maybe even towards someone else. It is important for couples to have emotion regulation in their relationship during a conflict (Gottman, 1994).

Partners may resort back to their childhood attachments during conflict due to the stress. Therefore, as Shi (2003) wrote, it is important for partners to maintain cooperation and self-control during and after their conflict. When there is conflict and stress, these adults turn away from their partner instead of towards (Shi, 2003). Conflict resolution goes hand in hand with fear of rejection. Conflict resolution capabilities were also hindered when the partners fixated on 'winning' the argument (Plessis & Clarke, 2008).

However, a couple chooses to react and/or address the problem will determine whether there is conflict resolution (Markman, Stanley, & Blumberg, 1996). When a partner feels validated and heard, is able to speak in an environment where they can adequately express their thoughts and feelings, then problem solving and conflict resolution can take place (Markman et al., 1996). On the other hand, Markman et al. (1996) also wrote that when there is ineffective emotional regulation, escalation,

unexpressed feelings, and an unsafe environment to share, this leads to relationship problems. The couple needs to soften their tone, not become defensive, and acknowledge their partner's point of view, according to Markman et al. (1996). The need to win an argument will then be replaced with wanting to work together. Gottman (1993) wrote that a partner's hidden agenda interfere with effective conflict resolution.

Communication

Open communication and trust are associated with one another and allows room for constructive arguing (Kobak & Hazan, 1991). For adult attachment, communication is vital in the development of the internal working models (Feeney & Noller, 1996). These internal working models relate to a caregiver's response and coincide with working models of self (Bretherton, 1992). "Open communication between partners provides individuals with information about self and other that allows working models to become more finely attuned" (Kobak & Hazan, 1991, p. 862). Securely attached individuals learn to change their internal working model to communicate their needs in a more effective way. Open communication in relationships allowed for trust and affection to be nurtured, even during conflict (Plessis & Clarke, 2008). Supportive communication has been shown to maintain long-term romantic relationships (Olderbak & Figueredo, 2009).

When a couple has an insecure working model, they tend to display dysfunctional thinking and lack the psychological availability needed from their partner to ease anger and insecure attachment (Kobak & Hazan, 1991). Thus, emotional communication mediates internal working models concerning marital adjustment, or, as Feeney, Noller, and Roberts (1995) discovered, a link between communication and adult attachment with marital satisfaction. Due to either a lack of responsiveness or a perceived lack of

inaccessibility, insecure attachment leads to ineffective communication (Halchuk, Makinen, & Johnson, 2012). Distress in the relationship is often correlated with ineffective communication and negative reciprocity (Johnson et al., 2001). Insecure attachment is correlated with ineffective self-disclosure and unexpressed supportive behaviors whereas emotion regulation and expression are related to the behaviors of a securely attached individual (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2002).

Burleson and Denton (1997) wrote that communication played a central role in marriage and that poor communication skills were the cause of marital issues. They also found that conflicts arose directly due to the lack of communication skills. Communication manifests itself in many forms. Distressed couples, according to Kobak and Hazan (1991), displayed dysfunctional and negative ways of problem-solving discussions and lower levels of support, whereas in healthier and happier relationships, couples adapted their communication to the contextual demands during conflict (Overall & McNulty, 2017). Bouthillier et al. (2002) wrote that securely attached individuals engaged in effective communication expressing their feelings and concerns, as well as acknowledging those same feelings within their partner. Those avoidant individuals in Bouthillier et al.'s (2002) study displayed lower levels of support and validation for their partner during interactions. Conflict interactions and communication were escalated therefore producing poor resolution in anxious/ambivalent individuals.

Gottman and Silver (1999) wrote about the harsh startup in marriage full of criticizing, sarcastic dialogues between partners that are toxic to the relationship. During conflict, if there is criticism or contempt, research showed that it would be better for the couple to start their conversation again, using nicer and softer tones. Gottman (1994) wrote about the Four Horseman and said that these four signs were predictors of divorce:

criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling. In order for couples to have open, active, and effective communication, they need to engage in listening, softening, and repairing with one another.

Marital Satisfaction

Marriage satisfaction plays an important role in the well-being of individuals and the family (Stack & Eshleman, 1998). Stack and Eshleman (1998) found that married couples were shown to be happier than those with an unmarried status. The couples who exuded greater emotional support were associated with having a higher personal well-being, along with financial satisfaction and better health, according to Stack and Eshleman's (1998) study. For their research, Stack and Eshleman (1998) referred to emotional support with someone being loved, respected, and valued as a person demonstrating that this kind of securely attached emotional support, tends to lower depression and improve mental health (Ross, Mirowsky, & Goldsteen, 1990). Kobak and Hazan (1991) also conducted research that showed that securely attached husbands and wives had a higher marital satisfaction.

Hazan and Shaver (1994) wrote that marital satisfaction could be reduced to whether basic needs are being met. Securely attached individuals are able to support and accept their partner regardless of their faults and tend to have longer relationships than either anxious or avoidant attached adults (Volling, Notaro, & Larsen, 1998). Securely individuals have higher levels of trust, positive functioning, and satisfaction (Halchuk et al., 2010). Volling et al.'s (1998) study revealed that those individuals who were securely attached tended to feel more confident in parenting than either anxious or avoidant attached individuals. According to Hazan and Shaver (1987), these secure adults described their romantic relationships as friendly, happy, supportive, and lasted longer

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than anxious or avoidant participants in their study. Spouses reported that they felt and exuded more love to one another with their securely attached partners (Volling et al., 1998).

Insecurely attached adults were found to have more negative relationship expectations, interpersonal cognitions, and relationship beliefs as well as more negative views about their spouse (Feeney & Noller, 1990). Feeney, Noller, and Roberts (1995) conducted a study where the finding showed that marital satisfaction was related to the control of the partner's sadness and anger. Another study, reported by Volling et al. (1998), showed that individuals who had both insecure attachment styles reported more marital distress.

Hazan and Shaver (1994) wrote that other areas such as intimacy, trust, commitment, and relationship satisfaction were viewed as more negative in insecure attached adults. Fears of intimacy kept avoidant attached individuals away from developing close relationships while jealousness, abandonment fears, and relationship obsession impeded anxiously attached individuals from close relationships (Volling et al., 1998).

One of the greatest predictors of marital satisfaction is the way emotions are expressed between partners when they try to resolve disagreements (Mehta et al., 2009). Gottman (1994) reported that withdrawing and stonewalling (avoidant behaviors) were predictors of marital distress and divorce and were more detrimental to marital satisfaction than negative engagement (anxious behaviors). He wrote that wives were the emotion regulators in the marriage. Gottman (1994) described at-risk marital relationships with wives who were avoidant attached married to secure husbands rather

than securely attached wife married to an avoidant husband because she would be able to compensate and manage the emotion around problems in the marriage whereas an avoidant wife would be emotionally inadequate to help maintain the relationship by being the emotional regulator.

Researchers have found that a strong predictor of a couple having marital satisfaction is when the partner(s) are able to express their emotions when trying to resolve disagreements (Mehta et al., 2009). According to Lambert and Dollahite (2006), relational qualities are strengthened when there is mutual participation in religious activities. Findings showed that partners who had a purpose-centered marriage of love, compassion, and respect, then valued resolution and/or forgiveness after a conflict.

Spirituality

As stated in Chapter 1, spirituality/religiosity refers to "a person's spiritual beliefs, religious practices, and involvement with a faith community" (Lambert & Dollahite, 2006, p. 439). Some examples of spirituality beliefs and religious practices includes: the belief in a marital bond, practicing prayer, studying scripture, attending and participating in faith community activities, and attending religious meetings. According to Lambert and Dollahite (2006), spirituality/religiosity is defined as a person's religious practices, spiritual beliefs, and faith community involvement and contributions.

Lambert and Dollahite (2006) wrote that there is a positive link between the reduction of marital conflict and spirituality/religiosity. They discovered that when the couple is unified in religious participation, there is greater conflict resolution. Couples who prayed together and attended religious events were found to have less contempt and hostility towards one another. Lambert and Dollahite (2006) also showed that couples

who had religious beliefs aided them in forgiving one another during conflict. Before a conflict, when there was a shared purpose and relational virtues, according to Lambert and Dollahite (2006), some of the conflicts were prevented by unifying the couples and decreasing stress. During conflict, open communication became possible when couples prayed because they reported that their anger was alleviated.

These experiences with spirituality are then intertwined into that person's internal working modal of attachment (Hall, Fujikawa, Halcrow, Hill, & Delaney, 2009). Couple's prayer, religious attendance, and giving all are factors that have been found to provide a positive environment and purpose to not only the quality of marriage, but also the way the couple addresses conflict (Lambert & Dollahite, 2006). Booth, Johnson, Branaman, and Sica (1995) described spirituality/religiosity as: religious attendance, prayer, social participation, Bible reading, and religious giving. Benner (1998) wrote that a person's internal working modal cannot be separated into "spiritual" and "psychological" components. In other words, one's experiences with God and their spirituality have roots in their psychological process view of God.

Marital environments where both partners attend religious services as well as religious couples who pray together have been shown to have an enhanced marital relationship (Booth et al., 1995). In their study, religion revealed to be the source of support and strength for the couples' marriage and family. Marital difficulties have led couples to increase their religious involvement and, according to Stacey (1990), individuals increased their religious participation either to ease marital tensions or to resolve a problem.

Ellison (1991) studied three religious aspects that affect well-being: social integration, divine interaction, and existential certainty. He wrote that during a crisis, social integration provided support and people are helped to interpret their life experiences using their religiosity. Prayer, meditation, and scripture reading, or divine interaction, helped individuals during conflict resolution with problem solving tools. These features also increased self-worth, according to Ellison (1991). The last applicable feature Ellison (1991) described was existential certainty which refers to how strong one's religious beliefs are and how that individual will allow their religion to influence their daily life as well as in stressful times. Most religions, according to Booth et al. (1995), value families and encourage strengthening marital relationships.

Adults who are securely attached are more likely to be motivated to pursue God and to strengthen their spirituality for its own sake, remaining free and autonomous from the need for affect regulation, unlike adults who are insecurely attached (Schore, 2003). Anxiously attached individuals, according to Byrd and Boe (2001), said that feelings of being rejected by God played an avid role in their prayer life with God offering more petitionary prayers. This concept correlates with the internal working model of anxious attachment.

Hall and Edwards (2002) wrote that God was more stable and emotionally close in adults who were more securely attached. Kirkpatrick (2005) also found that more secure adults were more likely to adopt some of their partner's view of God where insecure adults were least likely to form some views of God from their partner. Securely attached adults described higher levels of relationships with God as well as with others (Hart, Limke, & Budd, 2010). Since parent relationships and romantic relationships with

partners resemble attachments with God, spiritual maturity is reported higher in secure

attached individuals than with insecure attached individuals (Hart et al., 2010). Kimball

et al. (2013) wrote that spirituality could become a kind of reparative bridge for other

relationships because when an individual seeks to rely upon or be with God in distress,

that person's internal working model changes into a positive experience, therefore,

transforming other relationships.

Secure Attachment

Infants will only feel secure if their caregivers are responding to them (Ainsworth

& Bowlby, 1991). As securely attached children continue to grow, they gradually

increase their security through learning coping skills and relying on themselves

(Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). A person who has a secure attachment has achieved a

healthy balance of self and others. These individuals have both a comfortable sense of

self-worth as well as intimacy in relationships (Bartholomew & Shaver, 1998) or as

Hazan and Zeifman (1999) wrote, a "profound psychological and physiological

interdependence" (p. 351). They believe that their intimate partners are available when

there is an emotional or physical need (Russell, Baker, & McNulty, 2013). These adults

tend to reach out for social support from both romantic partners and have a strong support

of networks (Meyers & Landsberger, 2002). Expressing empathy is enabled through

security attachment (Levesque, Lafontainea, Carona, Flescha, & Bjornsona, 2014).

Caldwell and Shaver (2012) described securely attached individuals as having

ego-resiliency, meaning, that the security one has with positive experiences in their

relationships, flexibility is developed, therefore nurturing emotion regulation and

optimism during unpredictable life situations. These ego-resilient individuals can recover

from stressful experiences and have effective inner coping resources (Meyers &

Landsberger, 2002). According to Brennan and Shaver (1995), secure adults are more

likely to see their partners as trustworthy and are able to self-regulate. When a partner

self-discloses, becoming vulnerable and expressing their needs, intimacy develops (Reis

& Shaver, 1988). While securely attached couples are not free of conflict, there is a level

of trust that allows constructive arguing and problem-solving behaviors to be used,

according to Kobak and Hazan (1991).

Insecure Attachment (Anxious)

Hazan and Shaver (1994) very eloquently described insecure attachment by using

an analogy of a car. They described an analogy where a person was to imagine

themselves as a car owner. On most days, the car would start and provide reliable

transportation. However, imagine this same car now occasionally breaking down or not

starting. Both the breakdown frequency as well as the circumstances for the breakdown

would influence whether the person deemed this car reliable or not. If it broke down

once, but the person had a pressing meeting, this breakdown would feel different and

leave a more impressionable impact than if the person was just puttering around town.

Although caregivers are not cars, Hazan and Shaver (1994) wrote, a person's concrete

experiences of when attachment figures were responsive, unresponsive, or unpredictable

leave lasting impressions. What matters is not just that the caregiver responds, but also

how they respond in the circumstances.

Wilson and Ruben (2011) defined individuals who were anxious as those who

measured a partner's responsiveness, availability, and abandonment by their relationship

partner. Due to their higher levels of anxiety, they cope and behave by clinging to their

partner for reassurance (Russell et al., 2013). Beck et al. (2013) wrote that anxious individuals draw attention to their distress, over emphasizing it to their partners, and needing constant validation. An individual with anxious attachment often has a negative view of self while having a positive view of others. These individuals seek validation from others to gain security in the relationship (Bartholomew & Shaver, 1998). Brennan and Shaver (1995) wrote that anxiously attached adults fall in love quickly with their partner and then plead and beg for their partner's reciprocation. These individuals tend to waver between expressions of distress and anger in an effort to keep their partner close (Hazan & Shaver, 1994).

Anxiously attached individuals tend to have a low self-esteem and love addiction, according to Brennan and Shaver (1995). They are in a fearful double-bind of having unrealistic and unmet expectations of others while desperately seeking approval and affirmation, such that, they avoid intimacy all together (Bartholomew & Shaver, 1998). Hazan and Shaver (1987) described the anxious attached individual as desiring close relationships and equally fretting about abandonment. They struggle with a lack of confidence in relying on others to respond (Hazan & Shaver, 1994). They are more prone to falling in love very quickly and seek the partner's mutual love (Brennan & Shaver, 1995).

Insecure Attachment (Avoidant)

Due to consistent unresponsiveness from a caregiver as a child, the child developed avoidant attachment (Hazan & Shaver, 1994). This individual has a negative view of others while having a positive view of themselves. They avoid close relationships because of negative expectations and fear of intimacy Hazan and Shaver (1994) wrote.

Self-worth is maintained through the denial of needing close relationships (Bartholomew & Shaver, 1998). According to Hazan and Shaver (1994), avoidant attached individuals believe that others are unreliable and untrustworthy. Avoidant adults may not accept their partner's faults (Brennan & Shaver, 1995). Their fear of closeness leads to avoiding dependence on others and seeking support (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). These individuals, according to Simpson and Gangestad (1991), are the least invested and least committed in their relationships. They tend to be physically close with their partners but not psychologically vulnerable.

Avoidant attached individuals tend not to be comfortable with dependency and closeness (Wilson & Ruben, 2011). The avoidant adult possesses a repressive coping style (Vetere & Myers, 2002). These individuals tend to be less emotionally self-aware (Caldwell & Shaver, 2012). When avoidant individuals are in distress, they tend to pull away from their partner (Diamond, 2001). Emotional distance is maintained by overly relying on self and by downplaying their hurt or fear emotions (Beck et al., 2013). Both anxious and avoidant adults are at risk for maladaptive inner coping resources as well as experience lower levels of friend support and romantic support (Meyers & Landsberger, 2002).

Summary

Numerous developments emerged out of Bowlby's attachment theory. Hazan and Shaver (1987) shaped romantic adult attachment theory in such a way that it unified a framework for the study of romantic relationships (Fraley & Shaver, 2000). Dynamics that shape infant-caregiver relationships are also formed in adult romantic relationships (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Throughout the 80s and 90s, studies were strengthened by the

engaging of questions and in- depth research on intimate relationships, individual differences, and internal working models (Fraley & Shaver, 2000). Nevertheless, in learning more about how the functionality of spirituality and communication impact conflict, researchers gain a deeper understanding on how these components influence marital satisfaction, which could lead to higher marital quality and more securely attached individuals.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In this study, this researcher used a qualitative content analysis to examine the variables of spirituality/religiosity, conflict, and communication which have evolved from evidence-based research about romantic adult attachment in scholarly academic journals from 1987–2017. Content analysis is a widely used research design and has become increasingly popular over the past years. This period of time was chosen because it signals the beginning of empirical research about romantic adult attachment as the first study was completed by Hazan and Shaver in 1987. However, information and findings on how marital satisfaction is impacted by couples' reports of spirituality/religiosity were found in articles for this research drawn from 1992. While the theory was first published in 1987, the first study by Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992) addressing romantic adult attachment and spirituality/religiosity was published in 1992.

A content analysis is a "research method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from the text" (Weber, 1990, p. 9). This was a summative, synthesis, and conventional content analysis (Neuendorf, 2002). The researcher used a content analysis methodology for this study as it "allow[ed] the researcher to test theoretical issues [which] enhance[d] understanding of the data" (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008, p. 108). In other words, the researcher examined romantic adult attachment theory along with issues of marital satisfaction and then the three variables that mediate marital satisfaction (conflict, communication, and spirituality/religiosity).

This researcher, with the help of the Texas Woman's University (TWU) librarian, identified 16 articles based on romantic adult attachment, and the variables, marital satisfaction, spirituality/religiosity, conflict, and communication. Six of the journal articles did not include romantic adult attachment theory and the five variables used in this study and were eliminated. This researcher analyzed the ten remaining research studies for how romantic attachment theory (RAA) explained through quantitative design or explored through qualitative design the relationship between marital satisfaction, communication and/or conflict as well as spirituality/religiosity. To be included in this study, articles were based on romantic adult attachment theory that focused on marital satisfaction and spirituality/religiosity.

Sample of Articles about Romantic Adult Attachment

The researcher proposed that she would collect clinical peer-reviewed research journal articles pertaining to romantic adult attachment and the variables listed above that were published from 1987–2017. This researcher initially worked alone but, then, at the advice of her dissertation committee, worked with the TWU librarian, Andy Tucker, who assisted in the search for empirical articles with the variables of marital satisfaction, conflict, communication, and spirituality/religiosity. In order to narrow the pool of articles, this researcher and the librarian conducted an exhausted search, placing greatest emphasis on marital satisfaction and spirituality/religiosity, but maintaining the researcher's original interest in communication and conflict. With this design, the pool of research articles reached 16 that were narrowed down to 10 articles. Six of the 16 articles did not prove to include all the desired variables and were eliminated from the sample. Upon the guidance of the TWU librarian, this researcher used the following academic

databases to collect the sample articles: Child Development & Adolescent Studies, Education Source, ERIC, Family & Society Studies Worldwide, MasterFile Premier, Women's Studies International, Education Administration Abstracts, Society Index with Full Text, Professional Development Collect, Psychiatry & Behavior Sciences Collection, and Religion.

Originally, the research was going to include articles from 1987, when romantic adult attachment was founded, until the most recent date. However, when the articles were further researched, articles that pertained to the intention of this content analysis, the earlier dated articles did not address the impact spirituality has on marital satisfaction. All articles included in this study were published between 1992–2014, and were selected from eight major peer-review journals: Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin (PSPB), Journal of Family Psychology (JFP), Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion (JSSR), Developmental Psychology (DP), Journal of Social & Personal Relationships (JSPR), The Family Journal: Counseling & Therapy for Couple & Families (FJ), Gender & Behaviour (GB), and Psychology of Religion & Spirituality (PRS).

At the beginning of the research, 16 articles were found in the database search. However, after reading through the articles, six of the journal articles did not have the desired variable of spirituality/religiosity. A total of 10 journal articles (see Table 1 below) were included in this content analysis study. To determine which academic articles were included, the author used articles that focused on the following terms, synonyms, abstracts, or key terms in finding appropriate articles over the topic of romantic adult attachment: romantic adult attachment, adult romantic attachment, adult attachment, romantic attachment, secure attachment, insecure attachment, anxious

attachment, avoidant attachment, marital satisfaction, conflict, communication,

spirituality, religiosity, influences in marital satisfaction, marital quality, relational

quality, religion and marriage, spirituality and marriage, relational family therapy, and

attachment to God.

Table 1

Author(s), Title of Article, and Journal

Author(s)	Article	Journal
Pollard, Riggs, & Hook (2014)	Mutual Influences in Adult Romantic Attachment, Religious Coping, and Marital Adjustment	Journal of Family Psychology
Lopez, Riggs, Pollard, & Hook (2011)	Religious Commitment, Adult Attachment, and Marital Adjustment in Newly Married Couples	Journal of Family Psychology
Mosko & Pistole (2010)	Attachment and Religiousness: Contributions to Young Adult Marital Attitudes and Readiness	The Family Journal: Counseling & Therapy for Couples & Families
Jankowski & Sandage (2011)	Meditative Prayer, Hope, Adult Attachment, and Forgiveness: A Proposed Model	Psychology of Religion & Spirituality
Sullivan (2001)	Understanding the Relationship Between Religiosity and Marriage: An Investigation of the Immediate and Longitudinal Effects of Religiosity on Newlywed Couples	Journal of Family Psychology
Granqvist, Ivarsson, Broberg, & Hagekull (2007)	Examining Relations Among Attachment, Religiosity, and New Age Spirituality Using the Adult Attachment Interview	Developmental Psychology
Ottu & Akpan (2011)	Predicting Marital Satisfaction From the Attachment Styles and Gender of a Culturally and Religiously Homogenous Population	Gender & Behaviour
Reiter & Gee (2008)	Open Communication and Partner Support in Intercultural and Interfaith Romantic Relationships: A Relational Maintenance Approach	Journal of Social & Personal Relationships
Kirkpatrick & Shaver (1992)	An Attachment-Theoretical Approach to Romantic Love and Religious Belief	Personality & Social Psychology
Rowatt & Kirkpatrick (2002)	Two Dimensions of Attachment to God and Their Relation to Affect, Religiosity, and Personality Constructs	Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion

Demographics

The data collected about the articles in the final sample listed below in Table 2

from the 10 articles include marital status, race/ethnicity, gender, and religious affiliation.

When marital status was listed, the number of married participants ($n = 422$) were

compiled. In some articles, the participants were single, college students, or seriously

dating. Other studies did not reveal the marital status of the participants. Overall, most of

the articles focused on a population educated at the college or master's degree level. The

ethnicity represented in the study was overwhelmingly white, with other ethnic groups

not well represented except for a study with 150 Nigerian participants. Females ($n = 988$)

made up more of the participants than males ($n = 729$) in the overall studies. It is

important to note religious affiliation of the participants as there is an overwhelming

number of Protestants participants rather than from other religions. The breakdown of

demographics for each of the studies can be found in Appendix D.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of All Samples in the 10 Articles

Variable	N
Marital Status	
Married	422
Exclusive/Cohabitating	155
Individual participants (Unknown status)	2439
Race/Ethnicity	
White/Caucasian	961
Asian/Asian American	45
African American	39
Nigerian	150
Middle Eastern	3
Other/n/a	8
Gender	
Females	988
Males	729
Gender not Reported	12
Religious Affiliation	
Protestant	969
Catholic	223
Other	222
Atheist/Agnostic/Non-religious	155

Descriptions of the Individual Studies

In Table 3, several factors influenced the findings. It was apparent that the majority of the participants in the studies was Caucasian and were highly educated. Most were college educated or were in a master's level program. Overall, more female participants than males participated. However, the number of male participants was still strong. Protestant participants overwhelmingly outnumbered other faiths and religions.

Table 3

Descriptions of the Individual Studies

Author(s)	Sample Size	Religion	Gender	Education
Pollard, Riggs, & Hook (2014)	81 Heterosexual Married Couples (162 individuals)	Baptist: 23 Christian: 24 Protestant: 18 Catholic: 11 Spiritual, not religious: 9 No religious affiliation: 9 Bible/Nondenom.: 6 Mormon: 6 Jehovah. Wit: 6		Highly Educated: 93 (bachelor's or graduate degree)
Lopez, Riggs, Pollard, & Hook (2011)	92 Married Couples (184) Individuals			Mostly College Educ. 63.6%
Mosko & Pistole (2010)	249 College Students 124 = Non-serious dating/causal dating) (not cohabitating)	Nonreligious: 54 Christian: 154 Muslim: 1 Other: 28	F: 129 (51.8%) M: 119 (47.8%)	H.S.: 27 Some College: 190 Assoc.: 12 Master's: 5
Jankowski & Sandage (2011)	Single: 33.2% Parents: 49.8%	Protestant Affiliation University	F: 209 (51.7%)	All Master's students
Granqvist, Ivarsson, Broberg, & Hagekull (2007)	84 college participants	Recruited from theo/religion classes, prayer meetings, Bible Studies	M: 40%	All college students

(continued)

Author(s)	Sample Size	Religion	Gender	Education
Sullivan (2001)	172 Newly first time married couples w/out kids	Husbands: Protestants: 41% Catholic: 31% Jewish: 5% Mormon: 2% No Religion: 19% Other: 2% Wives: Protestants: 47% Catholic: 26% Jewish: 5% Mormon: 3% No Religion: 17% Other: 2%		10 + Years
Ottu & Akpan (2011)	150 participants Nigerian	Christian	F: 77 M: 73	
Reiter & Gee (2008)	Test 1: 353 college students Test 2: 152 follow- up survey	Interfaith religion.: 43 Intrafaith religion: 44 No response: 65	F: 251 M: 90 Gender Not Rep: 12	College participants
Kirkpatrick & Shaver (1992)	1st Survey: 670 2nd Survey: 213	Atheist: 2.8% Agnostic: 14.2% Catholic: 19.9% Jewish: 3.8% Protestant: 39.8% Other: 19.4%	F: 84.9 %	
Rowatt & Kirkpatrick (2002)	1st Survey: 120 Community Participants married: 64.5% single: 27% Divorced/Widow: 9.5%	South. Baptist: 24% Catholic: 12.5% Methodist: 11% Christian: 8.5% NonDenom: 8.5% Church of X: 6% Pentecostal: 5.5% Am. Baptist: 5% Ch. of God: 3.5% Lutheran: 3.5% Presbyterian: 2.5% None: 4% Other: 3%	F: 76 M: 44	Average year of educ: 15 yrs
	2nd Survey: 254 Undergraduate Students	Baptist: 47% Catholic: 23% Church Member: 80%	F: 176 M: 76	

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<center>**Measures**</center>

In gathering the articles, this researcher found a plethora of surveys, questionnaires, and other compiled tests that the researcher used to gather their information from their willing participants (see Table 4). A compilation of all of the measures and their characteristics and dimensions from each of the ten articles can be found in Appendix C. Some of the authors created surveys specifically for the population they were targeting. Other self-reports/measurements were derived from earlier researchers such as the MP (Meditative Prayer) from Poloma and Pendelton (1989) and the Religion Measurement. Some of the measures for religiosity when used in articles such as religious commitment, adult attachment, and marital adjustment in newly married couples and attachment and religiousness: contributions to young adult marital attitudes and readiness had some overlapping qualities. The Religious Commitment Inventory-10 (RCI-10) was used in both Lopez et al. (2011) and Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992). Intrinsic Religiousness Motivation Scale (IRM) was used in three articles: Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992), Mosko and Pistole (2010), and Rowatt and Kirkpatrick (2002). Loving God/Controlling God Scale was used in three articles as well: Granqvist et al. (2007), Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992), and Rowatt and Kirkpatrick (2002). Table 4 ranks the frequency of the measures used.

Table 4

Frequently Used Measures

Rank	Measure	Study	Frequency
1	DAS-Dyadic Adjustment Scale	1, 2, 8, 10	4
1	ECR-Experiences in Close Relationships	1, 2, 3, 4	4
2	IRM-Intrinsic Religious Motivation Scale	3, 9, 10	3
2	LOVING GOD/CONTROLLING GOD	5, 9, 10	3
3	MAS-Marital Attitudes Scale	3, 10	2
*3	RCI-10/RC-Religious Commitment Inventory-10/Religious Commitment	2, 9	2

*RC was derived from RCI.

Data Collection

The researcher created a Coding Form (see Appendix A) that included ten

columns: methodology, final sample, religious affiliation, measures, the author's

hypothesis, functionality/impact of spirituality/religiosity. The seventh, eighth, and ninth

columns was used to gather data on romantic adult attachment theory and the study

variables, spirituality/religiosity, conflict, marital satisfaction, and communication. The

last column addresses the therapy implications for therapists. In other words, this coding

form will be used to collect the researcher's findings that could influence and benefit

therapists. In addition to the table, a place for notes was included for the coders to make

additional notes to the researcher, as well as for the researcher to make notes for further

references. Creating and illustrating a line item of each article with the sample

characteristic data was essential to strengthen and compare the studies while providing

information that would be conducive to the content analysis findings. A Coding Guide

(see Appendix B) was created by the researcher and provided to the coders to define

terms and help the coders decipher what elements needed to be coded.

Coding of Data

Keywords

The researcher became immersed in the data by employing multiple readings and coding. The researcher read the articles again and color-coded the articles using the categories listed on the coding form columns. The researcher read the articles a third time and used the coding form to code the data from each article. In addition to the researcher, two coders (the researcher's dissertation advisor and a doctoral graduate student) were trained by the researcher to code the ten articles using the Coding Guide (see Appendix B). The identified variables in the articles were used as the a priori codes.

Training

The two coders, the dissertation advisor and doctoral graduate student, were each given a coding form and the same article to read. The coders were trained to look for the hypotheses in the articles to consider the impact of the findings on spirituality/religiosity had marital satisfaction, conflict, and communication. In addition, the coders were trained to look for therapy implications the author(s) had discussed. Finally, the coders were asked to check the researcher's identification of sample size and other sample characteristics that were included on each coding form, as well as confirm other demographic data that was considered static. Following Patton's (1999) notion of multiple analysts, this researcher used the two coders to code two articles together and checked their interrater reliability, which was 95% agreement. At that point, the researcher determined that both coders were fully trained and assigned one coder six

articles and the other coder four articles. The researcher met with the coders a second time to check their findings against the researcher's findings (Neuendorf, 2002).

Coding

After the initial coding, the researcher went through each of the coding forms from the coders and merged their findings with her findings. During the merging, it became apparent for the researcher, as well as for the two coders, that while the impact of spirituality/religiosity was infiltrated throughout the studies, the variables of marital satisfaction and spirituality clustered together but the other variables of conflict and communication did not emerge. The columns for impact on conflict and impact on communication were in either the impact or function of spirituality/religiosity or the hypothesis columns. When interrater reliability was checked between the researcher and the two coders, it was found to be 93% in agreement. All ten completed merged coding forms are found in Appendix D.

Patterns and Categories

The researcher merged the coding forms and met with the second coder to decipher the themes. In their meeting, they discussed the study hypotheses from the merged Coding Form and how some of those hypotheses began to overlap and/or share a theme. For instance, it was discovered in three of the articles that those who were anxiously attached did not necessarily rely on religion for coping. Avoidance attachment and religious coping patterns were found in articles 1, 2, 3, and 10. A white board was used to capture notes from each article and then writing beside the theme the studies that

interrelated. Ideas, arrows, color coding, and ways to begin listing and identifying themes and factors were immersed from the meeting.

The word 'mirror' was used repeatedly in Articles 1, 5, 9, and 10. Mirror became significant in describing attachment to God and how it mirrors romantic adult attachment behaviors. The researcher looked at correlations of marital satisfaction and commitment level along with couple's attitudes towards divorce. This surfaced in Articles 1, 6, and 8. Buffered was another significant word that surfaced in several articles addressing religious coping and avoidance attachment. Buffering may occur when a person uses their religion or faith to cope or to avoid a person or situation. Factors identified as risks or resilience also appeared throughout the meeting in discussions of the articles. Some of those key words were community, attitude towards divorce, willingness to seek help during conflict, commitment, church attendance, prayer, and forgiveness. Another area that emerged was a group of inconclusive findings.

There were three areas of studies the researcher found to be interesting however, the studies did not generate enough findings, such as gender. Studies 6 and 7 noted that gender played a role in attachment, but the authors noted a limitation in understanding how that role was played. Another area that surfaced during the coding was the influence on culture/intercultural and marital satisfaction/ communication (Ottu & Akpan, 2011; Sullivan, 2001). These articles also reported that culture was a factor in the marriage, but did not address it directly as recommended for further study. Lastly, it would be beneficial to learn about the spirituality in the family of origin. Findings showed how the family of origin affects adults' views on God, particularly the mother (Ainsworth et al., 1978). More research is needed to further and strengthen these findings.

Credibility and Trustworthiness

The researcher used two additional coders to ensure the coding was credible as well as to bring clarification to the coding findings (Patton, 1999). Neuendorf (2002) wrote that in order to provide coding validation and to create trustworthiness and validity, multiple coders needed to be used. The researcher, along with the two coders, ensured credibility by having the categories adequately cover the data (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The coders were oriented with the purpose of the study, validity, and the coding form, furthermore linking the results and the data to increase reliability of the study (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

In addition, original data from the articles along with the measures were compared. The researcher also ensured trustworthiness by being able to analyze and simplify the data and form categories from the study's subject (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). One of the limitations of a content analysis is word usage and understanding the meaning behind what the author is conveying. Weber (1990) noted that, "Each word may not represent a category equally well" (p. 37). Nevertheless, the researcher, along with the two coders, carefully and adequately categorized the data. Weber (1990) defined category as "A group of words with similar meaning or connotation" (p. 37).

It was imperative that the researcher and coders stay consistent to ensure reliability. Weber (1990) stated that, "Different people should code the same text in the same way" (p. 12). The researcher and the two coders used an interrater reliability and had a 95% agreement for the reliability of the coding.

Summary

The researcher described the research methodology that was used in the content analysis. Ten peer reviewed journal articles were used to shed some light on romantic adult attachment and how spirituality/religiosity influences marital satisfaction as well as with conflict and communication. The researcher and two independent coders analyzed themes and data by using the Coding Form. Even though there was not enough evidence to support the study of conflict and communication, learning how a couple's marital satisfaction is impacted by observing spirituality/religiosity affect conflict, communication, and contribute to marital quality would not only strengthen a marriage, but also create a therapeutic alliance capable of building up both individuals in therapy.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Content analysis was selected as the qualitative methodology to investigate how researchers studying romantic adult attachment theory and marital satisfaction studied how the variables of spirituality/religiosity, conflict, and communication affected marital satisfaction. Originally, the findings of conflict and communication were studied by this researcher in terms of their impact on marital satisfaction based on romantic adult attachment. However, after the researcher merged the findings in the Coding Form, the findings on conflict and communication no longer appeared significant as the findings concerning attachment and spirituality/religiosity were seen to play a more prominent role in marital satisfaction. Furthermore, the final analysis provides some evidence of how spirituality influences conflict and communication. While this researcher was interested in learning more about how marital satisfaction was impacted by conflict and communication, the little evidence found in the articles included in this study did not form any patterns that were useful for further discussion. The research study contained ten articles pertaining to romantic adult attachment, marital satisfaction and/or couple's satisfaction and spirituality/religiosity. This chapter will discuss the findings and results of the content analysis.

Theme: Attachment and Religion

Eight of the articles addressed how attachment interrelated with religion. However, for insecurely attached individuals, their anxious or avoidant attachment can intensify. These

same studies found attachment to God as mirroring an individual's romantic adult attachment.

Secure Attachment

Granqvist, Ivarsson, Broberg, and Hagekull (2007) hypothesized that "individuals with secure attachments form relationships with a God who is loving and caring and individuals with insecure attachment did not form a relationship with God and/or saw God as distant" (p. 596). Their study supported this null hypothesis and found that by using the Socialization-Based Religiosity Scale (SBRS), socially-based religiosity was dependent upon the individual's attachment to their parental or caregiver, and more specifically, their mothers. In addition, securely attached adults were more likely to form a more loving and compassionate perception of God, whereas insecure adults viewed God as more distant (Kirkpatrick, 2005). For secure attachment, Studies 3, 4, and 5 addressed how securely attached individuals have a more positive view of God and relate to God in a loving and stable way. Hall et al. (2009), who wrote that spirituality was intertwined into an individual's internal working model, supported Granqvist et al. (2007). Having loving parents or caregivers, particularly loving experiences with one's mother, strengthened a loving God image.

These findings also reported how individuals perceive God functioning as a 'surrogate attachment' who provides security to insecurely attached individuals to help regulate stress (Granqvist et al., 2007). These findings also agree with Kimball et al. (2013) writing when they found that individuals who seek God in distress use their internal working models to transform a relationship into a positive experience.

Anxious and Avoidant Attachment

Researchers found that religion also affects insecurely attached individuals and couples. Individuals with attachment anxiety exhibit clingy religious behavior that was not associated with positive religious coping (Pollard, Riggs, & Hook, 2014). According to Pollard et al.'s (2014) second hypothesis, individuals with high attachment anxiety may reach out to God more and be spiritually committed, however, they found that these individuals may experience these resources as being more unsupportive than supportive and may even experience abandonment or punishment.

Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992) discovered that their first hypothesis, "People who lack secure attached relationships as adults will be more likely to seek and find a relationship with God or Jesus was partially supported" (p. 271). The outcome was partially supported in that it was true for avoidant-attached individuals, but not for anxiety attached individuals. Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992) used Attachment to God Scale to determine these findings. The same findings were true in Lopez et al. (2011) second hypothesis, "being highly religious commitment would buffer the negative associations between anxiety attachment and marital adjustment as well as with avoidant attachment and marital adjustment" (p. 305). Lopez et al. (2011) used the RCI-10 for these findings. Like the first 2 studies mentioned, their outcome was partially supported, and these researchers found that a religious commitment did not buffer the association between attachment anxiety and marital functioning. In fact, they concluded that it exacerbated the negative association of anxiety attachment. Only for the participants and spouses who exhibited avoidant-attachment did religious commitment act as a buffer to marital satisfaction.

Attachment to God

Attachment to God mirrors individuals in romantic adult attachment. Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992) discovered that "secure lovers appear to be, on average, secure believers" (p. 272). They found that the secure group sees God as more loving, less controlling, and less distant than insecure groups and that secure lovers have mirror attitudes and experiences concerning romantic love (p. 270).

"Individuals with a secure attachment form relationship with a God who is loving and caring whereas individuals with insecure attachment did not form a relationship with God or saw God as distant" (p. 591) was Granqvist et al. (2007) first hypothesis. Loving parents were found to having a loving God image. In the first partial correlation found in Rowatt and Kirkpatrick's (2002) study, they measured if romantic adult attachment was largely consistent with expectations. "Anxious romantic adults were positively correlated to an anxious attachment to God, while avoidant attachment to God was positively correlated with avoidant dimensions of adult attachment" (p. 267).

<center>**Theme: Marital Satisfaction and Attachment**</center>

Marital satisfaction was found to be correlated to secure or insecure attachment. Ottu and Akpan (2011) hypothesized "that there would be a significant difference on marital satisfaction between participants with secure and insecure attachment styles in a culturally and religious homogeneous population and it was supported" (p. 3669). These authors used the Attachment Style Survey for one of their instruments. Low attachment avoidance correlated with positive marital satisfaction, according to Mosko and Pistole (2010).

Marital satisfaction was a key finding that surfaced in several of the studies. Reiter and Gee (2008) found those who were highly committed to marriage also had a satisfied relationship. The Global Distress Scale (GDS) and Religious Behaviors Questionnaire (RBQ) were used to support these findings. Likewise, Mosko and Pistole (2010) also discovered that positive marital attitudes were found when marriage was viewed as sacred and as a covenant. Marital Attitudes Scale (MAS) along with IRM were used for these findings.

Sullivan (2001) used the Marital Adjustment Test (MAT) and Religiosity Measures (RM) to find the second hypothesis, that "one's attitude towards divorce and the level of commitment was supported by the findings, as well as the willingness to seek help in times of marital distress" (p. 612). Spirituality/Religiosity reduces the impact of the risk variables on marital satisfaction. An individual's marital satisfaction is not predicted by the partner's religiousness/spirituality, but is predicted by his or her own. Sullivan (2001) discovered that religion in one's own life predicts spouse's commitment in the marriage. In Mosko and Pistole's (2010) first hypothesis, they wrote that "low attachment avoidance and anxiety (secure attachment) and high intrinsic religious motivation will contribute uniquely to positive marital attitudes" (p. 128). They found, by using the Experiential Close Relationships Scale (ECR) and MAS, that their first hypothesis was only partially supported because in their study only low attached avoidance, not secure attachment contributed to marital attitudes. Intrinsic religiousness contributed to positive marital attitudes when couples tended to work through problems, according to the IRM.

Theme: Marital Satisfaction and Spirituality

Similar to the findings that positive marital attitudes and commitment play a role in marital satisfaction, a person who practices their faith has been found to strengthen their marital quality (Jankowski & Sandage, 2011; Sullivan, 2001). Jankowski and Sandage (2011) observed that a person's spirituality helped individuals forgive and be able to let go of past hurts. The Disposition to Forgive Scale (DFS) was used to demonstrate a significant indirect effect between meditative prayer and forgiveness illustrating hope and adult attachment as mediators. The first hypothesis, stated by Jankowski and Sandage (2011), was that there was a total indirect effect between meditative prayer and forgiveness—hope and adult attachment as mediators. The Hope Scale (HS) was also used to measure these findings. The hypothesis supported in that there was a significant indirect effect between meditative prayer and adult attachment with hope as the mediator. Jankowski and Sandage (2011) also observed that an increased hope and increased felt security attachment appear to facilitate forgiveness.

In addition, Sullivan (2001) hypothesized that "religiosity has some direct effect on marital satisfaction or stability by reducing the impact of risk variables" (p. 618). In other words, religiosity reduces the impact of risk variables on marital satisfaction. RM were used to support the findings from Sullivan (2001) showing church attendance predicted commitment to marriage. Although male's and female's religions were not significantly correlated with their own religiosity, however, religion was significantly related to the within spouse and between spouse behavior. Sullivan (2001) observed that as spouse level of religiosity increases, their divorce attitudes become more conservative,

their commitment levels increase, and the likelihood that they would seek help in times of trouble also increases.

Ottu and Akpan (2011) discovered that low religious participation and religious heterogamy were associated with higher levels of marital dissatisfaction and dissolution. They studied both levels of individual and societal explanations for their religiosities impact on relationships and for use of the Index of Marital Satisfaction (IMS) for their findings. Ottu and Akpan (2011) wrote that while individuals who were Catholic or Jewish are less likely to divorce in comparison with other religious groups, a societal implication would be the possibility of divorce having society's disapproval.

In using the Religious/Spiritual Coping Methods (RCOPE), Pollard et al. (2014) found that spirituality increased feelings of calmness and hopefulness during marital conflict. These couples had a spiritual community in which their relationship was supported, providing resources and a sense of togetherness. However, Pollard et al. (2014) found that religious commitment was negatively associated with anxious attachment and marital satisfaction while religious coping buffered avoidant attachment and marital satisfaction.

Factors Linked to Risks and Resilience

Meyers and Landsberger (2002) discovered a correlation between social support and marital satisfaction. A commonality between several of the articles conveyed how essential community is for marital support and positive marital satisfaction. Sullivan (2001) projected that couples who shared a community and attended church added to resiliency along with an attitude towards divorce, levels of commitment, and a willingness to seek help in times of marital distress. Likewise, when couples and

individuals took time for meditative prayer, Jankowski and Sandage (2011) focused that there was an increase in hope and healing through forgiveness.

Pollard et al. (2014) found that even though religious coping was negatively associated with anxiety attachment, religious coping served as a buffer for avoidant attached individuals, providing positive marital satisfaction. Lopez et al. (2011) also discovered that religious commitment served as a buffer for avoidant attached individuals and couples. Lopez et al. (2011) indicated,

> Religiosity may moderate the association between vulnerability factors…Marriages of individuals who have difficulty with interpersonal closeness or who have distant partners may benefit from adherence to religious beliefs and a commitment to a religious community, because the additional sources of social support from God and a church community reduce the sense of personal detachment or buffer the effects of spousal unavailability (p. 306).

Inconclusive Findings

It is apparent that factors such as family of origin, gender, quality time together, culture and spirituality/religiosity need to be further studied with the concept of marital satisfaction. Reiter and Gee (2008) also connected evidence of the impact of family of origin and culture that will need further investigation.

Variables that Appeared with Marital Satisfaction

It is apparent that family of origin, and culture should be studied with marital satisfaction. Reiter and Gee (2008) also connected evidence of the impact of family of origin and culture.

Gender

Three of the articles, Lopez et al. (2011), Ottu and Akpan (2011), and Sullivan (2001) showed evidence that linked gender to marital satisfaction, but the authors could not conclude what those interaction effects were on both variables. In conclusion, they viewed attachment styles and gender to be significant, however, gender was not one of the identified variables.

Cultural and Intercultural Relationships

Ottu and Akpan (2011) and Reiter and Gee (2008) addressed the impacts of cultural and intercultural relationships and marital satisfaction. The findings from Reiter and Gee (2008) suggest that when intercultural partners exchanged cultural values with their partners, their relationships tended to grow. Both articles addressed the significance of open communication with their partners about one another's culture to relieve distress and bring clarity to the relationship, thus causing a positive marital satisfaction. Nonetheless, their findings were limited as to how the functionality of one's cultural played the positive role in a marital quality.

<div align="center">

Summary

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Regardless of having a secure or insecure attachment with a caregiver or spouse, research has illustrated that individuals can still have a strong and secure attachment with God and have a spiritual relationship (Kimball et al. 2013). Several of the articles in this content analysis had validation in their findings that showed that couples, namely avoidant attached individuals, who had a religious commitment had increased marital satisfaction and that their religious commitment served to buffer or protect those individuals (Lopez et al., 2011; Mosko & Pistole, 2010; Pollard et al., 2014). Having a

secure attachment correlated to having the highest religious commitment and view of

God, as indicated in Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992).

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, THERAPY IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study examined ten articles from eight scholarly journals about romantic adult attachment theory. Simple interrater reliability compared agreements and disagreements that accounted for 95% accuracy between the researcher and the two coders. The research findings revealed several themes and implications concerning the impact that spirituality/religiosity has on marital satisfaction.

It was the researcher's intention when starting this content analysis, to look at marital satisfaction, spirituality/religiosity, conflict, and communication as four separate variables and how these variables interacted based on romantic adult attachment. However, after researching, reading, and merging the data, it was found that communication and conflict did not have enough evidence to support further discussion. Although these two components are still important and included in the research, marital satisfaction and spirituality/religiosity took precedence and a great deal of findings emerged on these variables. In addition to this chapter addressing marital satisfaction and the impact of spirituality/religiosity, the researcher will discuss therapy implications, future research, and limitations that were found in the research.

Discussion

The three key themes that emerged from this content analysis were attachment and religion, marital satisfaction and attachment, and marital satisfaction and spirituality/religiosity. The themes are summarized from the findings identified in this content analysis in the list below:

1. Individuals with anxious attachment do not necessarily equate to an equal level of religious coping. Three articles showed that anxiety could increase while using religion as a coping mechanism.

2. Individuals with avoidant attachment can either use religiosity for coping or avoid it. It was found in four articles that these individuals have the potential to use religious coping as a healthy tool, filling the voids that they have from their partners. On the other hand, it was also found that avoidant attached individuals can view God as distant, thus, not relying on God or religion to cope.

3. Attachment to God mirrors an individual's romantic adult attachment. Four articles supported the finding that a person views and treats God like they do the partners in their romantic relationships.

Attachment and religion were found in four of the studies: Granqvist et al (2007), Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992), Rowatt and Kirkpatrick (2002), and Sullivan (2001). Five of the articles addressed attachment to God as mirroring romantic adult relationships. Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992) related secure attached individuals as viewing God as more loving and less controlling. Their findings paralleled secure lovers on average to be secure believers.

Attachment and Spirituality/Religiosity

The differences found between anxiety and avoidant attachment and spirituality are very useful. Even though they are both categorized as insecure attachment, the findings for how these individuals interact and relate to God and to others are significant to note. There was commonality between the articles that showed that avoidant attached

individuals use religion as a way to fill a void. They may, at times, start unhealthy, however, their responses in allowing their faith and religion to help them, is a healthy response (Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992). These individuals seem to be more willing to use resources to help them, according to the articles. Spouses with higher avoidant attached partners used religion to seek God (Rowatt & Kirkpatrick, 1992). Anxiety-attached individuals, on the other hand, worked hard to seek God and apply their faith/religion; however, it created more anxiety. It was discovered that the anxiety attached individual's motive of needing closeness got in the way of allowing their faith and religion to meet the needs they had. God, to them, was someone else to try and 'win over' or 'need approval from' versus a person or being who loved them unconditionally, and who did not need their approval for closeness (Rowatt & Kirkpatrick, 1992).

An additional finding indicated anxiously attached individuals and avoidant-attached individuals were impacted by religion and religious commitment. Another interesting finding, also found by Rowatt and Kirkpatrick (2002), not part of the coding, was that those with secure attachment with God had a greater life satisfaction. The avoidant group in Kirkpatrick and Shaver's (1992) study discovered that the avoidant group had the highest numbers of agnostics while the anxious attached group had the highest number of atheists. They were also found to be the highest anti-religious group. Sullivan (2001) noted that religiosity might compensate for couple's vulnerabilities and help them to remain relatively satisfied despite their vulnerabilities.

Marital Satisfaction and Attachment

Secure and insecure attachment was found to impact marital satisfaction (Ottu & Akpan, 2011). Mosko and Pistole (2010) had findings that demonstrated positive marital

quality with low attachment avoidance. Several of the studies showed the impact that attitude and commitment towards marriage linked both a satisfied marriage and positive marital attitudes (Mosko & Pistole, 2010; Reiter & Gee, 2008). Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992) found that secure attached individuals have the highest commitment towards one another.

One of the key findings about anxious attached versus avoidant attached was the impact on the relationship. Pollard et al. (2014), Lopez et al. (2011), and other authors showed that out of the two insecure attachments, it was found that anxiously attached individuals in the marriage posed the greatest threat to the relationship. This was shown through their attachment with God as well, and with the mirrored patterns mentioned previously.

Marital Satisfaction and Spirituality/Religiosity

Marital satisfaction and spirituality were found to have both intrinsic and extrinsic factors throughout several of the articles. (Jankowski & Sandage, 2011) found that spirituality and religiosity linked the marriage together by providing resources to help focus the couple on one another, work together, and find commonality. The study showed that the individuals were able to forgive and let go of past hurt as they spent time praying together in their spiritual lives. Community also has an impact on the couple's marriage as well as the couple's attitude toward divorce. Sullivan (2001) noted that as spouse's levels of religiosity increased, their divorce attitudes became more conservative and their commitment levels increased. The need to investigate more into the interactive role spirituality and religiosity has on couples surfaced from this study. There needs to be

more studies using an array of methods, expanding the sample population, as well as

exploring family of origin's faith and faith in culture

       Earlier research such an environment where both partners invite one another into

their spiritual lives, attend religious services, pray together, and forgive each other have

an enhanced marital relationship (Booth et al., 1995; Jankowski & Sandage, 2011;

Sullivan, 2001). These kinds of religious and spiritual acts provide a purpose and a

unifying bond to the quality of their marriage (Lambert & Dollahite, 2006). On the other

hand, when there is low religiosity, Ottu and Akpan (2011) discovered there was greater

chance of marital dissatisfaction.

<h2 style="text-align:center">Therapy Implications</h2>

       Romantic adult attachment theory embraces the whole person both individually,

as well as systemically (Olderbak & Figueredo, 2009). Through this content analysis,

many therapy implications were found that would greatly benefit therapists who see

couples as well as individuals. Having this knowledge may help to guide the therapist in

how to reach out to their clients, ask questions, and build a therapeutic alliance. This will

also allow the clients to explore their own faith, what it means to them, as well as their

partner's faith, and how their faith interacts in their relationship. Here is a list of the

therapy implications as gathered from the ten articles in this study:

- ✓ Develop coping strategies/tools for individuals to become more securely attached (Jankowski & Sandage, 2011; Pollard et al., 2014; Rowatt & Kirkpatrick, 2002).
- ✓ There is a need for counseling programs to include religiosity in training/meaning of marriage (Mosko & Pistole, 2010).

- ✓ Counselors need to be aware of religious attitudes from clients of any faith (Mosko & Pistole, 2010).

- ✓ Integrate relational spirituality in the therapy process with clients because it has proven to be effective (Jankowski & Sandage, 2011).

- ✓ Explore family of origin association between religion changes (Granqvist et al., 2007).

- ✓ Therapists need to ask their couple clients what role religiosity plays in the relationship to help provide marital interventions that provide long-term effectiveness (Reiter & Gee, 2008; Sullivan, 2001).

Future Research

It would be of great advantage for future research to bring attention to these areas to strengthen the research and to provide strong evidence in the roles genders play in attachment and marital satisfaction. A deeper cultural understanding would also benefit from future research.

The exploration of romantic adult attachment theory has provided tools and ways for therapists, researchers, and professors to further reach their clients and students. Nevertheless, there are limitations to the present research that could be strengthened if these areas were addressed. One limitation is the type of method used. All the research used in this content analysis was either a quantitative study or a mixed method study. A great deal of knowledge would be gained through observations and qualitative research. Another limitation is in the study of gender and attachment styles on martial satisfaction. Several of the studies exhibited a significant interaction between attachment styles and gender on marital satisfaction. However, the authors did not explore and/or expand their focus on this interaction. Thirdly, how parents view God and spirituality/religiosity,

affects how the adult views God and spirituality/religiosity. Another limitation is that most of the articles used highly educated participants. Some of the articles used college students or master students as participants (Granqvist et al., 2007; Jankowski & Sandage, 2011; Mosko & Pistole, 2010; Reiter & Gee, 2008; Rowatt & Kirkpatrick, 2002). Lastly, the authors in Studies 6 and 7 noted the significance of culture and the roles both culture and intercultural relationships, particularly with religious beliefs, however, were needed for the findings to be fully addressed in this study.

Conclusion

This content analysis dissertation was guided by the research questions: "How have research-based articles published in scholarly journals addressed how romantic adult attachment, marital satisfaction, communication, and /or conflict are impacted when spirituality/religiosity is added as a variable to these studies?" and "What are the gaps and limitations in the research based on romantic adult attachment, marital satisfaction, communication and/or conflict plus spirituality/religiosity when the past 18 years of study to the present are considered?" Although there was supportive evidence in the journal articles, more research needs to be conducted in the areas of romantic adult attachment and spirituality/religiosity and how it affects martial satisfaction.

Several themes emerged from this study. The first is attachment and religion and how these variables interact with one another. Views of attachment to God mirroring an individual's romantic adult attachment also surfaced. Factors were identified as risks and resiliency and how spirituality and religiosity can buffer those who have avoidant attachment.

The need to investigate more into the interactive role spirituality and religiosity has on couples surfaced from this study. The research thus far is significant. Nonetheless, there needs to be more studies using an array of methods, expanding the sample population, as well as exploring family of origin's faith and faith in culture.

Romantic adult attachment theory embraces the whole person both individually, as well as systemically (Olderbak & Figueredo, 2009). This is a hopeful theory because regardless of where one comes from and their family of origin, he or she can learn to become more securely attached in their adult relationship. Marriage and family therapists can empower their client's whole being by allowing and guiding their clients to focus on their strengths, especially in the area spirituality and religiosity.

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APPENDIX A

Coding Form

Methodology	Final Sample:	Rel. Affiliation	Measures:	Hypothesis:

Impact or Function of Spirituality/ Religiosity:	Impact on Conflict:	Impact on Marital Sat.:	Impact on Communication:	Therapy Implications:

Notes:

APPENDIX B

CODING GUIDE

Methodology: Quantitative (Qt), Qualitative (Ql), Mixed Methods (MX)

Final Sample: Population, Ethnicity, Married/Dating, Education, Working

Religious Affiliation: Religion & Denomination; if stated, how religious is the couple.

Measures: Tests used; list acronyms only (EX: RCOPE, ECR, DAS)

Hypothesis: HO

Impact or Functionality of Spirituality/Religiosity: From the author(s) findings, results, and/or discussions section, how is the marriage impacted from a couple's spirituality/religiosity or how does spirituality/religiosity function in the relationship?

Impact on Conflict: From the author(s) findings, results, and/or discussions section, how does the couple's spirituality/religiosity impact how they handle conflict and/or conflict management?

Impact on Marital Satisfaction: From the author(s) findings, results, and/or discussions section, what is the impact of the couple's spirituality/religiosity on their marital satisfaction?

Impact on Communication: How does spirituality/religiosity impact the couple's communication with the from the author(s) findings, results, or discussions section?

Therapy Implication: How does this information strengthen therapy for a therapist? How will this information help couples?

Notes: Any input the coder feels would help to bring clarity or explanation to Melissa, the researcher.

APPENDIX C

MEASURES USED IN 10 ARTICLES

Measure	Dimensions	Frequency
RCOPE (Religious coping)	A brief measure of + & - religious/spiritual coping methods. Pts indicate on a 4-pt Likert scale how much they used each of the 14 strategies in coping w/ a – event.	1 (Study 1)
ECR (Experiences in Close Rel. Scale)	From Brennan & Shaver, 1995, a 36-item self-report assessment of adult romantic attachment. ECR has 2 scales, attachment avoidance & attachment anxiety, 18 seven-pt Likert item.	4 (Studies 1, 2, 3, 4)
DAS (Dyadic Adjustment Scale)	32-item self-report measure of marital quality with a 4-& 5-pt Likert scale questions & 2 dichotomous questions.	3 (Studies 1, 2, 10)
RCI-10 (Religious Commitment Inventory-10)	RCI-10 consists of 10 items that measure the degree to which a person adheres to his/her religious values, beliefs, & practices & uses them in daily living.	2 (Studies 2, 9- a shorter survey used)
MAS (Marital Attitude Scale)	The MAS is a 23-item unidimensional measure that assesses attitudes toward the institution of marriage.	2 (Studies 2, 10)
RM (Readiness for marriage)	4 items to measure financial, sexual, emotional, & overall readiness for marriage. The items were derived from the Personal Readiness for Marriage (RM) subscale of the Preparation for Marriage questionnaire (PREP-M).	1 (Study 3)
IRM (Intrinsic Religiousness Motivation Scale)	A 10-item unidimensional measure of the extent to which decisions & behavior are based on extrinsic vs intrinsic religious motivation.	3 (Studies 3, 9, 10)
MP (Meditative Prayer)	Poloma and Pendelton (1989) developed a 15-item self-report measure to determine the extent to which persons engaged in 4 distinct prayer types: meditative, colloquial, ritual, and petitionary prayer. A 5-item meditative prayer subscale was used in the current study.	1 (Study 4)
HS (Hope Scale)	A 12-item self-report measure designed to assess participant's goal-oriented thinking. Hope is defined here as the cognitive energy & pathways for goals.	1 (Study 4)
DFS (Disposition to Forgive)	A 10-item self-report that measures the person's self-perceived tendency to engage in interpersonal forgiveness, toward managing negative emotion & relate favorably toward an offender.	1 (Study 4)
AAI (Adult Attachment Inventory)	A semi structured interview containing 20 questions. Participants are asked to select adjectives to describe their childhood relationships w/ parents. Other Qs pertain to loss/abuse.	1 (Study 5)

(continued)

Measure	Dimensions	Frequency
SBRS (Socialization-Based Religiosity Scale)	Used to learn how much the participant's adopted their parents' religious standards-nonstandards.	1 (Study 5)
Loving God/ Controlling God Scale	Images of God were assessed w/ Benson & Spilka's (1973) semantic differential Loving God/Controlling God Image Scale. Kirkpatrick & Shaver's (1992) Distant Image Scale was also used.	3 (Studies 5, 9, 10)
NAOS (New Age Orientation Scale)	Assess individual differences in the adoption of New Age- related beliefs, interests, & activities.	1 (Study 5)
RM (Religiosity Measurement)	4-item scale that assessed spouses' religious behavior & their self-identification as religious persons.	1 (Study 6)
MAT (Marital Adjustment Test)	Measures marital quality & functioning; Developed by Locke & Wallace, 1959, Scores range from 2-158, w/ higher scores indicating greater marital satisfaction.	1 (Study 6)
Divorce attitudes measured	Questionnaire based on 9-item scale in which spouses are asked to rate their agreement.	1 (Study 6)
CI (Commitment Inventory)	Marital commitment measured using a 12-item inventory.	1 (Study 6)
MHSM (Marita help-seeking measure)	14-item questionnaire asks spouses to imagine they encountered serious problems in their marriage & to indicate the steps they would take to resolve their difficulties.	1 (Study 6)
Behavior	Measures of spouses' - & + behavior were obtained using behavioral coding of the videotaped problem-solving discussions. They were coded using SPAFF (Specific Affect Coding System).	1 (Study 6)
EPQ-N (Eysenck Personality Questionnaire)	Neuroticism was measured using the EPQ-N subscale for spouses.	1 (Study 6)
Attachment Style Survey	A 20-item questionnaire. It has a 5-pt Likert Scale.	1 (Study 7)
IMS (Index of Marital Satisfaction)	Adapted for use in Nigeria. 25 item questionnaire which measures severity or magnitude of problem a person's spouse or partner perceives to be having in the marital relationship w/ his/her partner.	1 (Study 7)
GDS (Global Distress Scale)	Derived from the MSI-R (Marital Satisfaction Inventory- Revised), which assess overall relationship distress—modified for non-married individuals.	1 (Study 8)

(continued)

Measure	Dimensions	Frequency
CBQ (Cultural Behaviors Questionnaire)	Measures individuals' perceptions of the degree of open communication & topic avoidance regarding culture in their romantic relationships. 5-pt Likert Scale.	1 (Study 8)
OCC (Open Communication about Culture) (A subscale from CBQ)	6-item subscale which measures communications about cultural differences & similarities btw partners.	1 (Study 8)
CS (Cultural Support) (A subscale from CBQ)	6-item subscale which measures the maintenance factor of cultural support, defined as pro-relationship behaviors.	1 (Study 8)
RBQ (Religious Behaviors Questionnaire)	5-pt Likert Scale that measures individuals' perceptions of the degree of open communication regarding religion in their romantic relationships.	1 (Study 8)
OCR (Open Communication Religion) (A subscale from RBQ)	11-item subscale which measures open communication btw partners about religious & spiritual issues.	
RS (Religious Support)	3-item subscale which measures the relational maintenance factor of religious support. Defined as pro-relationship behaviors that are characterized by active engagement in activities that support one another's religious beliefs/practices	1 (Study 8)
Attachment measures from Hazan & Shaver (1987)	In a newspaper survey, participants were asked to choose from 3 paragraphs as to which best described their own experiences in & feelings about love relationships.	1 (study 9)
Survey by Collins & Read (1990)	Assessment of respondents' childhood attachments to parents.	1 (Study 9)
Attachment to God	Exploratory measure modeled on Shaver-Hazan parental attachment measure.	1 (Study 9)
Mental Health, Outcome Measures	Newspaper survey used from Hazan & Shaver (1990) used a checklist w/ multi-item measures of loneliness/depression, anxiety, physical illness, etc.	1 (Study 9)
RQ (Relationship Questionnaire)	A 4-paragraph measure of secure, dismissing, preoccupied, & fearful adult attachment derived from Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991).	1 (Study 10)
Personality Traits	A 40-item measure of 5 personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, & openness)	1 (Study 10)

		(continued)
Measure	Dimensions	Frequency

BIDR (Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding)	A 40-item measure of socially desirable responding w/ 2 subscales: Impression Management & Self-Deception.	1 (Study 10)
DOS (Doctrinal Orthodoxy Scale)	A scale that taps agreement w/ specific Christian doctrines.	1 (Study 10)
SIS (Symbolic Immortality Scale)	Measures a sense of becoming immortal through progeny, earthly creations or endowments, unity w/ nature, religious commitment, & peak experiences.	1 (Study 10)
DAS (Death Anxiety Scale)	A 15-item measure of thoughts & fears about death.	1 (Study 10)
MAS (Manifest Anxiety Scale)	A 20-item measure of general anxiousness.	1 (Study 10)
PANAS (Positive Affect Negative Affect Scale)	A 20-item affect-adjective rating scale.	1 (Study 10)

APPENDIX D

Merged Coding Forms from Each Article

Mutual Influences in Adult Romantic Attachment, Religious Coping, and Martial Adjustment

Authors: Pollard, Riggs, & Hook

Study #1

Methodology	Final Sample:	Rel. Affiliation	Measures:	Hypothesis:
Qt	81 Heterosexual married couples (162 individuals) Highly Educated: 93 (bachelor's or graduate degree)	Baptist: 23 Christian: 24 Protestant: 18 Catholic: 11 Spiritual, not religious: 9	RCOPE ECR DAS	H1: Both partners attachment avoid. & anxiety would be -- assoc. w/ marital adj., but these rel would be moderated by + & -- rel coping. OUTCOME: Supported; attach avoidance was inversely related to + rel coping while attach anxiety was unrelated to + rel coping. H2: Ind. w/ attachment anxiety would exhibit clingy rel. behavior. RA anxiety assoc. w/ more frequent use of +/-. OUTCOME: Supported; attach anxiety was unassoc w/ + rel. coping. Although ind w/ high attach anxiety may reach out more to God & spiritual comm., they may experience these resources as more unsupportive than supportive & may even experience abandonment or punishment as a projection of their attach models.
	White/European: 127 Hispanic/Latino: 14 African America.: 13 Asian: 3 Bi-/Multiracial: 3	No religious affiliation: 9 Bible/Nonden:6 Mormon: 6 Jehovah. Wit: 6		H3: Attachment avoid. would be assoc. w/ lower levels of rel. coping. OUTCOME: Supported/ sign interaction btw actor + rel coping & both actor
	Work: 87 (FT), 28 (PT), 34 unemployed, 7 students			attach avoidance & actor attach anxiety. H4: + rel. coping would buffer rel. btw anxiety/avoid attachment & marital adj. OUTCOME: Supported; Actor + rel coping buffered the deleterious rel btw actor attach avoidance & marital sat. + rel coping had no impact on marital adj when attach anxiety was high; however, when attach anxiety was low, higher + rel coping was assoc w/ higher marital adj.

Impact or Function of Spirituality/ Religiosity:	Impact on Conflict:	Impact on Marital Sat.:	Impact on Communication:	Therapy Implications:
Brings purpose to life. Forgiveness	Increased feelings of calm & hopefulness during marital conflict.	Reappraisal of neg. events find meaning making and positive sat.		Coping strategies may help individuals.
Supports relationship w/ spiritual community				Maintain more positive attitude despite avoidant attachment

NOTES: There was no relationship btw avoidance att & neg rel coping.

Title: Religious Commitment, Adult Attachment, and Marital Adjustment in

Newly Married Couples

Author(s): Lopez, Riggs, Pollard, & Hook

Study #2

Methodology	Final Sample:	Rel. Affiliation	Measures:	Hypothesis:
Qt	92 married couples (184) individuals. Couples, early married 1-5 years w/ no children. Predominantly White: 89.7%		RCI-10 DAS ECR	H1: Religious commitment would be related to healthy mar adj in both husbands and wives. OUTCOME: A. Partially Supported; Gender & actor rel comm nonsign, however partner rel comm was sign & + related to the mar adj. B: Multi-level model w/ gender, both actor & partner rel commit as the predictor variables, & actor dyadic adj. as the outcome var.
	Mostly College Educated: 63:6% Full-Time Work: Husbands 80.2% Wives 67%			H2: High Religious commitment would buffer the – assoc btw attach anxiety & mar adj & attach avoidance & mar adj. OUTCOME: Partially Supported; rel comm. did not buffer the – assoc btw attach anxiety & mar functioning. Rel comm exacerbates the – assoc btw attach. anxiety & mar adj. Rel comm acted as a buffer for ptcpts & spouses who exhibited attach avoidance.

Impact or Function of Spirituality/ Religiosity:	Impact on Conflict:	Impact on Marital Sat.:	Impact on Communication:	Therapy Implications:
Rel. commit. acted as a buffer or protective factor for ptpts who exhibited attach. avoidance & also for ptpts whose spouses exhibited attach avoid.		High rel. comm tied to increased marital adj. as attachment avoidance increased.		May benefit premarital therapists, martial therapists, & clergy.
Rel. commit exacerbated the neg. assoc. btw attachment anxiety & marital adj. Rel. commit interacted w/ only actor anxiety & not partner anxiety.				Therapists need to assess both attachment dimensions to determine whether rel. commitment may be a compensatory or risk factor for marital functioning.

NOTES: "Religiosity may moderate the association btw vulnerability factors and marital adjustment. Marriages of individuals who have difficulty w/ interpersonal closeness or who have distant partners may benefit from adherence to rel. beliefs & a commitment to a rel. community, b/c the additional sources of social support from God & a church community reduce the sense of personal detachment or buffer the effects of spousal unavailability" (p. 306).

Future research needed with more types of methods, i. e. observations.

Title: Attachment & Religiousness: Contributions to Young Adult Marital Attitudes & Readiness

Author(s): Mosko & Pistole

Study #3

Methodology	Final Sample:	Rel. Affiliation	Measures:	Hypothesis:
Qt	249 College Students; 129 (51.8%) = Women 119 (47.8%) = Men Age: 17-52	54=Nonreligious (agnostic/atheist) 154= Christian 5= Hindu 1= Muslim	ECR MAS	H1: Low attachment avoidance & anxiety (secure att.) & high intrinsic religious motivation will contribute uniquely to positive marital attitudes. OUTCOME: Partially Supported-only low attach
	Education: 27=HS, 190=some college, 12=assoc., 5=master's			avoid, not secure attach contributes to mar. attitude.
	Ethnicity: 212=White; 7=As./Pac. Islander; 7=Latino/Latina; 4=African Am.; 3=multi-ethnic, 9=international stud. 124=Nonserious (not dating/causal dating) 115=Serious (exclusive dating/ cohabitating)	28=Other (Islam,Hindu, Buddhist, science & Taoist) *Due to nonsystematic missing data, totals may not sum to 100%.	PREP-M IRM	H2: Low attachment avoidance & low anxiety (secure att.) would contribute uniquely to high levels of marital readiness. OUTCOME: Partially Supported-only low attach avoid, not secure attach contributes to marital readiness.

Impact or Function of Spirituality/ Religiosity:	Impact on Conflict:	Impact on Marital Sat.:	Impact on Communication:	Therapy Implications:
Intrinsic rel. contributed to positive marr. attitudes.	Positive views of marriage contribute to couples working through problems	Low attachment avoidance & high intrinsic religiousness are predictors of both + mar. attitudes & higher mar. readiness.		There is a need for counseling programs to include rel. in training/meaning of marriage. Counselors need to be aware of religious attitudes from clients of any faith.
Marriage viewed as sacred and a covenant.				This data-based knowledge may help family therapists about millennial young adult beliefs & behaviors that may be relevant to family life cycle development.

NOTES: Religious affiliation did not contribute to marital readiness. P132

Title: Meditative Prayer, Hope, Adult Attachment, & Forgiveness: A Proposed Model Author(s): Jankowski & Sandage

Study #4

Methodology	Final Sample:	Rel. Affiliation	Measures:	Hypothesis:
Qt	209 = 51.7% females Age: 21-63 Master's Students Single: 33.2% Parents: 49.8%	All participants were master-level students from a Protestant-affiliated univ.	Meditative Prayer: MP Indirect effect btw hope & forgiveness w/ adult att as mediator was tested ECR	H1: Total indirect effect btw med. prayer & forgiveness— hope & adult attach. as mediators OUTCOME: Supported; a sign total indirect effect btw meditative prayer & forgiveness w/ hope and AA as mediators. H2: A significant indirect effect btw meditative prayer & adult attachment by way of hope. OUTCOME: Supported; there was a sign specific indirect effect btw meditative prayer & AA w/ hope as the mediator.
	European Am.: 89.6% Asian/As. Am.: 3.8% African Am: 3.3% Native Am.: 1.4% Hispanic: 1%		Hope Scale: HS Disposition to forgive: DFS	H3: A specific sign. indirect effect btw meditative prayer & forgiveness through adult attachment was expected. OUTCOME: Not Supported; A sign. indirect effect btw meditative prayer & forgiveness w/ hope as the mediator was not found, nor was a specific indirect effect btw prayer & forgiveness w/ attach as the mediator. H4: A sign indirect effect btw prayer & forgiveness w/ attach as mediators through hope will be expected. OUTCOME: Not Supported; The specific indirect effect btw hope & forgiveness w/ AA as the mediator was observed.

Impact or Function of Spirituality/ Religiosity:	Impact on Conflict:	Impact on Marital Sat.:	Impact on Communication:	Therapy Implications:

Helps individuals forgive or let go of past hurts.				Increasing security attachment/ Increasing client's awareness of their experience to help alleviate unforgiveness. "Coaching the partner to respond attentively & emphatically to the victim's hurt could promote increased att. security.
Increased hope & increased felt security attachment appear to facilitate forgiveness.				Integrate relational spirituality in the therapy process w/ clients bc it has proven to be effective. Construct goals and provide direction to ensure hope and a collaborative relationship w/ clients.

NOTES: No sign gender difference. The findings supported the proposed multiple mediation model of the rel btw med prayer & forgiveness.

Title: Examining Relations Among Attachment, Religiosity, & New Age Spirituality Using the AAI

Author(s): Granqvist, Ivarsson, Broberg, & Hagekull

Study #5

Methodology	Final Sample:	Rel. Affiliation	Measures:	Hypothesis:
MX	84 participants Age: 20-50 years	32: intro to theo. class 12: Greek class 20: Pentecostal Movement gathering 2: Pent. Move. Prayer mtng for drug/alco addicts	AAI SBRS God Image	H1a: Ind. w/ secure att. form rel. w/ a God who is loving & caring whereas ind. w/ insecure att. did not form a rel w/ God or saw God as distant. H1b: Social based religiosity; secure att. adopt attached figure's own rel. standards & insecure att less likely to adopt rel standards. OUTCOME: Supported; High parental loving scores were assoc. w/ high scores on socially based rel, whereas high parental rejection & role-reversal scores were linked to low scores on socially based rel.
	40% of participants were men. All drawn from religious- spiritual groups.	2:Luthern Bible Study Group 7: therapy & pastoral care sem. 9: sp. & human rel.	Themes of Compensation NAOS	H2: Perceived God rel functions as a 'surrogate attach' providing security to the insecurely attach ind. It helps to regulate stress. OUTCOME: Supported; Rel converts. Whose conversions were often preceded by turmoil, report more unfavorable childhood rel w/ parents than a matched comparison group of nonconverts. Regulation of distress following experiences w/ insensitive caregivers.

Impact or Function of Spirituality/ Religiosity:	Impact on Conflict:	Impact on Marital Sat.:	Impact on Communication:	Therapy Implications:
Having parents who are loving were linked to having a loving God image. There is a social & IWM correspondence.	(New Age) Individuals may change religions during times of conflict.	There is a connection btw insecure RA to an increased rel over time & secure RA & higher rel.		Therapists need to be mindful that even though God oftentimes has paternal term descriptions, maternal attributes are more important in the ind. deity construction.
Experiences w/ ones' mother, not father assoc a loving God image & themes of correspondence.				Explore Family of Origin association btw religion changes in during conflict related to insensitive parenting. Look into religion change.

NOTES: One Gender difference: Paternal role reversal to be higher among women than men.

Title: Understanding the Relationship Btw Rel & Marriage: An Investigation of the Immediate & Long.

Effects of Rel. on Newlywed Couples

Author(s): Sullivan

Study #6: Part I

Methodology	Final Sample	Rel. Affiliation	Measures	Hypothesis
MX; 2 studies conducted. 1 cross- sectional & 1 longitudinal. *Sampling diff btw couples who responded. Couples who responded had more educ & higher status jobs, more likely to have cohabited premaritally	172 newly 1st time married couples w/ no children LA County English speaking/reading Married less than 6 months Ages: 18-35; Avg age: Males: 27 Female: 26 Educ: 10+ yrs	Husbands: Protestant: 41% Catholic: 31% Jewish: 5% Mormon: 2% No religion: 19% Other: 2%	RM MAT Divorce Attitudes CI	H1: Direct & Compensation Model: Religiosity has some direct effect on mar. sat or stability by reducing the impact of risk variables. OUTCOME: Supported; Religion predicts couples attitudes. H2: Religiosity predicts couples' att (their attitudes toward divorce, comm, and willingness to seek help). OUTCOME: Supported; Religiosity reduces the impact of risk variables on marital satisfaction.
Age & neuroticism are the 2 variables used to identify vulnerable couples.	Caucasian: 64% Asian. Am: 11% Hispanic: 16% African Am: 5% Middle Eastern: 2% Other: 2%	Wives: Protestant: 47% Catholic: 26% Jewish: 5% Mormon: 3% No religion: 17% Other: 3%	MHSM SPAFF EPQ-N	H3: A sign effect of religiosity on other dimensions of marital quality and functioning (divorce att., comm., help seeking, & comm behavior). OUTCOME: Supported; direct model tested & sign affect of rel. on other dimensions of marital quality & functioning (i.e., divorce attitudes, commit, help seeking, & comm behavior).

Impact or Function of Spirituality/ Religiosity:	Impact on Conflict:	Impact on Marital Sat.:	Impact on Communication:	Therapy Implications:
Church attend. predicts commt. to marriage.	Conflict discussions w/ husbands or wives were not affected either neg. or pos. by religiosity.	Attitude (towards divorce, level of comm., & willingness to seek help in times of mar distress)	Religion in one's life predicts spouse's comm. in marriage.	Therapists need to ask their couple clients what role religiosity plays in the relationship to help provide marital interventions that provide long-term effectiveness.
M/F Religion not sign corr w/ their own. Religiosity was sign related to w/in-spouse & btw-spouse behavior. As spouse's level of rel increases, their divorce attitudes become more conservative, their commit level increases, & the likelihood they would seek help in times of trouble increases.		Neither husband's or wives' religiosity sign. predicted their own ms. Neuroticism was – related to marital sat w/in & btw spouses, which is consistent w/ part of the moderating model. Wives' age was not sign related to mar. sat w/in or btw spouses, although husbands' age was sign related to wives' sat., w/ younger husbands having less satisfied wives.		
		The compensation mod better described the long. impt of age/neuroticism for MS.		
		High Religious = divorce attitudes High Religious = commit/MS High Religious = seeking help		

NOTES: Theme: religiosity may compensate for couples' vulnerabilities and help them to remain relatively satisfied despite these vulnerabilities.

Title: Predicting MS from the attachment styles & Gender of a Culturally & Rel Homogenous Population

Author(s): Ottu & Akpan

Study #7

Methodology	Final Sample:	Rel. Affiliation	Measures:	Hypothesis:
Qtr.	150 Participants 73 males; 77 females Age: 16-42 Nigerian	Christian	Attachment Style Survey (Love)	H1: There will be a stat. sign diff on MS btw participants w/ secure & insecure attach styles in a culturally & rel homogeneous pop. OUTCOME: Supported; There was a sign diff. btw ptpts w/ secure & insecure attach. styles on mar. satisfaction.
			IMS	H2: There will be a stat sign. diff on MS btw male & female participants in a culturally & rel homogeneous pop. OUTCOME: Not Supported; there was no sign. differ btw males or females on marital sat. The interaction effect of attach. styles & gender was found to be sign.

Impact or Function of Spirituality/ Religiosity:	Impact on Conflict:	Impact on Marital Sat.:	Impact on Communication:	Therapy Implications:
Low religious part. & rel. heterogamy are assoc w/ high levels of mar diss. & dissolution.		There is a sign. interaction btw attach. styles (insecure & secure) & gender on MS.		Understand the factors that affect MS to help couples reduce conflicts. Gender impacts attach. style.
		High MS = secure/secure attached Most Dissatisfied wives = avoidant/avoidant Most Dissatisfied husbands = anxious/avoid.		Attach. styles are salient indicators of mar. sat. Help children and parents develop healthy relationships for children to have a more secure attachment.

NOTES: Levels of individualism still show a positive assoc. w/ marital diss. & rate of divorce.

*Further research needs to increase the sample size across social groups. Family of origin, quality time together, and culture should also be studied w/ MS.

Title: Open Communication & Partner Support in Intercultural & Interfaith Rom. Rel.: A Rel. Maintenance Approach

Author(s): Reiter & Gee

Study #8

Methodology	Final Sample:	Rel. Affiliation	Measures:	Hypothesis:
Qt	TEST 1: 353 college ptpts in a psych class 251=females 90= males 12=gender not reported	TEST 1: 43: interfaith rel 44: intrafaith rel 65: no response	TEST 1: GDS CBQ OCC RBQ—subscale: OCR/RS	H1a: Ind. in intercultural rel. would experience higher levels of cultural conflict than those in intracultural unions. OUTCOME: Supported; When compared to indiv in intracultural rel., indiv in intercultural rel reported greater conflict related to diff in cultural beliefs/practices. H1b: Same ind would also report that exchange of cultural values helped rel growth. OUTCOME: Supported; when compared to intracultural partners, intercultural partners were more likely to report that exchange of cultural values w/ their partner helped their relationship grow.
	TEST 2: 152 participated in the year follow-up survey.	TEST 2: 43: interfaith rel 44: intrafaith rel 22: no longer in original rel 23: in another interfaith rel. 32: no faith response	TEST 2: Those who were still in the same rel in T1 answered questions measuring current rel sat.	H2a: Open comm. about culture (OCC) would be related to rel distress at T1 & rel sat., comm., & break-up at T2. OUTCOME: Supported; Higher levels of OCC were related to higher levels of rel. sat.; however, OCC was not sign related to later commitment. H2b: Cultural support for one another would be related to rel. distress at T1, & rel sat., comm, & break-up at T2. OUTCOME: Partially Supported; No sign. assoc.

				btw cultural support & commit., a trend emerged such that higher levels of cultural support were related to higher levels of rel. sat.
				H2c: Rel. distress at T1 would be related to break-up at T2. OUTCOME: Not supported. There were no sign. findings among indiv in intercultural rel., OCC, distress, & cultural support related to indiv still involved in their rel at T2. H3: Being in an intercultural vs intracultural rel. would be related to lower levels of rel sat., less comm., & higher likelihood of break-up at T2. OUTCOME: Supported; involvement in an intercultural rel emerged as a sign predictor of break-up at T2 such that intercultural rel were more likely than intracultural rel to be broken up at T2.
Impact or Function of Spirituality/ Religiosity:	**Impact on Conflict:**	**Impact on Marital Sat.:**	**Impact on Communication:**	**Therapy Implications**
	Intercultural rel more likely to have conflict related to cult diff. However, these ind also more likely to discuss diff. and promote rel. growth.	Rel. sat. is correlated w/ commitment levels.	Higher levels of open comm. about religion related to lower levels of rel. distress.	Help college students &/or intercultural couples about communication levels and partner support for one's culture to increase rel. maintenance/ increasing rel sat.
			Different faiths perpetuate lack of communicating.	This information may aid in premarital counseling. Therapists may need to help couples explore aspects of their faiths or what those faiths mean to the individuals/couples.

NOTES:

Title: An Attachment-Theoretical Approach to Romantic Love & Religious Belief

Author(s): Kirkpatrick & Shaver

Study #9

Methodology	Final Sample:	Rel. Affiliation	Measures:	Hypothesis:
Qt	1st Survey = 670 2nd Survey = 213 Strongly skewed sample. 84.9%: Female	2.8%: atheist 14.2%: Agnostic 19.9%: Catholic 3.8%: Jewish	Hazan & Shaver (1987) attach. measure. Collins & Read (1990) assessment on attach w/ parents. RC (rel commit) survey	H1: People who lack secure attach. rel as adults will be more likely to seek & find a rel w/ God or Jesus. OUTCOME: Partially Supported/True for Avoidant att not anxiety att. H2: Secure lovers appear to be, on avg, secure believers. OUTCOME: Supported
	97.6%: White Highly educated Age mean: 39.8 yrs	39.8%: Protestant 19.4%: Other *From a 5-pt scale, 3.2 was the mean response for rel comm.	IERO-Loving God & Controlling God Scale Distant God Attachment to God scale MH scale	H3: Strong correspondence btw adult & God-attach. class. OUTCOME: Only for insecure childhood att. to mothers

Impact or Function of Spirituality/ Religiosity*:	Impact on Conflict:	Impact on Marital Sat.:	Impact on Communication:	Therapy Implications:
Secure group sees God more loving, less control., less distant than insecure groups. (mirror image). Secure attach have the highest commit to rel.		Life sat. (not a part of coding) correlated + w/ the Loving God scale and – w/ Controlling God.		Through praying, conversing about scriptures, and therapy, clients are encouraged to develop a strong secure rel w/ God, which then infiltrates into parent, lover, and friend rel. Adult & God attach. are strongly related but only for subjects w/ insecure childhood attach to mothers.
Avoidant group had the highest # of agnostics, not atheists. Anxious group had the highest # of atheists. Highest group of anti-religious. Secure lovers have mirror attitudes & experiences concerning rom love.		(not a part of coding) People w/ a sec. att w/ God had a greater life sat., less anxiety, depression, and physical health.		

NOTES: Authors used Chi Square for first impact on sp/rel.

THEME: Religion and RAA have a parallel relationship. Last sentence p. 270.

*These were all tested w/ Chi Sq

Title: Two Dimensions of Attachment to God and Their Relation to Affect, Rel, & Personality Constructs

Author(s): Rowatt & Kirkpatrick

Study #10

Methodology	Final Sample:	Rel. Affiliation	Measures:	Hypothesis:
Qt	120 community pcpts 76= women 44= men Caucasian: 81% Hispanic: 7% African Am: 6% Asian Am: 3% Other: 3% Avg of 15 years of educ. Married: 64.5 % Single: 27% Divorced/W:9.5%	Sth Baptist: 24% Catholic: 12.5% Methodist: 11% Christian: 8.5% Nondenom.: 8.5% Church of X: 6% Pentecostl: 5.5% Am. Baptist: 5% C. of God: 3.5% Lutheran: 3.5% Presby: 2.5% Protestant: 2% Greek Orth: 1% Episcopal: 1% Unitarian: 1% None: 4.5%	RQ GP BIDR Loving God/ Controlling God Scales IEQS DOS	Correlations btw att. to God & other variables tested w/ new scale: Partial correlations w/ measures of RAA were largely consistent w/ expectations. Anxious RAA + correlated to anxious att. to God. Avoidant att. to God was + corr w/ avoid dim of AA Correlations btw att. to God & general personality traits are consistent w/ assoc. btw RAA & the Big Five. Att. to God dimensions corr - w/ agreeableness, + w/ neuroticism, min w/ conscientiousness, & negl w/ extraversion & openness to experience.
	254= undergraduate students 176= women 76= men Texan: 78% White: 75% Hispanic: 7% Asian/Pac Is: 7% African Am: 8%	Undergrad: Baptist: 47% Catholic: 23% Church mem: 80%	SIS DAS MAS PANAS	3. Att. to God Dimensions correlate w/ other widely used measures of rel belief & motivation, sup. the validity of the scales as measures of dim. of rel. belief. The avoid. dimension corr particularly strongly w/ loving God images, Xian orthodoxy, intrinsic rel orient., & rel. symbolic immortality & + w/ controlling God images. God att. dim. correlate differentially w/ psychological outcome measures. Anx att to God corr w/ both - affect & manifest anxiety; avoid God att was not sign. related to these variables.

Impact or Function of Spirituality/ Religiosity:	Impact on Conflict:	Impact on Marital Sat.:	Impact on Communication:	Therapy Implications:
Exp God or sign. others to be near & responsive. Like people w/ secure att., buffers - effects on immune system, causing secure att to be more men. & phys. healthier.				Providing tools to couples to become more securely attached in their relationships and in themselves.
Ind who do not have a current love partner, compared w/ ind who do, were found to be more religiously active, perceive a				
more personal rel w/ God, & to experience a rel that is based on affect regulation.				

NOTES: Pg. 648 fifth full paragraph about emotion regulation and anxiety.

This was not significant, but a trend that showed attach to God dimensions were social desirability, intrinsic religiousness, doctrinal orthodoxy, loving image of God, avoidant & anxious attachment to God.

There is a partial correlation for avoidant attached seeing the image of God as loving and controlling. Avoidance - correlation w/ religious orientation/doctrinal orthodoxy.

Positive correlation with extrinsic religious orientation and a partial correlation with God being controlled.