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MARITAL SATISFACTION: FACTORS FOR BLACK JAMAICANS AND AFRICAN  
AMERICANS LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES

by

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B.A. Syracuse University, 1997  
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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in the Department of Child, Family and Community Sciences  
in the College of Education  
at the University of Central Florida  
Orlando, Florida

Summer Term  
2009

Major Professor: Andrew P. Daire

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## ABSTRACT

Marital satisfaction is the strongest predictor for happiness in many areas of life (Russel & Wells, 1994). A satisfying marriage is associated with better general adjustment and fewer health problems (Bray & Jouriles, 1995). Factors that contribute to marital satisfaction reported by researchers include religion and spirituality (Anthony, 1993; Marks et al., 2008; Shehas, Boch & Lee, 1990), family of origin dynamics (Cohn, Silver, Cowan, Cowan, & Pearson, 1992; Webster, Orbuch, & House, 1995), and quality of family relationships (Timer, Veroff, & Hatchett, 1996). Additionally, satisfying marriages are beneficial to couples and children of these marriages.

The purpose of this study of marital satisfaction was to investigate and examine factors that might affect marital satisfaction among Jamaicans and African Americans living in the United States and identify similarities and differences of those factors. No previous study has compared these cultural groups. This study utilized the National Survey of America Life data set. The factors investigated included the effects of age, gender, educational attainment, social support, and religion on the marital satisfaction of these two groups. For the first research question, the dependent variable was marital satisfaction and the independent variable was ethnicity. For the second research question the dependent variable was marital satisfaction and the independent variables were age, gender, and educational attainment. For the third research question, the dependent variable was marital satisfaction and the independent variables were social support and religion.

A Pearson Chi-square analysis investigated the first research question's hypothesis that no relationship existed with marital satisfaction and ethnicity. Findings indicated a marginally significant relationship between marital satisfaction and ethnicity. A Multinomial Logistic Regression analysis investigated the second research question and hypothesis that no predictive relationship existed between marital satisfaction and ethnicity with age, gender, and educational attainment. Findings indicated that age, gender, and educational attainment level were significant predictors of marital satisfaction. A Multinomial Logistic Regression analysis investigated the third research question and hypothesis that no predictive relationship existed between marital satisfaction and ethnicity with social support and religion. Findings indicated social support was a significant predictor of marital satisfaction, and religion was not. Overall, these results suggested that ethnicity, age, gender, educational attainment, and social support were significant predictors of marital satisfaction opposed to religion.

Investigating these two cultures in relation to marital satisfaction could lead to an enhanced awareness of the similarities and uniqueness of each group. It may also provide insight to service providers. For example, mental health clinicians or, specifically, marriage and family therapists, may gain insight into the similarities and differences of these two groups and therefore tailor their treatment services accordingly. Additionally, these findings might affect intervention approaches for clinicians.

This dissertation is dedicated to God, my family, friends, all who have gone before me and paved the way, those whose shoulders I stood on during this portion of the journey, and those who supported me on the path.

Essencia, this is also dedicated to you. I love you.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

GSAT	Grade Six Achievement Test
STATIN	Statistical Institute of Jamaica

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Research on marital satisfaction conducted since the early 1940s suggests that the benefits of a satisfying intimate marriage include better health, a more active sex life, higher income, better adjustment among children from these marriages, and greater work incentive (Dawson, 1991; Keicolt-Glaser, Fisher, Ogrocki, Stout, Speicher, & Claser, 1987; Lillard & Waite, 1995; Waite & Lillard, 1991). Men typically benefit more from marriage. These benefits include longer lifespan, better physical health, and more positive behavior (Meadows, 2007 & Umberson, Williams, Powers, Liu, & Needham, 2006). Wilcox, Doherty, Fisher, Galston, Glenn, Gottman, Lerman, Mahoney, Markey, Markman, Nock, Popenoe, Rodriguez, Stanley, Waite, and Wallerstein (2005) emphasized the benefits of marriage to include family, economics, physical health and longevity, mental health, and emotional well-being. Having a satisfying marriage proves beneficial to couples, their children, and members of the surrounding community.

Most Americans value marriage and the majority of people marry at some point in their lives (Bramlett & Mosher, 2002). However, the marriages of today are different than those of the past; the age people get married, the values marriages hold, and the length of marriages are different (Cherlin, 2005). The differences affect the United States divorce rate. Although there has been a recent decline in the divorce rate, reasons for this change rest with a decrease in marriage rate along with an increase in cohabitation rates. Over the years, the overall divorce rate in the United States has remained high.

### Black Caribbeans and African Americans

Black Caribbean and African American individuals in the United States are considered by many as “closely related ethnic groups” (McAdoo, Younge & Getahun, 2007, p. 99). Logan and Deane (2003) stated that 1.5 million Blacks within the United States identify themselves as Caribbean. The Caribbean is the source of the earliest and largest voluntary Black migration into the United States. In 2003, of all Caribbean migrants, 513,228 Jamaican immigrants settled in over seven states within the United States (Camarota & McArdle, 2003).

Jamaica is Britain’s best known and third largest Caribbean island (Smith, 1962). In Jamaica, marriage is a fragile institution (Burnard, 1994). Although marriage is a norm for the middle class (Altink, 2004), for the lower class, marriage is “a pipedream” (Francis, 2009, p.1). A 1994 study of Jamaican marriages indicated that nearly 15% of marriages did not last two years; close to one-third failed to last past five years; 29% of marriages lasted more than 10 years; and 7.4% continued for more than 20 years (Burnard, 1994). In the same study, Burnard reported that over time, marriage became more unstable and the likelihood of remarriage decreased.

In 2007, the data from the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN) indicated that divorces plunged to 1,140, from 1,768 in 2006 and 1,806 in 2005. However, researchers at the Statistical Institute of Jamaica noted that the smaller number of divorces were due to changes in the Matrimonial Causes rules, which have resulted in a considerable backlog in divorce petitions (Collinder, 2008a). Therefore, Jamaicans and African Americans appear to face similar challenges in maintaining stable marriages. Additionally, the divorce facts seem to run parallel. These two cultural groups are experiencing challenges in their marriages. A segment of their

lives that affects all other life areas is fragmented. However, the literature about marriage and the marital satisfaction of these two cultural groups is minimal.

The first nationally representative sample survey of Black adults in the United States (Jackson, 1987) found that raising children, companionship, having a sustained love life (sex), safety (for women), help with housework, and financial security are major reasons Blacks consider marriage important (Billingsley, 1993). Between the years of 2001 and 2003, the National Survey of American Life conducted research of the largest representation of African American participants and the first representation of Black Caribbean participants, which included a large oversample of Caribbean individuals in the United States (Jackson, Torres, Caldwell, Neighbors, Nesse, Taylor, Trierweiler, & Williams, 2006). Bryant, Taylor, Lincoln, Chatters, and Jackson (2008) found that “gender, ethnicity and economic factors were associated with reports of marital satisfaction” (p. 247) for Black Caribbean and African American participants. In the report, Bryant et al. identified a need for additional inquiry about the relationship between education and marital satisfaction for African American and Black Caribbean individuals. A study of these two groups may highlight ways to strengthen their unions.

This present marital satisfaction study examined factors of marital satisfaction for Jamaicans and African Americans living in the United States. The factors for exploration included: age, gender, educational attainment, social support, and religion. Researchers investigated these factors because these variables were available in a dataset. This study utilized secondary data from the National Survey of American Life provided through the Political and Social Research department of the University of Michigan’s Inter-University Consortium. This rich dataset is the only record in the United States to include a large sample of Black Caribbean

participants (Bryant et al., 2008). The percentage of Black Caribbeans grew nearly 67% in the United States between 1990 and 2000 (Logan & Deane, 2003). Of the Black Caribbean participants in the National Survey of American Life study, 32% were Jamaican (Bryant et al., 2008). This study explored Jamaicans, in conjunction with African Americans, because they had not been previously studied in the literature, representing a gap in the research. As a part of the Black Caribbean ethnicities, Jamaicans are culturally different from other Caribbean groups (Blake, 1961). Despite this, there is little research on Jamaicans. More specifically, database searches, including Academic Search Premier, ERIC-EBSCOhost, PsycInfo, Altavists, and Google Scholar, yielded no study to date that explored factors that influence marital satisfaction for Jamaican and African American individuals living in the United States or in any other country.

#### Purpose of Study

The purpose of this marital satisfaction factors study was to investigate and examine factors that might affect marital satisfaction among Jamaicans and African Americans living in the United States and identify similarities and differences. The areas to be investigated included the effect of age, gender, educational attainment, social support, and religion on the marital satisfaction of these two groups. These factors were examined because of the available factors from the original dataset (Jackson et al., 2006). Specifically, social support and religion were investigated for Jamaicans and African Americans because of their shared history as a part of the African Extended Family and its significance for these groups of Black individuals (Dixon, 2007). Research indicated a strong influence of enslavement on the lives of Blacks, including their marriages (Hill, 1971).

Previous findings related to marital satisfaction derived from the original dataset have found that both African American and Black Caribbean participants reported relatively high satisfaction in their marriage (Bryant et al., 2008). However, no study to date specifically compared Jamaican and African American individuals. Thus, a gap existed in the research literature examining marital satisfaction for these two cultural groups, and a need for this study became evident. This marital satisfaction investigation provided a step toward greater understanding of cross-cultural marital satisfaction between Jamaicans and African Americans. This contribution to the overall research helped identify clinical interventions and strategies for increased marital and relationship satisfaction for Jamaican and African American couples living in the United States and elsewhere.

### The Caribbean

Jamaican and Caribbean culture differ from American culture in various ways. For example, Caribbean cultures embrace collectivism versus individualism (Henry, 1994). Caribbean islands consist of several countries that stretch from the Bahamas to South America, within the Caribbean Sea (Hall, 2001; Waters, 2004). Caribbean people enjoy togetherness and sharing. These cultural groups placed very strong emphases on religion and spirituality, community, family bonds and education (Waters, 2004). The countries within the Caribbean, however, are quite diverse. While each Caribbean island shares many commonalities, each country's unique culture distinguishes it from its neighbors (McAdoo, Younge, & Getahun, 2007). The terms "West Indies" and "Caribbean" are commonly used interchangeably. The "West Indies" refers to the islands between North and South America, while the "Caribbean" represents the specific region where these islands are located. The West Indies include the Greater Antilles in the north, the Lesser Antilles to the east, and the Bahamas in the northeast.

The Greater Antilles include Hispaniola (Haiti and the Dominican Republic), Cuba, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico. The Lesser Antilles include Saint Lucia, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada, Saint Vincent, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Antigua, Guadeloupe, Dominica, and Martinique (Greenidge, 2007). This study focuses on people who originate from the English-speaking Caribbean island of Jamaica in the Greater Antilles.

Waters (2004) suggested that all Caribbean islands share three commonalities: legacies of European colonialism, legacies of enslavement, and the domination of the island's economy and culture by international communities. These commonalities shape the West Indian culture and identity of those who migrate to the United States. In addition to Jamaica's primary international connection to the United States (Central Intelligence Agency, 1997), Jamaicans and African Americans share an enslavement legacy of the African Extended Family (Hill, 1998). The African Extended Family system looks at the strength and source of support gained from generational connection outside the immediate family structure.

Enslavement, "a practice in which human beings are owned by other human beings" (Weatherford, 2000, p. 21), is not unique to America. Both Jamaicans and African Americans have ancestral origins in Africa. When Africans were brought to the Caribbean and the Americas during the period of enslavement, they also brought century-old practices and marriage and family patterns with them (Dixon, 2007). Sudarkaska (1980) reported that marital practices of individuals who share an enslavement legacy focus on the joining of families and the highlighting of extended familial relations.

Historically, enslaved individuals had no rights to their spouse or anything else (Amen, 1992). Marriage therefore was not seen as a lifetime commitment. Presently, there exists a behavior established during the times of enslavement where the commitment of marriage is not

maintained or sustained (Dixon, 2007). The impact of this former existence on Black people is present in their marital experiences of today.

Unfortunately, literature on marital satisfaction rarely depicts the cultural importance of African ancestry. This historical survey will lend credence to Jamaican and African American marriages and aid in greater understanding of the needs and possible similarities among these cultures.

Research on marital satisfaction typically uses information presented from research with non-Black couples (Bengtson, Rosenthal, & Burton, 1992; Brooks, 2006; Gottman, 1999). The statistics reporting the significance of marital satisfaction, therefore, typically use couples that do not culturally reflect Jamaican or African American individuals. Thus, it was thought that the results of this marital satisfaction factors study would add greater depth and breadth to the area of marital satisfaction among underrepresented populations in field of literature that addresses this line of research.

#### Significance of the Study

Marital satisfaction is the strongest predictor for happiness in many areas of life (Russel & Wells, 1994). For example, a satisfying marriage is associated with better general adjustment and fewer health problems (Bray & Jouriles, 1995). Factors that contribute to marital satisfaction reported by researchers include religion and spirituality (Anthony, 1993; Marks, Nesteruk, Swanson, Garrison, & Davis, 2005; Shehas, Boch, & Lee, 1990), family of origin dynamic (Cohn, Silver, Cowan, Cowan, & Pearson, 1992), and quality of family relationship (Timer, Veroff, & Hatchett, 1996). Additionally, satisfying marriages are beneficial to couples and children of these marriages while present in the marital household and beyond. Amato (2005) stated that “children growing with two continuously married parents are less likely to experience



a wide range of cognitive, emotional, and social problems not only during childhood but also in adulthood” (p. 75). It is, therefore, safe to declare that experiencing a home-life with parents who are married and satisfied in their marriage benefits everyone in the household. Amato further stipulates that children brought up in single parent or cohabitating homes tend to have less education, earn less income, report poorer relationship quality, have more troubled marriages, experience higher divorce rates and experience poor mental health. Unsatisfied and unhealthy marriages have a negative effect on children that continues into adulthood.

Moreover, the literature is clear about the harmful effects of broken families, particularly for children (Fagan, 1994; Fagan & Rector, 2000; Gergusson, Lynskey, & Horwood, 1996). Divorce can affect children’s academic, social, and psychological well-being and can lead to a greater incidence of risky behaviors that will affect their health (Amato, 2005, Doherty & Needle, 1991). Research also indicated that children from single-parent families possess a greater risk for juvenile crime, domestic or general abuse and violence, and lowered income. These studies also showed that children born out of wedlock had an increased risk of death in infancy, higher incidence of retarded cognitive and verbal development, and higher rates of drug addiction and out-of-wedlock pregnancy as teens (Amato, 2005; Gergusson, Lynskey & Harwood, 1996; Fagan, 1994; Fagan & Rector, 2000). As adults, these children also experienced a greater risk for divorce, lower salaries, and family violence. Pinsof (2002) stated that the factors responsible for rising divorce rates in the United States and elsewhere (increased human lifespan, transformation of women’s roles, and shift in values and beliefs about marriage and divorce) further weakened marital stability. Therefore, marriage matters and satisfying marriages matter even more.

Wilcox et al. (2005) performed an extensive review of marriage and child outcome research and identified reasons why marriage matters. The three fundamental themes included: 1) Marriage is an important social good, 2) Marriage is an important public good, and 3) The benefit of marriage extends to poor and minority communities. Wilcox and colleagues additionally emphasized that marriage matters in the areas of: 1) family, 2) economics, 3) physical health and longevity, and 4) mental health and emotional well-being. These findings indicate the many benefits of marriage and further suggest additional gains of a satisfying marriage.

Unfortunately, even with significant benefits, many people never marry, and many marriages end in divorce. The 2008 U. S. Census reported that 222.6 million individual in the total population, 56.1 million were never married and 22.8 million were divorced. Of the 181.3 million White individuals, 41.2 million were never married and 18.8 million were divorced. Of the 26.1 million Black individuals, 10.5 million were never married and 10.4 million were divorced. Of the 1.2 million Asians individuals, 2.7 million were never married and 0.4 million were divorced. Of the 29.6 million Hispanic individuals, 9.3 million were never married and 2.3 million were divorced.

Bryant et al. (2008) stated that marital satisfaction literature presents a fragmented view of contributing factors with minority groups. Additionally, when scholars studied Black families, information is often shared from a deficit perspective emphasizing problems and pathology (Connor & White, 2006). The present marital satisfaction factors study further reported information on factors associated with family fragmentation in Jamaican and with African American cultures because of availability. This further supported the need for additional research

and reporting about these two cultural groups and the effect experienced by individuals in their marriages.

Although research on marital satisfaction for Jamaican couples is lacking, deficits resulting from a lack of stable homes are evident in Jamaican culture. These included reports that crime is “one of the greatest social problems facing Jamaica” (Chavanees, 2001, p.1). At the end of 2001, the number of crimes was 849, more than twice the number two decades ago.

Chavanees (2001) correlated the Jamaican crime rate to high unemployment rates; miserable social, economic, and family conditions; parental neglect; and a weak family structure.

Additionally the state of education in Jamaica, reported as unhealthy, further indicated the possible support that more satisfying marriages provide (Editor, 2009). Jamaicans and African Americans are facing similar social problems that may be linked to a lack of satisfying marriages.

Jackson (1991) discussed the many commonalities in the Black experience with many ethnic variations within the Black population. The U.S. Census Bureau report in 1990 concluded that almost one million Black persons in the United States were English speaking from the West Indies (Bryant et al., 2008). Notwithstanding this reality, research on a growing population of Black Caribbean in America is dearth. Sharing the comparative findings of this marital satisfaction factors study could lead to an enhanced awareness of the similarities and difference of these two cultural groups, as related to marital satisfaction. Additionally, this perspective would contribute to the literature by filling a gap in research.

This study was conducted for several reasons. Investigating these two cultures in relation to marital satisfaction could lead to an enhanced awareness of the similarities and uniqueness of each group. It could also provide insight to service providers. For example, mental health

clinicians or, specifically, marriage and family therapists, could gain insight into the similarities and difference of these two groups and therefore tailor their treatment services accordingly. Additionally, these findings could affect intervention approaches for clinicians. Finally, this investigation might also provide members of these and other cultures with an increased awareness of similarities and differences.

### Statement of the Problem

Over the past few decades, the decline of American marriages has been a favorite theme of social commentators, politicians, and academics (Cherlin, 2005). Jamaicans and African Americans have similar experiences in the United States. In addition to social pressures, and social maladies like racism, classism, and glass-ceiling issues, these two cultural groups share similar histories of enslavement (Hill, 1972; Sudarkasa, 1980). Jamaica experienced enslavement from the 1600s to the 1900s gaining independence on August 6, 1962 (Central Intelligence Agency, 1997). African Americans experienced enslavement from the 1600s to late the 1800s with its abolition on April 19, 1866. Yet little research has been conducted to examine the effects of these forces on marriage quality and stability for these two cultural groups.

In addition to those factors, there are similarities in educational, legal, and social challenges among Jamaicans and African Americans (Chavanees, 2001; Editor, 2009). Stronger marriages may improve social ills more present in the lives in these groups of people (Wilcox et al., 2005). Research supported the idea that strong marriages decrease divorce, and increase the marriage rate (Broman, 1993; Clark-Nicolas & Gray-Little, 1991; Lawson & Sharpe, 2000; & Taylor, 1998). This marital satisfaction factors study highlighted the aforementioned issues as they relate to satisfying marriages within these two cultural groups.

## Marriage Quality

Research has examined factors that affect marriage quality. Broman (2005) and White (1983) found that spousal behavior and high spousal interaction positively correlate to marital satisfaction. Additionally, the provision of financial support sustains a marriage despite a lack of satisfaction (Broman, 1993). Minimal financial security adversely affects marital quality (Clark-Nicolas & Gray-Little, 1991). Though research continues to investigate high divorce and maladjustment rates (Orbuch, Veroff, & Hunter, 1999), examinations of positive African American marriages and relationship qualities lag. Studies on these positive aspects may positively influence African Americans who could benefit from better primary relationships (Oggins, Veroff, & Leber, 1993).

Although Tucker and Mitchell-Kerman (1995) found that a high divorce rate exists among African American couples, these men and women still view marriage as highly desirable and do not differ from other ethnic groups in this regard. For example, married African Americans identify as “very happy” more than their unmarried counterparts (Creighton-Zollar & Williams, 1987). Jamaicans embrace marriage and see it as a status symbol (Francis, 2009). Bryant and colleagues (2008) reported that “68% of African American and 63% of Black Caribbean participants indicated they were very satisfied with their marriages (p. 246).” Additionally, “Black Caribbean women reported significantly higher levels of marital satisfaction than did African American women (p. 247).”

The factors of age, gender, educational attainment, social support, and religion were explored for Jamaicans and African Americans living in the United States as they are the areas often researched with groups of majority culture. Marital satisfaction with these two groups warrants exploration.

## Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study answered three research questions by examining three hypotheses in order to investigate factors related to marital satisfaction with Jamaicans and African Americans.

### Research Question One and Hypothesis

What relationship exists between marital satisfaction and ethnicity?

Null Hypothesis One: No relationship exists with marital satisfaction and ethnicity.

### Research Question Two and Hypothesis

What socio-demographic factors predict marital satisfaction for Jamaican and African American participants?

Null Hypothesis Two: No predictive relationship exists between marital satisfaction and ethnicity with age, gender, and educational attainment.

### Research Question Three and Hypothesis

What factors of social support and religion predict marital satisfaction among Jamaican and African American?

Null Hypothesis Three: No predictive relationship exists between marital satisfaction and ethnicity with social support and religion.

## Definition of Terms

This study used the following operational definitions throughout this study based on a review of the literature and information gathered from the National Survey of America Life data.

- African American: Individuals born in the United States who have origins in any of the Black populations of Africa. Participants in the study who self-identified as African American (Jackson, 2008).

- African Extended Family: Individuals with a history and heritage from Africa with a heritage in the Caribbean or the United States having support gained from generational connection outside the immediate family structure (Hill, 1972).
- Age: Participants indicated their age by identifying their date of birth.
- Black: Individuals with a history and heritage from any of the Black populations of Africa.
- Educational attainment: Participants who identified as having less than a high school diploma or possessing a high school diploma.
- Ethnicity: Participants who identified as Jamaican or African American.
- Gender: Participants were identified as either male or female by the observation of the interviewer.
- Jamaican: Members of the largest British Caribbean Island. Participants in the study self-identified as West Indian or Caribbean decent and now reside in the United States (Bryant et al., 2008; Jackson, 2008).
- Marital satisfaction: The amount of contentment a couple feels about their relationship (Rowe, 2004). The happiness a husband or wife feels about their relationship with their spouse (Ferrance, 1999). Marital satisfaction from the National Survey of America Life data was measured by the question, “Taking things all together, how satisfied are you with your marriage?” Response categories ranged from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 4 (very satisfied) (Bryant et al., 2008).
- Religion: Religion is defined as one’s adherence to a church or institution’s beliefs or practices (Lukoff, Turner, & Lu, 1993). This includes one’s religious practice; commitment and participation; and coping as well as overall religiosity as identified with

survey questions from the National Survey of American Life Study. (Please see Appendix C)

- Social Support: Social support generally consists of three components: feeling loved, feeling valued, and belonging to a social network (Cobb, 1976). This includes support from people other than spouse/partner as identified with survey questions from the National Survey of American Life Study. (Please see Appendix C).

### Limitations

Although this study was motivated by the lack of available information in the literature about the marital satisfaction of Jamaican and African American couples, this also presented a limitation. It was difficult to obtain material necessary to strongly support the research and conduct a more thorough literature review. Therefore, some areas were not as well supported with data. However, this limitation was unavoidable.

Additionally, the use of a secondary set of data posed as a constraint. The researcher was required to take information found in the dataset at face value. The researcher had no part in the formation of the questionnaire or the conducting of interviews. Therefore, the researcher was unable to formulate research questions and then develop a measure, and sample participants. Research questions, therefore, were formed based on the available data.



## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was to investigate and examine factors that might affect marital satisfaction with and between Jamaicans and African Americans living in the United States and identify similarities and differences of those factors. This study utilized the National Survey of America Life data set to share research findings about Jamaicans and African Americans. The variables examined include marital satisfaction, ethnicity, age, gender, educational attainment, social support, and religion. This study examined the following questions: 1) What relationship exists between marital satisfaction and ethnicity? 2) What socio-demographic factors predict marital satisfaction for Jamaican and African American participants? 3) What factors of social support and religion predict marital satisfaction among Jamaican and African American?

In order to establish a framework for these questions, this chapter presents a review of the literature related to the aforementioned variables, including their relationship to the two cultural groups of interest. This chapter begins with a synopsis of Jamaican and African American cultures and factors relating to marriage. A historical view of Jamaicans and African Americans will lay a foundation for the purpose and significance of these two cultural groups related to marriage. Additionally, information on the similarity of the enslavement history of these two groups may inform their likeness and the challenges experienced related to marital satisfaction.

### Theoretical Framework

People of African descent living in the United States belong to three major groupings: descendants of enslaved Africans, immigrants from Caribbean countries and their descendants,

and immigrants from countries on the continent of Africa and their descendents. McAdoo, Younge, and Getahun (2007) suggested that the growing proportion of native and foreign-born Black populations in the United States has posed a challenge for the study of marriage, parenting, and family-socialization. They indicated that researchers' lack of awareness of cultural norms and differences of these groups pose as a constraint. Therefore, the under-recognition of the unique cultural factors and differences between native and foreign born Black people can lead to a lumping under the category of African American. This is significant for the exploration of factors presented in and the purposes proposed for this study.

This study presented the concept of the African Extended Family as the foundation, although not a theory. Guided by the seminal work of Du Bois (1909), Billingsley (1968, 1993), Frazier (1939), Hill (1972), and Dixon, (2007), African Extended Family provided a foundation for studying marriages of people of African descent who share the common history of enslavement. These scholars emphasized the importance of understanding African marriages and families in order to conceptualize Black family structure. This was additionally important because in the United States, research literature does not typically explore the study of Black family structure through historical lenses in the research literature.

In 1989, Du Bois encouraged social scientists to study people of African descent with a strong historical foundation. He emphasized that a proper study of these cultural groups necessitated an assessment of historical, cultural, social, and economic forces. The understanding of families of African descent necessitates understanding of functioning (Herskovits, 1941; Sudarkasa, 1980; McDaniel, 1990; Dixon, 2007). Hopson and Hopson (1994) stated that "the absence of respect for marriage and family during the years of enslavement left deep scars. Marriage between Black slaves had no formal legal standing and families were torn apart at will"

(p. 40). This significant awareness gives a frame of reference for the functioning of these families and the impact of the scars of enslavement on the marriages of Black families in the United States.

### Effects of Enslavement

Enslavement focused on the degradation of a people and using them for cheap labor. It also divided families and diminished the presence of relationships while making marriages illegal. One example of the ripping apart of families as a result of enslavement was that of a slave in Georgia who begged his master to sell him to Jamaica so that he could find his wife, despite warnings that his chances of finding her on so large an island were remote (Genovese, 1974). Another slave in Virginia chopped his left hand off with a hatchet to prevent being sold away from his son. Though the challenges of enslavement were immense both in Jamaica and the United States, Black families held dear the importance and connection to family. Social support and connectedness, therefore, were of utmost importance.

From the beginning of the development of enslavement, a marriage system was in place that included legal marriage and concubinage (a system that clearly defined racial hierarchy). White men (usually plantation owners) married White women but entered into non-legal unions (concubinage) with women who were Black or Colored. The term “concubinage” was a general one, contrasting with “marriage” in terms of legality. It included practices ranging from short-term general relationship that did not involve co-residence to permanent unions that differed from marriage only in terms of the legal status of spouses and children (Smith, 1990). With concubinage, many children were born out of wedlock and named bastards.

Throughout the period of enslavement, slaves were forbidden to marry. While cohabitation was permitted, the union between two slaves lasted no longer than the plantation

owner pleased. If the female slave did not bear children, the plantation owner decided whether or not to give her to another man on the plantation or sell her to another plantation totally.

Therefore, among slaves, there was no such thing as a lasting union. Female slaves were all considered prostitutes and suffered no degradation for it (Dixon, 2007; Smith, 1990).

As a result of these experiences, Black families faced a number of challenges during the period of enslavement. Those challenges, coupled with the family fragmentation issues facing African American families, was punctuated by Cherlin's (2005) conclusion that an African American child was more likely to grow up living with both parents during slavery days than he or she is today. It seemed the challenges experienced by Black families have spanned the years from the days of enslavement to the present. Although no longer a part of the present experience in Jamaica and the United States, the effects of enslavement as the foundation are felt today. During periods of enslavement, the support of extended family was a norm (Higman, 1978). We see today that social support is a continual factor that affects the Black family and marriage.

The exploration of enslavement and the African Extended family was important to this study on marital satisfaction factors for Jamaicans and African Americans because of the significant impact this shared experience played on the lives of these people. While enslaved both in Jamaica and the United States, this group did not regard marriage as a clearly defined institution. Because those enslaved had no rights and were not regarded as humans, slave masters had free access to the wives of their male slaves. This influenced a lack of empowerment among Black males, which led to a feeling of emasculation. Further, enslaved men, who were originally providers and protectors of their families, could be sold at anytime and had no say in the treatment of their family members, including their wives. This led to the detached sense of self

and diminishing of emotional ties to wives and family members as a form of self-preservation (Sudarkasa, 1980).

The effect of enslavement was felt by those living in Jamaica and within the United States. There was no discrimination to cultural or ethnic make-up or background for the treatment of those enslaved. Families were torn apart, and marriages were not respected. The lasting effects on these groups are translated today in the expression of high divorce and low marriage rates as well as unwed childbearing of Black people living in the United States. Understanding the history of Black people who reside in the United States and the effect of enslavement on their lives was necessary for the study and understanding of the marriages of these group.

### Jamaica

#### History and Culture

Jamaica is the largest English-speaking Island in the Caribbean, with a population of nearly 2.7 million people. This island is located in the Caribbean Sea south of Cuba and its capital, Kingston, lied in the southeastern section of the island (World Factbook, 2009). The official language is English, but a majority of Jamaicans spoke an English-based local Patois. Patois is a synthesis of old English and nautical terms, Irish dialect, and Spanish and African words (Jamaica Review, 2003).

Arawaks from South America settled in Jamaica prior to Christopher Columbus' first arrival at the island in 1494. During Spain's occupation of the island, starting in 1510, the Arawaks were exterminated by disease, slavery, and war. Spain then brought the first African slaves to Jamaica in 1517. In 1655, British forces seized the island, and in 1670, Great Britain gained formal possession (U. S. Department of State, 2006). The abolition of slavery in 1834

freed a quarter of a million slaves with full independence from Britain in 1962 (World Factbook, 2009).

Jamaica exists as a young culture with 44% of the population under 20 years old. It is also a diversely ethnic population. The country's motto, "Out of many, one people" reflected the comprised cultures of East Indians, Chinese, Europeans, Syrians, Lebanese, and Blacks predominantly from West Africa (World Factbook, 2009).

Jamaica's international affiliation was closely connected to the United States, which was its most important trading partner. In April of 1982, Ronald Reagan was the first United States President to visit Jamaica. In 2000, trading goods with the United States brought almost \$2 billion in revenue. Jamaica was a popular destination for American tourists; more than 800,000 Americans visited the island in 2000. In addition, some 10,000 American citizens, including many dual-nationals born on the island, permanently resided in Jamaica (U. S. Department of State, 2006). Jamaican and American affiliations were very clear.

Understanding the history and culture of Jamaicans was significant for this study for a number of reasons. This awareness gave a foundational overview of the participants in this marital satisfaction factors study and gave a historical context for this line of research. While the participants presented in this study were Jamaicans living in the United States, it was important to gain clarity about the history of these people in order to achieve understanding about their cultural history and plight. These factors provided the researcher with a cultural context through which to study and understand this cultural group. Knowledge of this group's similarities and possible differences to the African American culture were revealed.

## Marriage Factors

An extensive search exploring a variety of Counseling, Counselor Education, Psychology, Social Science, Sociology, and Caribbean Studies' databases as well as Google Scholar, using a variety of related key terms Jamaica(n) Marriage(s), Jamaica(n) Couple(s), and Jamaica(n) Marital Satisfaction, Jamaica and Marriage, Jamaican and Marriage, Jamaica and Marital Satisfaction, Jamaican and Marital satisfaction) yielded no research articles. However the Jamaican daily newspaper, *The Gleaner*, contained information on marriage and issues related to family fragmentation. The fact that limited to no research data existed and limited data was being collected on marriage statistics created a more challenging position for emerging research on marital issues in Jamaica (Jackson, 1991). The research being conducted in this study was therefore significant to the contribution to the body of literature.

By the eighteenth century, the institution of marriage in the country was defined as a fully legal and indissoluble union in which the couple lived under the same roof faithfully and occupied separate spheres and exercised distinct roles (Altink, 2004). During that period, the Anglican Church performed 3,600 marriages amidst a slave population of 330,000. Most slaves preferred a nonconformist marriage, which required only proof of baptism (Higman, 1984). During these early periods, Jamaica was recognized as having an extremely unstable family system, with high rates of union (marriage and cohabitation), partnership dissolution, and high levels of fertility outside of marriage (Blake, 1961; Stycos & Back, 1964). More recently, however, it was noted by Hutchinson, Simeon, Bain, Tucker and Lefranc (2004), that being married was associated with satisfaction for both men and women.

## Divorce

The Statistics Institute of Jamaica reported the country's national accounts annually. Regarding divorce, findings suggested that the divorce rate in Jamaica may reflect the need for more satisfying marriages. From 1996 to 2005, the courts granted a total of 14,895 divorces (STATIN). The greater portion of the marriages lasted from a few months to 14 years with most couples initially married between ages 18 to 29. The data showed that, for most couples, it was their first marriage. However, a significant number of them, mostly men, had previously been married (Collinder, 2008b). It seemed that divorces in Jamaica had no respect to length of marriage or the age of the partners. A key demographic variable investigated in this marital satisfaction factors study included age. Noting the significance of age on marital satisfaction and reporting those findings could significantly contribute to research. The implementation of supports to individuals at various age levels prior to and during their marriages might affect the state of marriages and the satisfaction thereof.

Attention to the divorce rate and who divorced in Jamaica was also beneficial. Young women under 25-years-old outnumber all other age groups petitioning for divorce. Between 2002 and 2006, this group comprised more than 50% of all divorces in Jamaica. During this period, more than 700 women under age 25 successfully petitioned for divorce each year (STATIN). In 2006, of 1,768 divorce cases, 1,145 were under age 25. Comparatively, only 260 individuals in the 40-49 age group and 81 in the 50-and-over age range were divorced. Additionally, some marriages lasted only a few months (Collinder, 2008b). Young persons were divorcing at a rate much higher than older persons. This fact supported the need for marital interventions of younger adults. Additionally, investigating the factors that could contribute to



satisfying marriages for Jamaicans might limit the number of divorces and positively affect the culture of these marriages. This may benefit Jamaicans by affecting the social ills that are present in the country. With more satisfying marriages, not only could those in the marital experience be positively affected, but children and the community at large may also reap the benefits.

With divorce on the rise in Jamaican society, an investigation of the attraction to marriage may be necessary. Researches on the island reported that marriage “marks the point at which the possibility of pregnancy begins” (McNeil, Olafson, Powell & Jackson, 1983, p. 143). For some in this culture, marriage seems like a rite of passage to childbirth. This could be one level of attraction to the institution. However, adolescent pregnancy significantly challenged Jamaican culture. At the largest maternity hospital in Kingston, 26% of births were to adolescents (Powell & Jackson, 1979). This leads to an effect on the attainment of education and the educational system, as pregnant teens were made to drop out and not encouraged to return to school after the birth of the child (McNeil, Olafson, Powel, & Jackson, 1983). This left many adolescents in Jamaica without a proper education and exposed to the many consequences thereof. These fragmented issues, resulted in domino effects, presented questions regarding the needs of this culture and the affect that additional research and implementation of research findings may have. Educating Jamaicans about the effects of enslavement, impact of marriage and divorce as well as the effect of marital dissolution may lead to greater holistic benefits. This education may begin at a very basic level.

### Education

Education in Jamaica was free and mandatory until the age of 14 (Jamaica Review, 2003). Thereafter, students took the Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT). Those with a passing

rate of this exam pursued high school. Although private educational institutions existed at both the primary and secondary levels in Jamaica, these accounted for just 5% of total student enrollment. Instead, most education in Jamaica was publicly funded and provided almost free of cost. The enrollment rate at the primary level stood at 90% in 2005, although average daily attendance is estimated at 70-80%. Enrollment at the secondary level was 78% in 2005, up from an average of just 64% in 1991 (Country Profile, 2008). While Jamaican divorce and adolescent childbirth increased, the educational system may be utilized as an inroad to affect the culture. However, the opportunity for this type of education struggled with the challenges presented by juvenile crime.

Without a mandate for high school attendance and less than a 100% attendance rate at the lower educational levels, juveniles were often found loitering on the streets in Jamaica. These children were often left unmonitored by parents and were influenced by the adult crime scene. As a result, Jamaican society was overburdened by delinquent juveniles. Reports indicated that juvenile detention centers were always full (Simms, 2009). Many of the issues authorities faced included gun-related charges, stabbings, and housing with adult inmates – inciting additional crime related behaviors (Simms, 2009). These challenges were representative of fragmented Jamaican families with ripple, domino, and cyclic effects. Having a satisfying marriage and learning about the factors that contribute thereto could minimize or alleviate some of these challenges.

Divorce, teen pregnancy as the foundation, and crime were prevalent in Jamaica. However, there was a spiritual component to the island's culture. Religion and church attendance played a significant role in shaping Caribbean society and was cited as one of the central axes of Jamaican life (Beckford, 1975; Wyatt, Durvasula, Guthrie, LeFranc & Forge, 1999). Pentecostals

comprised the largest category of religious affiliation in the country (Broos, 1996). The country's religious breakdown comprised of: Protestant 61.3% (Church of God 21.2%, Seventh-Day Adventist 9%, Baptist 8.8%, Pentecostal 7.6%, Anglican 5.5%, Methodist 2.7%, United Church 2.7%, Jehovah's Witness 1.6%, Brethren 1.1%, Moravian 1.1%), Roman Catholic 4%, other including some spiritual cults 34.7% (UNDP). As part of the African Extended Family, Jamaicans relied on spiritual aspects of life for support. Religion and spirituality, along with other support systems (i.e., church attendance and extended church family), may enhance the marital relationships of Jamaicans, which would, therefore, benefit the fragmented family experience and the culture at large.

Jamaica, a relatively small island of 2.5 million people, seemed to possess societal challenges comparable to those faced by African American in the United States. This cultural group also faced issues with family fragmentation related to unwed childbearing, divorce, and marriage. Jamaicans and African Americans shared divorce, family fragmentation, and unwed childbearing characteristics that may benefit from the exploration of the benefits of more satisfying marriages. Therefore, research on the marital satisfaction of these two cultural groups offered a clearer understanding of the factors that contributed to their marital satisfaction or lack thereof. This may also assist researchers with a clear understanding of the make-up of this cultural group and the affect of culture on their marriages.

#### Overview of Marriage in America

Although the institution of marriage is found in all societies, cultures, and countries, there was no universal definition of marriage (Kottak, 1991). In the United States today, marriage is less dominant as a social institution than at any time in history (Cherlin, 2005). Levinson (1995) indicated that to Americans marriage meant "stabilized patterns of norms and roles associated

with the mutual relationship between husband and wife” (p. 471). The majority of studies regarding marital relationships, however, tended to emphasize divorce, women’s perception on marital equity, directions people took in marriage, and custodial issues in marriage and remarriage (Ahron & Rogers, 1987; Heaton, 1985; Heaton & Albercht, 1991; Little, 1982; Traupham & Hatfield, 1983; Vemer, Coleman, Granong, & Cooper, 1989). Despite these disturbing facts, marriages continued to retain high value and benefits for Americans across ethnicities (Dixon, 2007).

Unfortunately, the marriage rate for African Americans, compared to other groups in the United States, spoke volumes. The 2000 United States Census reported that the African American marriage rate was at 42%, compared to 61% for Whites and 59% for Hispanics. The divorce rate for African Americans was 12% compared to 10% for Whites and 7% for Hispanics. Additionally, 68% of African American births were to unmarried women compared to 29% for Whites and 44% to Hispanics. Moreover, 62% of African American households were headed by a single parent compared to 27% for Whites and 35 % for Hispanics. African Americans were experiencing more challenges in their marriages and families than any other ethnic group in the United States.

Though African Americans faced this reality, the United States of America, more than any other nation, had the highest rate of divorce (Cherlin, 2009). Divorce affected all parties involved since marriage joined two communities. Therefore, the effect of divorce on children was devastating. A study by Fagan and Rector (2000) showed that compared with children within intact families, children of divorced parents: 1) had higher rates of crime, drug use, child abuse, and child neglect; 2) performed poorly on reading, spelling, and math tests, and repeated grades and dropped out of high school and college more frequently; 3) had higher incidences of

behavioral, emotional, physical, and psychiatric problems, including depression and suicide; and 4) had an increased probability of divorce as adults cohabited more frequently. It may be surmised that divorce is the beginning of a downward spiral of dysfunctional behavior patterns.

Pinsof (2002) and Clark-Nicolas & Gray-Little (1991) stated that the factors responsible for rising divorce rates in the United States, and elsewhere, adversely affected minimal financial security and weakened marital stability. Additionally, several studies noted that individual values were strongly affected by divorce. Reports from Hogan and Kitagawa (1985); Newcomer and Udry (1987); Trent (1994), and Wyatt (1997) indicated that American girls from single-parent homes reportedly had higher rates of early onset of intercourse and expectations for non-marital childbearing than those from two-parent homes. The proportion of African American children living with single parents was greater than that of White children for a century or more (Morgan, McDaniel, Miller & Preston, 1993).

#### African American History and Culture

African American was a term often used to describe people who lived in the United States with an ancestry from Sub-Saharan Africa. The name *Negro* (adopted during enslavement) was offensive, so after the long use of the word *colored*, after liberation from enslavement, *Afro American* was adopted by civil rights activists. The term African American was proposed by Jesse Jackson in the late 1980s (Strickland, 2000) and was the terminology used today.

The first Africans in the United States, 20 men and women, arrived as indentured servants in Jamestown, Virginia, aboard a Dutch ship in 1619 (Potter & Clayton, 1997). African Americans served as slaves until the Civil War in 1861, when the northern states in America fought the South to abolish enslavement. In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln signed the

Emancipation Proclamation that granted slaves freedom (Potter & Clayton). The 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> amendments gave additional rights to African Americans of liberty.

Although the period of enslavement dramatically affected the lives and traditions of African Americans, it did not erase family and social memory. Therefore, certain practices, such as family structure, kinship and non-kinship bonding, and the extended family network, remained alive (Foster, 1983).

African Americans comprise 13% (35.5 million; 48% male, 52% female) of the total United States population, and a 14% increase was projected by 2025 (U.S. Bureau of Census, 2003). In 2000, 54% of African Americans lived in the South, 8% lived in the West, and 19% lived in the Northeast and Midwest. Fifty-three percent of all African Americans lived in central cities and metropolitan areas (McLoyd, Hill, & Dodge, 2005).

Boyd-Franklin (1989), Knox (1985), and Marks, Hopkins, Chaney, Monroe, Nesteruk and Sasser (2008) emphasized the great importance of spirituality to African American culture. The impact of religion in the lives of this group dated to their African ancestry where this significant practice played a role in every part of the African's life (Mbiti, 1969; Nobles, 1980). Marks et al. (2005) also emphasized the importance of spirituality in the lives of many African Americans. Littlejohn-Blake & Anderson-Darling (1993) noted that spirituality was a part of the survival system of African Americans. It was a common practice for this cultural group. Like Jamaicans, African Americans emphasized the importance of a spiritual component in their lives.

#### Marriage Factors

In the United States, African Americans had the lowest marriage rates compared to other ethnic groups (National Center for Health Statistics, 2003; United States Census Report, 2000) and two to three times the divorce rate (Pinderhughes, 2002; Tucker & Mitchell-Kernan, 1995).

Additionally, living as a minority in a majority nation affected not only one's marriage, but also the satisfaction thereof.

Marriage rates among African Americans significantly declined over the last half of the 20th century. In 1950, approximately two-thirds of all African Americans over the age of 15 were married and living with their spouses, and less than 25% had never married (U.S. Census Bureau, 1996). However, by 2003, only 32.5% of all African Americans aged 15 and older were married and living with their spouses, and 43.4% had never married (Fields, 2003).

For African Americans, stability in marriage began to decline in the 1980s. Prior to that time, 74% of all African American households were headed by both parents; 22% were headed by women and the remaining four percent were headed by men (U. S. Census, 1979). By 1980 and through 2009, divorce was a pandemic in African American households with 62% headed by single parents (U. S. Census, 2003). This shift in the marriage of African Americans had a ripple effect on family fragmentation, economics, unwed childbearing, and the health of these families. However, a source kept these families hopeful amidst these challenges.

### Religion

In a study conducted by Brooks (2006), it was found that communication, similarity, and religion were 50% of the indicated factors that contributed to the happiness and stability of African American relationships. Brooks also cited a number of gender differences that included the following: commitment, trust, and love were the factors most often cited by women as contributors to marital satisfaction. Commitment and understanding were reported as the most contributing factors for men.

The African American culture emphasized religion and spirituality (Dixon, 2007). This belief system was brought with this group from their origins in Africa. It is, therefore, understandable that religion played a significant role in their marriages. African Americans who identified their marriages as strong, happy, and enduring connote faith, religion, and spiritual experiences, including “personal and relational references to God,” to satisfying marriages (Marks et al., 2008, p.184). This cultural group relied on a spiritual source for support in an area of life that affected many other facets.

Research in the United States was clear on the benefits of satisfying marriages, healthy families, and the impact of family fragmentation. Though Jamaican research on marriages was scant, it was possible to make similar inferences. The awareness of the many benefits of a satisfying marriage suggested the need for further inquiry of both cultures.

### Marital Satisfaction

Marriage was a very important social good (Wilcox et al., 2005). Researchers explored marital satisfaction to aid in the understanding of couples and the contributors to marital success. Rowe (2004) defined marital satisfaction as the amount of contentment couples received from each other. Early cross-sectional surveys of marital satisfaction suggested that marital satisfaction declined steadily during the first ten years of marriage (Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Dentler & Pineo, 1960; Pineo, 1961, 1969). Hicks and Platt (1970) noted in a review of research on marital quality in the 1960s that most sampled lacked overall representativeness, with respondents generally being young, middle class, college-educated, and White.

Over the years, marriage became a public issue (Nock, 2005), and the decline of marriages across the nation, and its effect on families and communities, led to a series of investigations about the best way to arrest the pandemic and assist those desirous of change.



Institutions and researchers explored a number of ways to enhance marital satisfaction and prepare couples for a healthy marital relationship. These strategies could positively affect marriages and society at large.

Crohan and Veroff (1989) looked at dimensions of marital well-being in White and Black newlyweds and concluded that happiness contributes greatly to marital satisfaction. Additionally, it was found that achievement, religious orientation, strong kinship bonds, and role flexibility are strengths in Black families (Hill, 1971; Smith, Burlew, Mosley & Whitney, 1978). These findings are important as a look at the factors for this research is investigated.

This marital satisfaction factors study used one question to assess marital satisfaction. Other instruments used to assess marital satisfaction included the Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988). This seven-item measure of marital satisfaction showed moderate to high correlations with measures of marital satisfaction. Additionally, The Relationship Pleasure Scale was a six-item measure of general pleasure and satisfaction in marriage. This instrument was found to be a valid and reliable measure for marital satisfaction and pleasure.

#### Marital Satisfaction and Socio-Demographic Variables

Research on marital satisfaction and key demographic variables revealed that age at the time of marriage was the most consistent predictor of marital satisfaction and that couples who waited to get married had relationships that lasted longer because they took more time to choose their partners (Heaton, 2002). Research indicated that those couples who were married after the age of 22 reported higher marital satisfaction (Kaslow & Robison, 1996).

In exploring the impact of marriage on gender, it was noted that relative to single men, married men reported greater life satisfaction. Interestingly, among women, the patterns reverse. Single women report greater life satisfaction than did married women (Steil, 1984). ). Bryant and

colleagues (2008) reported that, “Black Caribbean women reported significantly higher levels of marital satisfaction than did African American women (p. 247).”

In relationships, women were socialized to be more attuned to their social environments than men (Antonucci, 1994; Belle, 1987), and women think more about relationships once they are formed than men (Acitelli, 1992; Burnett, 1987; Cate, 1991; Martin, 1991). Therefore, it was safe to say that being satisfied in a marriage was of more importance for women than men. Additionally, Bryant, et al. (2008) found that “gender, ethnicity and economic factors were associated with reports of marital satisfaction” (p. 247) for Black Caribbean and African American participants.

Regarding education, Broman (1993) stated that “people who lack educational resources may be more likely to remain in a marriage that is not happy, but that provides some financial support for the partner” (p. 730). While education may not predict marital satisfaction, Clark-Nicolas and Gray-Little, (1991) found more of an effect with income. Investigating marital satisfaction and the educational levels of those involved in these relationships could lead to further insight.

Heaton (2002) found that education was negatively correlated with divorce, unless the woman had more education than her spouse. Heaton additionally found that women with more education than their husbands had a greater likelihood to have marriages that ended in divorce. Broman (1993) found that wives’ educational level and having a higher income than their husbands among Blacks is a factor frequently proposed to affect marital quality. However, Creighton-Zollar, and Williams (1992) established no association of either education or occupational status inequality with the marital quality of Blacks.

## Marital Satisfaction and Religion

Religion and spirituality were important factors when assessing marital satisfaction. Lukoff, Turner, and Lu, (1993) defined religion as one's adherence to a church or institution's beliefs or practices. Literature on the impact of religion on marital satisfaction was split. In his sixty-year review of family research, Jenkins (1991) found that high religiosity and increased church attendance increased marital satisfaction, while a study conducted by Booth, Johnson, Branaman, and Sica (1995) found no relationship between religiosity and marital satisfaction. In a study by Beach and Hunt (2008), it was found that prayer significantly affected the satisfaction of marriage immediately after study implementation and with six-month follow-ups.

Although greater individual religiousness and religious homogeneity has been associated with increased marital satisfaction and adjustment, this research area required measurement and conceptual advancements (Thomas & Cornwall, 1990). Heaton (2002) found that couples with religious preferences who exercised the same religious faiths were more satisfied in their marriages than couples who had no religious preference.

In a qualitative study by Robinson and Blanton (1993) where 15 couples were interviewed, religion was the most prevalent theme that emerged from that analysis as an indicator of long-term marital satisfaction. Some couples reported that having religious faith was more powerful when both spouses believed in God. Although the amount of church involvement was different among the couples in this study, some couples found this to be a strong factor in the satisfaction of their marriages.

Banchand and Caron (2001) examined explanations for stability and satisfaction for long-term married couples and found that support as well as religion/religious agreement contributed to this. In this study, 36% of the couples perceived religion as a positive factor, 26% reported

that it directly affected their marriage, and 36% stated that religion played little to no role in affecting their marital satisfaction.

In a review of ten qualitative studies on marital satisfaction, Brooks (2006) found that religion was the sixth factor most cited that contributed to lasting and satisfying marriage relationships. Brooks also found in her study that the importance of religion focused on being Christian, believing in God, and the power of prayer as contributing factors.

### Marital Satisfaction and Social Support

Cobb (1976) defined social support as containing three components: feeling loved, feeling valued, and belonging to a social network. It may be viewed as a feeling of closeness, contact, positive interaction, and emotional contact. Simon and Johnson (1996) found that social support was a secondary influence on marital satisfaction as compared to spousal support.

Types of social support included emotional support, esteem support, network support, tangible support, and informational support (i.e., feelings of love, care, concern, respect, safety, and belonging) (Xu & Burleson, 2001). Emotional support was attributed to marital satisfaction when husbands and wives received it from friends as well as family members. (Allgood, Crane, & Agee, 1997). Blacks had a greater importance of extended and fictive (non-blood related) kin ties. Bengtson et al. (1990) found that Blacks had higher functional solidarity among extended kin than Whites.

In a study by Acitelli and Antonucci (1994), it was found that individual's perception of received social support affected the perception of satisfaction in their marriages. Additionally, in a study of young midlife couples, Julien and Markman's (1991) reported that wives' marital satisfaction was more influenced by social support from their husbands than husbands' marital satisfaction was influenced by social support from wives.

## Summary

The benefits of a satisfying marriage positively affected spouses and their children during the marital years and for years to come (Bramlett & Moshner, 2001). Unfortunately, marriages were failing. Therefore, the implication of failed marriages affected families on many dimensions. Society also felt this ripple effect as it was reflected in the divorce rate. With this reality, there was an incomplete picture of overall marriage and marital satisfaction. Investigating African American marriages, including their history, could benefit the research literature by providing a greater understanding of this group. This marital satisfaction factors study offered a clearer understanding of the factors that contributed to marital satisfaction or lack thereof for Jamaican and African American participants. The findings of this study may also assist researchers with an enhanced awareness of the make-up of these cultural groups and the effect of the culture on their marriages. Research in this area may strongly contribute to a more holistic awareness of the state of Jamaican and African American marriages. Clarification of the status and effect of Jamaican and African American marriages was necessary to further affect the literature. The literature benefited from the broader scope of the marital relationships of cultural groups outside of those commonly reported on. Information shared about the state of these individuals enhanced the view of this culture. Furthermore, increased exposure to Black couples in the literature in general, enhanced research. Additionally, practitioners were equipped with greater knowledge about these couples, to enhance multicultural awareness.

Furthermore, no study to date specifically compared Jamaican and African American individuals living in the United States. Thus, a gap existed in the research literature examining marital satisfaction for these two cultural groups. This investigation provided a step toward greater understanding of cross-cultural marital satisfaction between Jamaicans and African

Americans. This contribution to the research helped identify interventions and strategies to increase marital and relationship satisfaction in Jamaican and African American couples.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to investigate and examine factors that might affect marital satisfaction with and between Jamaicans and African Americans living in the United States, and to identify similarities and differences between those factors. This study utilized the National Survey of America Life dataset to share research findings about Jamaicans and African Americans living in the United States. The variables being examined included marital satisfaction, ethnicity, age, gender, educational attainment, social support and religion. Since this study used a portion of data from the National Survey of American Life dataset, this chapter is presented in two segments. First, information about the National Survey of American Life's study will be presented. Then, the methodology for the present study, including its use of the National Survey of American Life data will be presented. This section presents details on the research questions, data, population, measures, participants, research design, procedures and analysis.

### Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study will answer three research questions by examining three hypotheses in order to investigate factors related to marital satisfaction with Jamaicans and African Americans.

#### Research Question One and Hypothesis

What relationship exists between marital satisfaction and ethnicity?

Null Hypothesis One: No relationship exists between marital satisfaction and ethnicity.

#### Research Question Two and Hypothesis

What socio-demographic factors predict marital satisfaction for Jamaican and African American participants?

Null Hypothesis Two: No predictive relationship exists between marital satisfaction and ethnicity with age, gender, and educational attainment.

#### Research Question Three and Hypothesis

What factors of social support and religion predict marital satisfaction among Jamaicans and African Americans?

Null Hypothesis Three: No predictive relationship exists between marital satisfaction and ethnicity with social support and religion.

#### National Survey of American Life Study

##### Data Background

The National Survey of American Life “is the most comprehensive and detailed study of mental disorders and the mental health of Americans of African descent ever completed” (Jackson, 1987, p.196). The original purpose of the National Survey of American Life study was to “explore intra-and inter-group racial and ethnic differences in mental disorders, psychological distress and informal and formal service use, as they are manifested in the context of a variety of stressors, risk and resilient factors, and coping resources, among national adult and adolescent samples” (Jackson et al., 2006, p. 196). The National Survey of American Life study was undertaken by the Program for Research on Black Americans at the University of Michigan’s Institute for Social Research. It was developed under sponsorship of the National Institute of Mental Health as part of the National Institute of Mental Health Collaborative Psychiatric Epidemiology Surveys initiative that includes the National Survey of American Live, the National Comorbidity Survey Replication and the National Latino and Asian American Study



(Bryant et al., 2008; Lincoln, Taylor, & Jackson, 2008). The principal investigators of the National Survey of American Life study include James S. Jackson, Cleopatra Caldwell, Linda M. Chatters, Harold W. Neighbors, Randolph Nesse, Robert Joseph Taylor, and David R. Williams.

The National Survey of American Life study selected respondents from the targeted geographic segments in proportion to African Americans and Black Caribbean people living in the United States. A computer-assisted instrument aided in primarily face-to-face data collection, which occurred between February 2001 and March 2003. However researchers conducted 14% of the interviews telephonically. Challenges experienced by the investigators during the implementation of the study included a longer period of preparation than anticipated (1 1/2 years) and a longer field period than anticipated (2+ years).

#### Population

Development of the study-specific section for the instrument began four months prior to the official start of the project. The researchers formed four groups and then analyzed, formulated, and interpreted the questions. Many of the questions first appeared in the 1979-1980 National Survey of Black Americans and the National Survey of Black Americans panel questionnaires.

The study recruited retired teachers and other community professionals to serve as interviewers utilizing flyers posted in Black neighborhoods, barbershops, hair salons, community centers, and churches. This assisted the National Survey of American Life to use race matching of interviewer and respondents, along with the use of community-based interviewers. This resulted in the hiring of over 300 interviewees. Interviews were culturally sensitive and included many African American staff members. Four interviewer training sessions occurred over a period of 14 months. The staff included African American post-doctoral fellows and advanced

graduate students. The average time for survey completion was 139 minutes (2 hours, 19 minutes) and survey participants received compensation of \$50 for their time and cooperation.

For the participants, the Black Caribbean and African Americans first self identified their race as Black. Those participants who answered affirmatively, when asked if they were of West Indian or Caribbean descent or if their parents or grandparents were born in the Caribbean, received Black Caribbean identification. The Black Caribbean participants then identified their heritage from a list of Caribbean countries. The interviewers were provided with a list of countries considered Caribbean. Of the following list of Caribbean countries, those in *italics* indicate Spanish-speaking islands and those in non-italics include English-speaking islands. The islands include Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bonaire, British Virgin Islands (Anegada, Tortola, Virgin Gorda) Cayman Islands, *Costa Rica*, *Cuba*, Dominica (Commonwealth of), *Dominican Republic* French Guiana, Grand Cayman, Grenada and Grenadines, Guadeloupe, Guyana, British West Indies, Cayman Brac, Haiti *Honduras*, Jamaica, Leeward Islands, Little Cayman, Martinique, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles (Bonaire, Curacao, Saba, St. Eustatius [Statia]), *Nicaragua*, *Panama*, *Puerto Rico*, St. Croix, St. John, St. Thomas, St. Maarten [Martin]), St. Kitts-Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent – Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks & Caicos Islands, West Indies, Windward Islands, and U.S. Virgin Islands.

A total of 6,199 participants contributed data to the National Survey of American Life study with 3,570 African-American, 1,623 Caribbean and 1,006 Non-Hispanic White (Bryant, Taylor, Lincoln, Chatters, & Jackson, 2008). The African American and Non-Hispanic White samples were selected from primary core samples inherent with existing sampling units. The study sampled Black Caribbean sample participants from geographic areas noted with relatively

high density of persons of Caribbean decent. This purposive sampling of Black Caribbean participants afforded this implementation of the marital satisfaction dissertation study.

### Marital Satisfaction Factors Study

This marital satisfaction factors dissertation used a secondary dataset obtained from the National Survey of American Life Study (Jackson, 2008). The first step in accessing the data for this marital satisfaction factors study included the participation in a summer seminar at the University of Michigan. Attendance and participation in the summer seminar involved a detailed application process that included a submission of vita and recommendation letter from the dissertation chair. The researcher then flew to Ann Arbor, Michigan to participate in the three-day seminar. This researcher was exposed to various organizations with databases of secondary data for public use during the participation in the seminar entitled *Quantitative Methods of Social Research: Using Secondary Data for Analysis of Marriage and Family*. After the introduction of all the databases and datasets, this researcher selected the National Survey of American Life database because it contained a large sample that included Black Caribbean participants.

This researcher requested data through a detailed process after attending the training. The general dataset was accessible through the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research website. This step included the initial receipt of permission from the University of Central Florida's Institutional Review Board (See Appendix A). The Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research also required responses to questions including who will have the data, what the data will be used for, the period of time the data will be in use, where the data will be stored and under what circumstances, why the data is being requested, and what methods will be used to disseminate the findings of the research from the data. The University of Central Florida's Institutional Review Board granted an exemption and the Inter-University

Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan approved the application. The data for Black Caribbean participants required an additional application due to its restricted status (See Appendix B). Along with the University of Central Florida's Institutional Review Board Approval, this additional step required a detailed data request application through the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan. Changes to research questions, persons handling the data, and methods relating to the data analysis were provided to the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research prior to continuing the study.

### Participants

The 2,888 participants for this marital satisfaction factors study represented the married subsample of African Americans and Jamaicans from the National Survey of American Life study. Of the total participants, 2,444 were African Americans, making up 85% and 444 were Jamaicans, representing 15% of the sample (see Figure 1). Table 1 presents the frequencies and percentages of sample composition as well as the participants' demographics information.

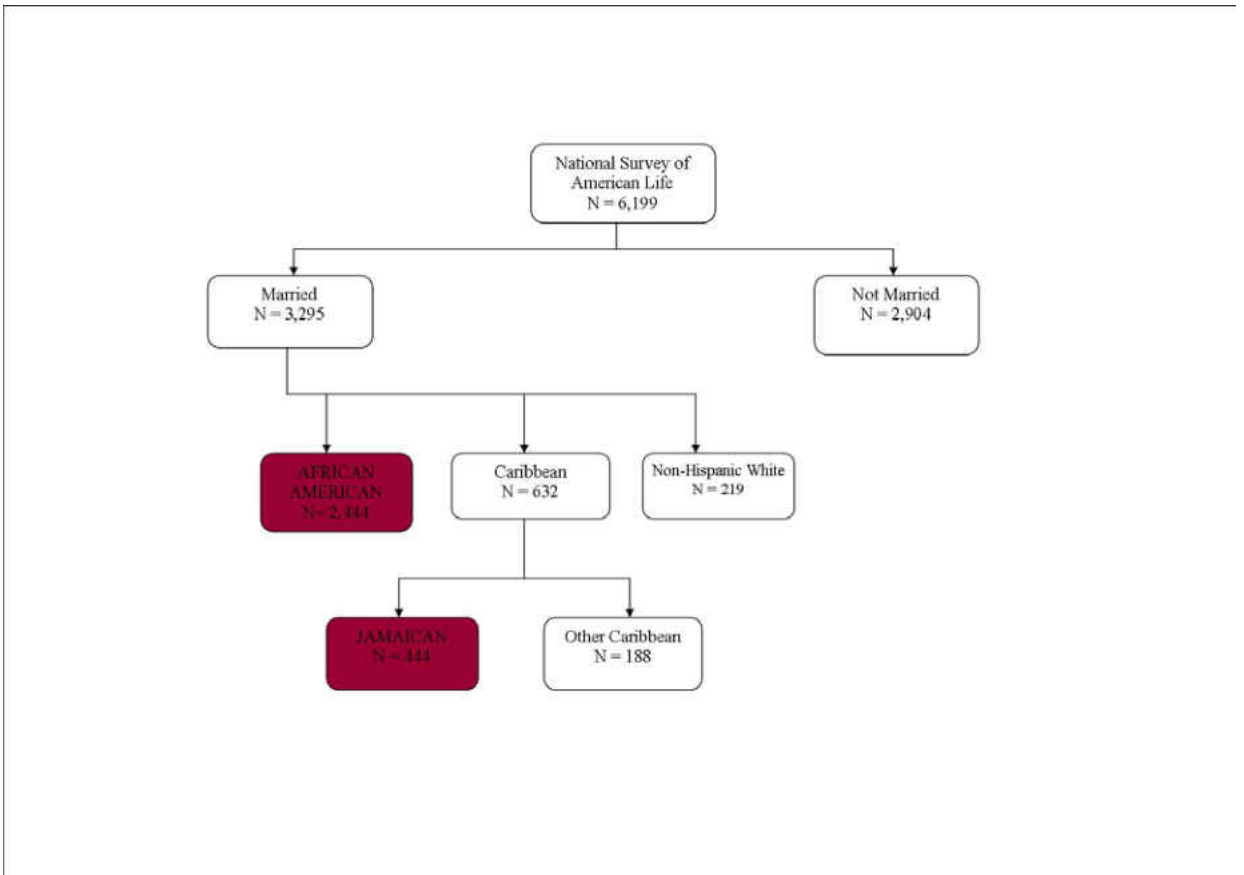


Figure 1: Marital Satisfaction Factors Study Participants

Table 1: Marital Satisfaction Factors Study Participant Demographics

		<b>All N = 2,888</b>	<b>Jamaicans N = 444</b>	<b>African Americans N = 2,444</b>
<b>Age</b>	18-90 Range	M = 43.52	M = 44.15	M = 43.43
<b>Gender</b>	Male	1,322 (45.8%)	218 (49.1%)	1,104 (45.2%)
	Female	566 (54.2%)	226 (50.9%)	1,340 (54.8%)
<b>Education</b>	0-11 Years	620 (21.5%)	98 (22.1%)	522 (21.4%)
	12 Years	1086 (37.6%)	148 (33.3%)	938 (38.4%)
	13-15 Years	696 (24.1%)	102 (23%)	594 (24.3%)
	Greater than or equal to 16 years	486 (16.8%)	96 (21.6%)	390 (16%)
<b>Religion</b>	Protestantism/Protestant, No Denomination mentioned	90 (3.1%)	14 (3.2%)	76(3.1%)
	Baptist (All types)	1354 (46.9%)	82 (18.5%)	1272 (52%)
	Lutheran	8 (0.3%)	N/A	8 (0.3%)
	Methodist (All types, including United Brethren)	170 (5.9%)	20 (4.5%)	150 (6.1%)
	Pentecostal	158 (5.5%)	48 (10.8%)	110 (4.5%)
	Presbyterian	26 (.9%)	10 (2.3%)	16 (.7%)
	Protestant, other (Please specify)	568 (19.7%)	150 (33.8%)	418 (17.1%)
	Catholicism/Catholicism, no denomination mentioned	140 (4.8%)	20 (4.5%)	120 (4.9%)
	Catholic, Roman	44 (1.5%)	22 (5%)	22 (0.9%)
	Catholic (All others)	6 (0.2%)	N/A	6 (0.2%)
	Agnostic or Atheist	4 (0.1%)	2 (0.5%)	2 (0.1%)
	No Religious Preference	78 (2.7%)	12 (2.7%)	66 (2.7%)
	No Religion	150 (5.2%)	42 (9.5%)	108 (4.4%)
	Other (Specify)	86 (3.0%)	18 (4.1%)	68 (2.8%)

## Jamaican and African American Participants

The participants' ages ranged from 18 to 90 years old with an average age of 44 years (mean = 43.56). Of the total participants, 1,322 (45.8%) were males and 1,566 (54.2%) were females. Educational attainment levels for all participants ranged from no formal education to some years in college. Thirteen (13) years (mean = 12.64) represented the average highest grade of school completed for the Jamaican and African American participants. Six-hundred and twenty (620, 21.5%) completed 0-11 years of education, 1,086 (37.6%) completed 12 years of education, 696 (24.1%) completed 13-15 years of education, and 486 (16.8%) completed greater than or equal to 16 years of education. The majority of the total participants of this study completed 12 years of education.

The two dominant religious affiliations of the participants included 1,354 participants (46.9%) who identified as Baptists and 568 participants (19.7%) as Protestants. The other identified religious affiliations included Catholics (N = 190, 6.5%); Methodists (N = 170, 5.9%); Pentecostal (N = 158, 5.5%); no religion (N = 150, 5.2%); those who did not specify a religious preference (N = 86, 3%); no religious preference (N = 78, 2.7%); Presbyterian (N = 26, 0.9%); Lutheran (N = 8, 0.3%); and Agnostics or Atheist (N = 4, 0.1%).

## Jamaicans

For the 444 total Jamaican participants, the average age was 44 years old (mean = 44.15) and highest grade of school completed was 14 years (mean = 13.72). Of the Jamaican participants, 218 (49.1%) were males and 226 (50.9%) were female. Educational attainment levels for Jamaican participants ranged from no formal education to some years in college.

Similar to all participants (Jamaican and African Americans), the average highest grade of school completed for Jamaican participants was 13 years (mean = 12.64). Ninety-eight (98, 22.1%) completed 0-11 years of education, 148 (33.3%) completed 12 years of education, 102 (23%) completed 13-15 years of education and 96 (16.8%) completed greater than or equal to 16 years of education. The majority of the Jamaican participants of this study completed 12 years of education (Bryant et al., 2008).

The two dominant religious affiliations of the Jamaican participants included Protestants (N = 150, 33.8%) and Baptists (N = 82, 18.5%). The other religious affiliations indicated included Pentecostal (N = 48, 10.8%); no religion (N = 42, 9.5%); Catholic (N = 42, 9.5%); Methodists (N = 20, 4.5%); those who did not specify a religious preference (N = 18, 4.1%), no religious preference (N = 12, 2.7%); Presbyterian (N = 10, 2.3%); and Agnostics or Atheist (N = 4, 0.1%).

### African Americans

For the 2,444 total African American participants, the average age was 43 years old (mean = 43.43) with 1,104 (45.2%) were males and 1,340 (54.8%) were females. Educational attainment levels for all the African American participants ranged from no formal education to some years in college with a mean of 13 years (mean = 12.63). Five-hundred-and-twenty-two (N = 522, 21.4%) completed 0-11 years of education, 938 (38.4%) completed 12 years of education, 594 (24.3%) completed 13-15 years of education, and 390 (16%) completed greater than or equal to 16 years of education.

The two dominant religious affiliations for the African American participants were Baptists (N = 1,272, 52%) and Protestant (N = 418, 17.1%). The other religious affiliations



included Methodists (N = 150, 6.1%); Catholics (N = 148, 6%); Pentecostals (N = 110, 4.5%); no religion (N = 108, 4.4%); Protestants (N = 76, 3.1%); those who did not specify a religious preference (N = 68, 2.8%), no religious preference (N = 66, 2.7%); Presbyterians (N = 16, 0.7%); Lutherans (N =8, 0.3%); and Agnostics or Atheists (N = 2, 0.1%).

### Data Analysis

#### Variables

Variables for this study were selected based on a review of the literature in the area of marital satisfaction and what was included in the National Survey of American Life dataset. This study examined one independent variable and five dependent variables. The independent variable was marital satisfaction and the dependent variables included age, gender, educational attainment, social support, and religion. The dependent variables were interval and categorical data. Categorical independent variables included age, gender and education. Interval independent variables included social support and religion.

#### Dependent Variable

Marital satisfaction was the dependent variable for this marital satisfaction factors study. This variable was captured from the National Survey of American Life survey question: “Taking things all together, how satisfied are you with your marriage?” This question was measured using the Likert scale of 1 (very dissatisfied) through 4 (very satisfied). A single item indicator of marital satisfaction is a normal occurrence in research (Glenn, 1989; Johnson, 1995; Schoen, Rogers, & Amato, 2006; and Bryant and colleagues, 2008). Research also found single-item indicators of marital satisfaction correlate highly with multi-item measures and provided similar results (Johnson, 1995).

## Independent Variables

The independent variables for this marital satisfaction factors study included: ethnicity, age, gender, and education, social support and religion. One questions revealed the participant's age. Age was obtained from the question asked by the interviewer of the participants: "First, what is your date of birth?" The interviewer's observation identified gender. Education was obtained from the question asked by the interviewer of the participants: "How many years of school did you finish?" Educational levels were confirmed by number of years completed: "Less than high school (0-11 years);" "high school (12 years);" "some college (13-15 years);" and "Bachelors degree or greater (16 years or more)." Participants' identification revealed ethnicity . . . Ethnicity was assessed by participants' identification as "White, Black and/or Caribbean." Thereafter, questions about ethnicity were gathered including: "Which of these do you feel best describes your ancestry or country of origin?" The list of Caribbean islands was then shared. Participants identified the island of their origin (Jackson et al., 2006).

Five questions assessed the religion variable. These included: "How often do you": 1) "...read religious books or other religious material?," 2) "...watch religious programs on TV?," 3) "...listen to religious program on the radio?," and 4) "...pray?" 5) "...ask someone to pray for you." These questions were measured using the Likert scale 1 *Nearly everyday* through 6 *Never*. The number representing their responses was summed by this researcher. Reliability proved strong evidence by a Cronbach's Alpha of .76 and Split half reliability of .62

Five questions comprised the social support variable. Three questions were measured using the Likert scale 1 *very often* through 4 *Never*. These included: "Other than your (spouse/partner), how often do your family members": 1) "...make you feel loved and cared

for?,” 2) “...listen to you talk about your private problems and concerns?,” and 3) “...express interest and concern in your well-being?” The two additional questions relating to social support were measured using the Likert scale 1 *very close* through 4 *Not close at all* included: 4) “How close do you feel towards your family members?” and, 5) “Would you say your family members are very close in their feelings toward each other?” The responses to these five questions were summed by this researcher since all had similar 1 to 4 Likert scales. The Social Support variable boasted respectable reliability coefficients with .77 for Cronbach’s Alpha and .62 for split half.

### Variable Codes

This marital satisfaction factors study utilized a multinomial logistic regression to examine two of the research questions. This necessitated the recoding of several variables. The marital satisfaction variable was kept as it was originally coded from the National Survey of American Life Study where: *very satisfied* = 1; *satisfied* = 2; *dissatisfied* = 3; and *very dissatisfied* = 4. The ethnicity variable was recoded to: African Americans = 0 and Jamaicans = 1. The age variable was recoded to: below 30 years = 1; 31-44 years = 2; 45-59 years = 3; and greater than or equal to 60 years = 4. With an additional binary recode: < 45 years old = 0 and 45 years > = 1. The gender variable was recoded to: male = 0 and female = 1. The education variable was recoded to: “Does not have a high school degree” = 0, and “Have a high school degree” = 1. After summing the social support and religion variables, they were then recoded to the Likert scale. The social support variable was recoded to: 1-5 = 4; 6-10 = 3; 11-15 = 3; and 16-20 = 4 then an additional binary recode with to: 11-20 = 0 and 1-10 = 1. The religion variable was recoded to: 0-6 = 6; 7-11 = 5; 12-17 = 4; 18-23 = 3; 24-29 = 2; and greater than or equal to 30 = 1 then an additional binary recode to: 24->30 = 0; 12-23 = 1; and 0-11 = 2 (Jackson et al., 2006)

Details of original survey questions may be accessed through the following website: <http://www.rcgd.isr.umich.edu/prba/nsal#questionnaires>. Additionally, survey samples questions from the National Survey of American Life Study used specifically for the marital satisfaction factors study are located in Appendix C.

### Data Analysis

This study used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 17.0 to analyze the data and examine the null hypothesis. The study required a frequency distribution to help describe participants and variable composition. The first research question inquired about marital satisfaction factors in and between Jamaican and African American participants. The dependent variable was marital satisfaction and the independent variable was ethnicity. A Pearson chi-square analysis examined the first hypothesis regarding the marital satisfaction of these two groups. A Pearson chi-square investigated the single hypothesis for the first research question. Pearson Chi-square explores cases that fall into different categories for individual variables and compares them with hypothesized values (Pallant, 2005). This two-way design determines whether the two variables in the design are independent of each other (Shavelson, 1996).

The second and third research questions investigated the marital satisfaction factors in and between Jamaican and African American participants regarding socio-demographic variables, social support, and religion. The dependent variable was marital satisfaction and the independent variables were age, gender, education, social support, and religion. A multinomial logistic regression analysis investigated the second and third research questions and hypotheses. Multinomial logistic regression is an extension of binary logistic regression allowing simultaneous comparison of more than one case with dependent variables including more than

two classes (Garson, 2009). Multinomial logistic regression analyzes relationships between a non-metric dependent variable and dichotomous independent variables. Multinomial logistic regression compares multiple groups through a combination of binary logistic regressions. Multinomial logistic regression analysis requires that the dependent variable be a dichotomous, nominal, or ordinal variables and that the independent variables be metric or dichotomous. Multinomial logistic regression does not make any assumptions of normality, linearity, and homogeneity of variance for the independent variables and does not impose these requirements (Multinomial Logistic Regression Basic Relationships, 2008, slides 2-5).

### Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate and examine factors that might affect marital satisfaction among Jamaicans and African Americans living in the United States and identify similarities and differences of those factors. Marital satisfaction was the dependent variable in this study and the independent variables under investigation were (1) ethnicity (2) age, (3) gender, (4) education, (5) social support, and (6) religion. Three research questions allow the researcher to satisfy the purpose of this study. Analyses conducted to examine hypotheses and answer the research questions included a Pearson Chi-square and Multinomial Logistic Regression analyses.

## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to investigate and examine factors that might affect marital satisfaction among Jamaicans and African Americans living in the United States and identify similarities and differences of those factors. This marital satisfaction factors study utilized the National Survey of America Life dataset to share research findings about these ethnic groups. The variables being examined included ethnicity, age, gender, educational attainment, social support, and religion. A Pearson Chi-square investigated the first research question and hypothesis. Multinomial Logistic Regression investigated the second and third research questions and associated hypotheses. This chapter presents the finding for each research question and hypotheses. Table 2 contains the means, standard deviations, N (number of participants) and percentages of all participants.

The goal of the first research question for this study was to identify whether or not a relationship existed between marital satisfaction and ethnicity. The goal of the second and third research questions was to investigate to what extent socio-demographic characteristics, social support, and religion helped explain marital satisfaction based on ethnicity.

Table 2: Means, standard deviations and frequencies among variables of interest

Variable	Subgroup	Mean	SD	N	%
Marital Satisfaction		1.45	.673	N/A	N/A
Social Support		.8144	.38887	N/A	N/A
Religion		1.2369	.65189	N/A	N/A
Ethnicity					
	Jamaican	N/A	N/A	444	15%
	African American	N/A	N/A	2,444	85%
Gender					
	Male	N/A	N/A	1,322	45.8%
	Female	N/A	N/A	1,566	54.2%
Educational Attainment					
	Less than High School	N/A	N/A	518	30.6%
	Greater than High School			1,174	69.4%

A bivariate correlation with the variables of interest describes the existence of any relationships between any two sets. Table three presents the Correlation Matrix among the Variables of Interest in the research analysis of the study. Table 4 contains the Case Processing Summary of all the variables of interest for this marital satisfaction factors study. The percentage of cases in each group defined by the dependent variable is found in the Case Processing Summary Table (Table 4).



Table 3: Correlation Matrix: Variables of Interest

	Marital Satisfaction	Ethnicity	Age	Gender	Educational Level	Social Support	Religion
Marital Satisfaction	1	.033	-.097**	.152**	.054*	-.122**	-.076**
		.075	.000	.000	.025	.000	.000
		2874	2874	2874	1692	2856	2858
Ethnicity		1	.024	-.028	-.010	.022	-.056**
			.199	.127	.676	.232	.003
			2888	2888	1698	2866	2870
Age			1	-.075**	-.188**	.018	.135**
				.000	.000	.330	.000
				2888	1698	2866	2870
Gender				1	.073**	.055**	.191**
					.003	.003	.000
					1698	2866	2870
Educational Level					1	.046	-.079**
						.061	.001
						1684	1694
Social Support						1	.123**
							.000
							2850
Religion							1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). \* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4. Case Processing Summary: All Variables

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Marital Satisfaction * Ethnicity	2874	99.5%	14	.5%	2888	100.0%
Marital Satisfaction * Educational Attainment	1692	58.6%	1196	41.4%	2888	100.0%
Marital Satisfaction * Age	2874	99.5%	14	.5%	2888	100.0%
Marital Satisfaction * Gender	2874	99.5%	14	.5%	2888	100.0%
Marital Satisfaction * Religion	2696	93.4%	192	6.6%	2888	100.0%
Marital Satisfaction * Social Support	2856	98.9%	32	1.1%	2888	100.0%

## Results of Analyses

### Research Question One

The first research question sought to investigate the likelihood that all participants would report marital satisfaction. To answer the question, one hypothesis was examined. A Pearson Chi-square analysis was necessary to conduct this hypothesis because the data used were categorical in nature. The hypothesis sought to inquire that no relationship existed in marital satisfaction and ethnicity for Jamaican and African American participants. Table 5 represents the cross-tabulations and Table 6 indicates the Chi-square test results for this question. For marital satisfaction, 64.4% African Americans reported being *very satisfied* compared to 58% Jamaicans, N=1822. Participants who reported *somewhat satisfied* included 29.3% African Americans compared to 35.2% Jamaicans, N=868. Participants who reported *somewhat dissatisfied* included 4.3% African Americans as compared to Jamaicans 5.5%, N=128. Lastly, participants who reported *dissatisfied* included African Americans 2.1% as compared to 1.4% Jamaicans, N=56. These results indicated a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and ethnicity  $\chi^2 (3, n=2436) = 03, p < .05$ .

Table 5. Cross-tabulations: Marital Satisfaction by Ethnicity

			Ethnicity		Total
			African Americans	Jamaicans	
Marital Satisfaction	VERY SATISFIED	Count	1568	254	1822
		% Marital satisfaction	86.1%	13.9%	100.0%
		% within Ethnicity	<b>64.4%</b>	<b>58.0%</b>	63.4%
		% of Total	54.6%	8.8%	63.4%
	SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	Count	714	154	868
		% Marital satisfaction	82.3%	17.7%	100.0%
		% within Ethnicity	<b>29.3%</b>	<b>35.2%</b>	30.2%
		% of Total	24.8%	5.4%	30.2%
	SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED	Count	104	24	128
		% Marital satisfaction	81.3%	18.8%	100.0%
		% within Ethnicity	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	4.5%
		% of Total	3.6%	.8%	4.5%
	VERY DISSATISFIED	Count	50	6	56
		% Marital satisfaction	89.3%	10.7%	100.0%
		% within Ethnicity	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	1.9%
		% of Total	1.7%	.2%	1.9%
Total	Count	2436	438	2874	
	% Marital satisfaction	84.8%	15.2%	100.0%	
	% within Ethnicity01	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	84.8%	15.2%	100.0%	

Table 6. Chi-square Tests: Ethnicity

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.696 <sup>a</sup>	3	<b>*.034</b>
Likelihood Ratio	8.597	3	.035
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.168	1	.075
N of Valid Cases	2874		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.53.

## Research Question Two

The second research question sought to predict marital satisfaction based on ethnicity and socio-demographic characteristics (age, gender, and educational attainment). To answer the question, one hypothesis was examined. Multinomial Logistic Regression investigated the hypothesis that socio-demographic characteristics (age, gender, and educational attainment) were not predictive of marital satisfaction based on ethnicity

Table 7 presents a summary of the cases for this research question where the 16 subpopulations under investigation is depicted. Table 8 presents the marital satisfaction and socio-demographic variables model predictions compared to the Intercept Only (Null model). The Null model uses the modal class (*somewhat satisfied*) as the model's prediction accuracy – 28%,  $p < 0.05$ . Table 9 depicts whether the model adequately fits the data, with  $p < 0.05$ , we could conclude that this model adequately fits the data. The Likelihood ratio test is presented in Table 10 reflecting the contribution of each variable to the model – educational attainment, age, and gender, had a significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) contribution.

### Very Satisfied Compared to Very Dissatisfied

The first-third of Table 11 depicted the outcome of *very satisfied* compared to *very dissatisfied* for this research question. There was no significance found for ethnicity with Jamaicans compared to African Americans, Odds Ratio (OR) = 1.424 (95% CI 0.581 to 3.490),  $p = .440$ . Significance was found with age for participants less than 45-years-old compared to those greater than 45-years-old. They were more likely to report *very satisfied*, Odds Ratio (OR) = 0.327 (95% CI 0.157 to 0.681),  $p = 0.003$ . Therefore, participants greater than 45-years-old

were less likely to be *very satisfied* than those less than 45-years-old, Odds Ratio (OR) = 3.06 (95% CI 6.37 to 1.47). There was no significance found for educational attainment for those with less than a high school diploma compared to those with greater than a high school diploma, Odds Ratio (OR) = 0.617 (95% CI 0.322 to 1.182),  $p=0.145$ . Significance was also noted in the socio-demographic characteristic of gender, with an observed Odds Ratio (OR) = 6.742 (95% CI 3.809 to 16.182),  $p=0.000$ . Male Participants were nearly seven times more likely to report being very satisfied.

#### Somewhat Satisfied compared to Very Dissatisfied

The second-third of Table 11, depicted the outcome of *somewhat satisfied* compared to *very dissatisfied*. There was no significance found for ethnicity with Jamaicans compared to African Americans, Odds Ratio (OR) = 0.811 (95% CI 0.329 to 2.002),  $p=0.650$ . Significance was found for educational attainment with participants less than a high school diploma, compared to those with a high school diploma, more likely to report *somewhat satisfied*, Odds Ratio (OR) = 0.476 (95% CI 0.244 to 0.927),  $p=0.029$ . Therefore, participants with a high school diploma were less likely to report *somewhat satisfied* than those without a high school diploma, Odds Ratio (OR) = 2.10 (95% CI 4.10 to 1.08). Significance was found for age with participants less than 45-years-old, as compared to those greater than 45-years-old, more likely to report *somewhat satisfied*, Odds Ratio (OR) = 0.465 (95% CI 0.221 to 0.979),  $p=0.044$ . Therefore, participants greater than 45-years-old were less likely to report *somewhat satisfied* than those less than 45-years-old, Odds Ratio (OR) = 2.15 (95% CI 4.52 to 1.02). Additionally, significance was found for gender with male participants as compared to female participants more likely to report *somewhat satisfied*, Odds Ratio (OR) = 3.649 (95% CI 1.503 to 8.858),  $p=0.004$ .

### Somewhat Dissatisfied compared to Very Dissatisfied

The last-third of Table 11 reported the outcome of *somewhat dissatisfied* compared to *very dissatisfied*. There was no significance found for ethnicity with Jamaicans compared to African Americans, Odds Ratio (OR) = 0.598 (95% CI 0.216 to 1.658),  $p=0.323$ . Significance was found with educational attainment for participants with less than high school diploma, compared to those with a high school diploma, more likely to report *somewhat dissatisfied*, Odds Ratio (OR) = 0.413 (95% CI 0.178 to 0.957),  $p=0.039$ . Therefore, participants with a high school diploma were less likely to report *somewhat dissatisfied* than those with without a high school diploma, Odds Ratio (OR) = 2.421 (95% CI 5.628 to 1.045). Significance was also found with gender for male participants, as compared to female participant, more likely to report *somewhat dissatisfied* compared to *very dissatisfied*, Odds Ratio (OR) = 3.765 (95% CI 1.413 to 10.037),  $p=0.008$ . Overall, these findings indicated a significant prediction of marital satisfaction for gender with participants who are males; for age with participants under 45-years-old, and for educational attainment with participants having less than a high school diploma. These results suggested that age, gender, and educational attainment were significant predictors of marital satisfaction opposed to ethnicity.



Table 7. Case Processing Summary: Socio-demographic Variables

		N	Marginal Percentage
Marital Satisfaction	VERY SATISFIED	1104	65.2%
	SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	468	27.7%
	SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED	78	4.6%
	VERY DISSATISFIED	42	2.5%
Ethnicity	African American	1444	85.3%
	Jamaican	248	14.7%
Educational Attainment	Less than High School Diploma	518	30.6%
	High School Diploma	1174	69.4%
Age	Less than 45 years	946	55.9%
	Greater than 45 years	746	44.1%
Gender	Male	804	47.5%
	Female	888	52.5%
Valid		1692	100.0%
Missing		1196	
Total		2888	
Subpopulation		16	

Table 8. Model Fitting Information: Socio-demographic Variables

Model	Model Fitting Criteria	Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	318.442			
Final	198.320	120.122	12	<b>*.000</b>

Table 9. Goodness-of-Fit: Socio-demographic Variables

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	79.474	33	<b>*.000</b>
Deviance	63.146	33	.001

Table 10. Likelihood Ratio Tests: Socio-demographic Variables

Effect	Model Fitting Criteria	Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	-2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept	1.983E2	.000	0	.
Ethnicity	216.531	18.211	3	*.070
Educational Attainment	206.848	8.528	3	<b>*.036</b>
Age	233.292	34.972	3	<b>*.000</b>
Gender	250.894	52.574	3	<b>*.000</b>

The chi-square statistic is the difference in -2 log-likelihoods between the final model and a reduced model. The reduced model is formed by omitting an effect from the final model. The null hypothesis is that all parameters of that effect are 0.

a. This reduced model is equivalent to the final model because omitting the effect does not increase the degrees of freedom.

Table 11. Parameter Estimates: Socio-demographic Variables

		B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
								Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Marital Satisfaction	VERY SATISFIED								
	Intercept	3.249	.525	38.289	1	.000			
	Jamaican	.353	.457	.597	1	.440	1.424	.581	3.490
	African American	0 <sup>b</sup>			0				
	Less than High School	-.483	.332	2.122	1	.145	.617	.322	1.182
	High School Diploma	0 <sup>b</sup>			0				
	Less than 45 years	-1.117	.374	8.927	1	*.003	.327	.157	.681
	Greater than 45 years	0 <sup>b</sup>			0				
	Male	1.908	.447	18.255	1	.000	6.742	2.809	16.182
	Female	0 <sup>b</sup>			0				
SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	Intercept	3.025	.530	32.603	1	.000			
	African American	-.209	.461	.206	1	.650	.811	.329	2.002
	Jamaican	0 <sup>b</sup>			0				
	Less than High School Diploma	-.743	.340	4.769	1	*.029	.476	.244	.927
	High School Diploma	0 <sup>b</sup>			0				
	Less than 45 years	-.766	.380	4.063	1	*.044	.465	.221	.979
	Greater than 45 years	0 <sup>b</sup>			0				
	Male	1.294	.453	8.184	1	*.004	3.649	1.503	8.858
	Female]	0 <sup>b</sup>			0				
	SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED	Intercept	.861	.619	1.932	1	.165		
African American		-.515	.520	.978	1	.323	.598	.216	1.658
Jamaican		0 <sup>b</sup>			0				
Less than High School		-.885	.429	4.249	1	*.039	.413	.178	.957
Greater than High School]		0 <sup>b</sup>			0				
Less than 45 years		.129	.465	.077	1	.781	1.138	.458	2.829
Greater than 45 years		0 <sup>b</sup>			0				
Male		1.326	.500	7.025	1	*.008	3.765	1.413	10.037
Female		0 <sup>b</sup>			0				

a. The reference category is: VERY DISSATISFIED. b. This parameter is set to zero because it is redundant.

### Research Question Three

The third research question sought to predict marital satisfaction based on ethnicity and measures of social support and religion. To answer the question, one hypothesis was examined. Multinomial Logistic Regression investigated the hypothesis that no predictive relationship existed with marital satisfaction based on ethnicity, social support, and religion.

In Table 12 presents a summary of the cases for this research question, highlighting the 12 subpopulations under investigation. Table 13 depicted whether this marital satisfaction and social support and religion model predictions, compared to the Intercept Only (Null model). The Null model uses the modal class (somewhat satisfied) as the model's prediction accuracy – 30.3%,  $p < 0.05$ . Table 14 revealed the model adequately fits the data, with  $p < 0.05$ , we could conclude that this model adequately fits the data. The Likelihood ratio test (Table 15) represented the contribution of each variable to the model –social support had a significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) contribution.

#### Very Satisfied compared to Very Dissatisfied

The first-third of Table 16 depicted the outcome of *very satisfied* compared to *very dissatisfied*. There was no significance found for ethnicity with Jamaicans compared to African Americans, Odds Ratio (OR) = 0.851 (95% CI 0.358 to 2.018),  $p = 0.713$ . Significance was found with social support for participants who reported receiving social support “very often” and “fairly often” compared to those who reported “not too often” or “never,” Odds Ratio (OR) = 0.383 (95% CI 0.213 to 0.687),  $p = 0.001$ . Therefore, participants who reported receiving social support “not too often” or “never” were less likely to report *very satisfied* opposed to those who

reported receiving social support “very often” and “fairly often”, Odds Ratio (OR) = 1.176 (95% CI 0.70 to 1.46). There was no significance found with religion, Odds Ratio (OR) = 1.013 (95% CI 0.093 to 2.610),  $p=0.979$ .

#### Somewhat Satisfied compared to Very Dissatisfied

The second third of Table 16 represented outcomes of *somewhat satisfied* compared to *very dissatisfied*. There was no significance found for ethnicity with Jamaicans compared to African Americans, Odds Ratio (OR) = 0.623 (95% CI 0.261 to 1.489),  $p=0.287$ . There was no significance found with social support, Odds Ratio (OR) = 0.612 (95% CI 0.340 to 1.102),  $p=0.102$ . Additionally, there was no significance found with religion, Odds Ratio (OR) = 1.483 (95% CI 0.570 to 3.856),  $p=0.419$ .

#### Somewhat Dissatisfied compared to Very Dissatisfied

The second third of Table 16 reflected outcomes of *somewhat dissatisfied* compared to *very dissatisfied*. There was no significance found for ethnicity with Jamaicans compared to African Americans, Odds Ratio (OR) = 0.638 (95% CI 0.240 to 1.696),  $p=0.367$ . There was no significance found with social support, Odds Ratio (OR) = 0.852 (95% CI 0.430 to 1.688),  $p=0.646$ . Additionally, there was no significance found with religion, Odds Ratio (OR) = 2.214 (95% CI 0.739 to 6.628),  $p=0.156$ .

These findings indicated a significant prediction of marital satisfaction among people who received social support “very often” and “fairly often” opposed to ethnicity and religion.

Table 12. Case Processing Summary: Social Support and Religion

		N	Marginal Percentage
Marital Satisfaction	VERY SATISFIED	1692	63.2%
	SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	812	30.3%
	SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED	120	4.5%
	VERY DISSATISFIED	54	2.0%
Ethnicity	African American	2292	85.6%
	Jamaican	386	14.4%
Religion	A few times a year	266	9.9%
	A few times a month/At least once a month	1472	55.0%
	At least once a week	940	35.1%
Social Support	Not too often/Never	496	18.5%
	Very Often/Fairly Often	2182	81.5%
Valid		2678	100.0%
Missing		210	
Total		2888	
Subpopulation		12	

Table 13. Model Fitting Information: Social Support and Religion

Model	Model Fitting Criteria	Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	222.221			
Final	175.564	46.657	12	<b>*.000</b>

Table 14. Goodness-of-Fit: Social Support and Religion

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	50.177	21	.000
Deviance	54.771	21	.000

Table 15. Likelihood Ratio Tests: Social Support and Religion

Effect	Model Fitting Criteria	Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	-2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept	1.756E2	.000	0	.
Ethnicity	183.220	7.656	3	.054
Religion	1.756E2	.000	0	.
Social Support	202.225	26.662	3	<b>*.000</b>

The chi-square statistic is the difference in -2 log-likelihoods between the final model and a reduced model. The reduced model is formed by omitting an effect from the final model. The null hypothesis is that all parameters of that effect are 0.

a. This reduced model is equivalent to the final model because omitting the effect does not increase the degrees of freedom.



Table 16. Parameter Estimates: Social Support and Religion

		B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
								Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Marital Satisfaction <sup>a</sup>									
VERY SATISFIED	Intercept	3.997	.477	70.310	1	.000			
	Jamaican	-.162	.441	.135	1	.713	.851	.358	2.018
	African American	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
	Religion - A few times a year	-.257	.492	.273	1	.601	.773	.295	2.029
	Religion - A few times a month/At least once a month	-.274	.312	.774	1	.379	.760	.413	1.400
	Social Support - Very Often/Fairly Often	-.961	.298	10.362	1	*.001	.383	.213	.687
	Social Support - Not too often/Never	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	Intercept	3.364	.481	48.922	1	.000			
	Jamaican	-.473	.445	1.132	1	.287	.623	.261	1.489
	African American	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
	Religion - A few times a year	-.084	.499	.028	1	.867	.920	.346	2.446
	Religion - A few times a month/At least once a month	-.146	.317	.214	1	.644	.864	.464	1.607
	Social Support -Very Often/Fairly Often	-.557	.303	3.382	1	.066	.573	.316	1.037
	Social Support - - Not too often/Never	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED	Intercept	1.017	.550	3.427	1	.064			
	Jamaican	-.450	.499	.813	1	.367	.638	.240	1.696
	African American	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.
	Religion -- A few times a year	.296	.585	.255	1	.614	1.344	.427	4.232
	Religion - A few times a month/At least once a month	.341	.378	.813	1	.367	1.406	.670	2.950
	Social Support - Very Often/Fairly Often	-.248	.355	.486	1	.486	.781	.389	1.566
	Social Support - Not too often/Never	0 <sup>b</sup>	.	.	0	.	.	.	.

a. The reference category is: VERY DISSATISFIED. b. This parameter is set to zero because it is redundant.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate and examine factors that might affect marital satisfaction in Jamaicans and African Americans living in the United States, and to identify significance with those factors. A Pearson Chi-square analysis investigates the first research question's hypothesis that no relationship existed between marital satisfaction and ethnicity. This statistical procedure was used because both predictor and outcome variables were categorical. Using Pearson Chi-square, findings indicated a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and ethnicity.

Multinomial Logistic Regression analysis investigates the second research question and hypothesis that no predictive relationship exists between marital satisfaction and ethnicity with age, gender, and educational attainment. Findings for research question and hypothesis two indicated age was a significant predictor of greater marital satisfaction for participants less than 45-years-old; gender was a significant predictor of greater marital satisfaction with males; and educational attainment level was a significant predictor of greater marital satisfaction with participants possessing less than a high school diploma.

Multinomial Logistic Regression analysis investigates the third research question and hypothesis that no predictive relationship existed between marital satisfaction and ethnicity with social support and religion. Findings for research question and hypothesis three indicated social support was a significant predictor of greater marital satisfaction for participants who reported receiving support "very often" and "fairly often" opposed to ethnicity and religion.

Taken alone, using Pearson Chi-square analysis, there was a significant relationship found with marital satisfaction and ethnicity. However, no significance was found for marital

satisfaction and ethnicity when other factors were included in the model, as was the case when using Multinomial Logistic Regression. Overall, the results of the research questions suggested that ethnicity, age, gender, educational attainment, and social support were significant predictors of marital satisfaction as opposed to religion. Regarding ethnicity a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and ethnicity, where African Americans participants reported at a higher percentage than Jamaicans. With age as a significant predictor of greater marital satisfaction, participants less than 45-years-old indicated significance over participants greater than 45-years-old. Regarding gender as a significant predictor of greater marital satisfaction, male participants indicated significance opposed to females. With educational attainment level, a significant predictor of greater marital satisfaction indicated participants possessing less than a high school diploma versus those possessing a high school diploma. Additionally, social support was a significant predictor of greater marital satisfaction for participants who reported receiving support “very often” and “fairly often.” Lastly, religion was not a significant indicator of significance with marital satisfaction.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate and examine factors that might affect marital satisfaction among Jamaicans and African Americans living in the United States and identify similarities and differences of those factors. This marital satisfaction factors study utilized the National Survey of America Life dataset to examine variables including ethnicity, age, gender, education, social support and religion.

Findings for the first research question and hypothesis indicated a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and ethnicity. Findings for the second research question and hypothesis indicated that age below 45 was a significant predictor of marital satisfaction. Being male predicted greater marital satisfaction, and having less than a high school diploma was found to predict greater marital satisfaction. Findings for research question and hypothesis three indicated social support was a significant predictor of marital satisfaction for participants who reported receiving support “very often” and “fairly often.” Overall, these results suggested that ethnicity, age, gender, education and social support were significant predictors of marital satisfaction while religion did not predict satisfaction.

### Ethnicity and Gender

The findings of this study indicated that there is a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and ethnicity for both Jamaicans and African Americans when analyzed independently with Pearson Chi-square. Though the percentage in findings was marginal, African Americans 64% and Jamaicans 58%, it warrant to mention that since all the participants of this study lived in the United States at the time of the study, it might be safe to assume that the

American culture may have influenced the choices and values of the participants. Since Jamaican participants reported a satisfaction level 7% less than that reported by African American participants, this may be explained by the probable lack of adaptation to gender roles of United States culture. Individuals tend to match gender role expectations of their native culture (Taylor, Jackson, Chatters, 1997). In other words, Jamaicans may be less satisfied when they are immigrants because they feel at odds with the surrounding cultural expectations regarding gender. In Jamaica, marital expectations indicate shared experience. While socialized to marital roles of United States, in many ways, Jamaicans may have divergent perspectives on which culture's gender roles are appropriate for their marriage (Dixon, 2007). These realities may carry both cultural and intellectual imprints. Participants may (consciously or unconsciously) make a choice about which culture they see in their marriage and which demands will affect their desires.

Utilizing the original dataset from the National Survey of American Life study, Bryant et al. (2008) found that gender and ethnicity were associated with reports of marital satisfaction while comparing Black Caribbean and African American. This is consistent with other findings. Research has indicated that men typically benefit more from marriage than females. These benefits include longer lifespan, better physical health, and more positive behavior (Meadows, 2007 & Umberson, Williams, Powers, Liu, & Needham, 2006). Bryant et al. (2008) also found an association with gender and marital satisfaction. While investigating gender however, Bryant and colleagues found that women reported high levels of satisfaction. Thus, the current findings are somewhat at odds with this earlier study. However, Bryant's study looked at marital satisfaction among African Americans and Black Caribbeans.

The findings of this marital satisfaction factors study indicated that gender was a significant predictor of marital satisfaction for males. This researcher speculated that it might be the case that females in these marital relationships became caretakers for males, which then left the males with healthier lives and a feeling of great satisfaction with their lives as well as within their marriages. Females, however, may not have experienced as much satisfaction because they were the givers in these relationships and did not receive as much to formulate feelings of satisfaction. Research has consistently reported that men generally benefitted more from marriage than did women. Meadows (2007) reported that fathers who married the mothers of their children in the year following the birth were healthier than their single counterparts. Additionally, it is often stated that “men, in general, physically benefit from the status of being married. Their health status improves, negative physical symptoms decrease, and positive behaviors increase, for the most part, when they get married, compared to their still-unmarried peers” (Staton, 2008, p. 1). It is therefore easy to see why the men in this marital satisfaction factors study reported greater marital satisfaction than women.

#### Age

This study found that those participants less than 45 years of age reported significantly greater satisfaction with their marriage than those who are greater than 45 years old. This is difficult to understand when coupled with the fact that young persons in Jamaica are divorcing at a rate much higher than older persons (Collinder, 2008b). Perhaps these results reflected these participants because these Jamaican participants are presently residing in the United States and the influence of culture and migration affected the difference seen with the Jamaicans living in Jamaica. Research by Kaslow and Robinson (1996) indicated that couples who were married after the age of 22 reported higher marital satisfaction. This leads to an inquiry about the

influence of marital satisfaction and age or conversely, if one's age at the onset of marriage affects the satisfaction of marriage. In addition, the length of time a couple has been married and its effect on marital satisfaction may be more important than the actual age. Other factors to be considered include the level and type of expectation each partner had at the time of marriage; whether or not having children impacted the satisfaction of marriage; the dynamics of the household; and role sharing as factors that impacts marital satisfaction (Dillaway & Broman, 2001; Farley & Bianchi, 1991). Unfortunately, the data set did not provide the information, which would help solve this problem.

### Education

Creighton-Zollar and Williams (1992) found no association between education and marital quality of Blacks. This marital satisfaction study, however, found that participants with less than a high school diploma reported greater satisfaction with their marriage than those with a high school diploma. This researcher speculated that education enhances the quality of life. With less education, one may maintain a certain sense of naivety and be more willing to accept life as it comes without major desires for more. Therefore, satisfaction with one's marriage and being very satisfied may come readily for someone with less than a high school education.

Additionally, Broman (1993) reported that wives' educational level among Blacks is a factor frequently proposed to affect marital quality while Heaton (2002) found that women with more education than their husbands had a greater likelihood to have a marriage that ended in divorce. As women become more educated, they gain more power in the relationship and see more options for their lives (Dillaway & Broman, 2001). The findings of this study, in conjunction with the findings of other researchers, suggested the probable need for educated women to maintain a single status or run the risk of engaging in a marriage that may end in divorce.

### Social Support

Social support reportedly acts as a buffering factor against personal distress (Demaray et al., 2002). Low social support is associated with negative outcomes such as depression (Elmaci, 2006), adjustment and behavioral problems (Kashani et al., 1994) and feelings of hopelessness and withdrawn behavior (Kashani et al., 1994). In this study, participants who received social support “very often” and “fairly often” reported more satisfaction in their marriage. Since social support appears to enhance positive experiences and ward-off negative experiences, it is clear to see why this factor would couple positively with satisfaction in one’s marriage.

Participants of this study who reported being “fairly close” to their family and friends and received their supports, as well as those who reported connection with that support system “fairly often” reported more satisfaction in their marriages. This also reflected the cultural make-up of Jamaicans that are inclusive and family-oriented instead of individualistic in their interactions (Henry, 1994). Additionally, this is reflective of healthy relations as those who would otherwise have connections with their family and friends “very often” or feel “very close” to them would more likely reflect an enmeshed relationship; one that is not very healthy for a marital experience as the family of origin would likely be more fused. That would leave little room for greater marital health, growth, and satisfaction between partners.

### Religion

A surprising finding for this study was the lack of significant relationship between religion and satisfaction in marriages for either Jamaican or African American participants. A number of researchers reported the significant relationship associated with religion and marriage (Banchand & Carson, 2001; Brooks, 2006; Boyd-Franklin, 1989; Dixon, 2007; Hill, 1971; Knox, 1985; Marks et al., 2008; Smith, Burlew, Mosley & Whitney, 1978). The studies by Brooks



(2006) and Marks and colleagues (2008) used qualitative methodology over a period of two years. Though the marital satisfaction study utilized a combination of questions related to individual religious practice, one may wonder whether the questions assessed individual orthodoxy and religious practice or intrinsic relationship with a higher power. For example, religion questions asked: “How often do you read religions books or other religious material?” Participants’ response to this question may relate to personal interest or research opposed to personal religious practice. Additional questions asked: “How often do you watch religious programs on TV or listen to religious programs on the radio?” These responses may be related to one’s expose based on influence or environment and not personal preference. The final set of questions on religion asked; “How often do you pray or ask someone to pray for you?” There were no follow-up questions about the reasons behind the prayer request or prayer or the types of prayers performed. All the oppositions may present an influence on one’s religious practice and reflect relations with a higher power.

Religion plays a significant role in shaping Caribbean society and is one of the central axes of Jamaican life (Beckford, 1975; Wyatt, Durvasula, Guthrie, LeFranc & Forge, 1999). Additionally, Boyd-Franklin (1989), Knox (1985), and Marks et al. (2008) emphasized the great importance of religion to African American culture. This supported the idea that religion plays a significant role in the lives of both Jamaicans and African Americans. A lack of significance with the religion variable in this study raises questions. Did the participants in this study identify religion as an act of social support (i.e. church attendance and ritualistic family event?), or was the religion experience intrinsically fulfilling for personal growth and development? One may consider whether or not going to church as a couple was a ritualistic practice that held no value or depth of meaning. This experience could have been a patterned behavior without

affecting other life areas therefore yielding no significant effect on the satisfaction of a couple's marriage. Although religion generally functions as a support system that has merit for marriages, since many people recite their vows with a religious foundation, the findings of this study did not support the general assumption that religious predicts marital satisfaction.

### Implications for Clinical Practice

This study had important implications for mental health professionals. First, cross cultural challenges and acculturation issues for Jamaicans residing in the United States might be considered in terms of their responses to the interviewers questions (Foner, 2005). This may include the fact that they were in the process of becoming accustomed to new cultural norms and understanding these meanings. Because they are transplants, Jamaicans may not have as much access to social support. In this study, those participants who received social support "very often" and "fairly often" reported a significantly greater satisfaction in their marriage. Because Jamaicans are unable to access their support system due to distance, this may negatively affect the satisfaction of marriages within this culture. With this knowledge, treatment providers should address issues of immigration and the effects of possible cultural isolation in treatment plans. This may provide Jamaicans with a safe place to explore feelings and normalize the realities of the effect of relocation on their marital experience and life on a whole (Jackson, 2007). Additionally, marriage education courses may begin to incorporate cross-cultural topics into their curriculum to meet the transitional needs of these immigrants.

Additionally, since those with less than a high school diploma reported greater marital satisfaction, college counselors may benefit from addressing the importance of social support issues in treatment plans for their married clients. It may be the case that couples who have never moved from their homes and live in the same communities within which they were raised are

more satisfied with their marriages because they have a stable and consistent support network. Do educated couples of this ethnicity feel isolated? This finding is provocative and its exact meaning requires fuller exploration.

#### Implications for Future Study

The present study was an initial exploration of marital satisfaction factors for Jamaican and African American participants. One important accomplishment of this study is that it is among the first to include Jamaicans in marriage research. It would be beneficial for future research to survey Jamaican and African American individuals living in Jamaica for a comparative look as the effect of the same marital satisfaction factors on these two ethnic groups. Additionally, exploring the significance of the effect of social support on the marriages of other ethnic groups not explored in this study would be beneficial.

A question that might be investigated is whether social support affected education. Since this study's findings indicated students with less than a high school diploma had more satisfying marriages, might it be inferred that these students were married and remained in their hometowns where a social support system is established? Were these less educated individuals more likely to stay in their communities and receive the benefits of social support? Future study should focus on this interesting finding.

#### Limitations

Although this study has several strengths, it is necessary to mention some of the limitations. Utilizing a secondary dataset has a number of benefits and limitations. Stewart and Kamins (1993) stated that secondary data should not be used without careful evaluation, and data obtained from secondary sources require especially close scrutiny. Because the researcher in the present study was unable to be present during the interviewer training and the actual interviews,

in essence, this was a blind analysis of the data. Additionally, the present researcher did not participate in the formulation of questions, and was not privy to the nonverbal responses of the participants and how that may have affected the answers they provided. In addition, the researcher had no control of the environment where interviews took place and how that might have affected the quality of the data collected. In addition, the researcher had no control over the compilation of data and no means for checking inconsistencies or errors in recording.

This marital satisfaction factors study involved individual participants and not couples. Therefore, a holistic view of marital satisfaction from the couples themselves may be clouded by the reality of the individual participants. Additionally, the subsample of Jamaicans utilized in this study did not specify those born in Jamaica from those with Jamaican parents or grandparents. This may have affected acculturation factors and affected data results. Additionally, the marital satisfaction question was one item in a long interview. Although single item indicators of marital satisfaction are normal in research (Bryant, et al., 2008; Glenn, 1989; Johnson, 1995; Schoen, Rogers, & Amato, 2006), this may have contributed to variability lack of variability in scores which reflects on the validity of the research results.

Campbell and Stanley (1996) have written about internal and external validity in research studies. The extended data collection filed period to over two years may have affected validity on a variety of levels. For example, from the original sample, the Caribbean participants had high refusal rates after September 11 and the use of telephone interviews was authorized for areas where there were no interviewers to conduct in-person interviews. The demographics of the intended population may have changed related to the intent with the initial set-up of the study. Additionally, maturation regarding the normal passage of time and the performance of each participant may have affected the result. There may have been mistakes made in relation to

research fidelity, instrumentation, testing, as well as selection interaction. Future researchers should account for these limitations when reading this study.

Finally, the reporting of marital satisfaction may be biased since it is based on self report. Individual perception of satisfaction and the level of satisfaction may vary based on feelings, circumstances, and situations regardless of one's ethnicity, age, gender, education level, social support received, or religion. Though marital satisfaction is relative and not absolute (Levenson, Carstensen & Gottman, 1993), marital expectations and a feeling of satisfaction that may affect a marriage, significantly affects the reporting of satisfaction between individuals. Thus, people enter a marital experience with the expectation that they will have satisfying marriages and therefore experience that as a result. Conversely, entering a marriage with certain expectations may negatively affect the level of satisfaction

### Conclusion

The purpose of this study of marital satisfaction was to investigate and examine factors that might affect marital satisfaction among Jamaicans and African Americans living in the United States and identify similarities and differences of those factors. No previous study has compared these cultural groups. This study utilized the National Survey of America Life data set. The factors investigated included the effect of age, gender, educational attainment, social support, and religion on the marital satisfaction of these two groups. For the first research question, the dependent variable was marital satisfaction and the independent variable was ethnicity. For the second research question, the dependent variable was marital satisfaction and the independent variables were age, gender, and educational attainment. For the third research question, the dependent variable was marital satisfaction and the independent variables were social support and religion.

A Pearson Chi-square analysis investigated the first research question's hypothesis that no relationship existed with marital satisfaction and ethnicity. Findings indicated a marginally significant relationship between marital satisfaction and ethnicity. A Multinomial Logistic Regression analysis investigated the second research question and hypothesis that no predictive relationship existed between marital satisfaction and ethnicity with age, gender, and educational attainment. Findings indicated age, gender and educational attainment level were significant predictors of marital satisfaction. A Multinomial Logistic Regression analysis investigated the third research question and hypothesis that no predictive relationship existed between marital satisfaction and ethnicity with social support and religion. Findings indicated social support was a significant predictor of marital satisfaction and religion was not. Overall, these results suggested that ethnicity, age, gender, educational attainment and social support were significant predictors of marital satisfaction opposed to religion.

Investigating these two cultures in relation to marital satisfaction could lead to an enhanced awareness of the similarities and uniqueness of each group. It may also provide insight to service providers. For example, mental health clinicians or, specifically, marriage and family therapists, may gain insight into the similarities and differences of these two groups and therefore tailor their treatment services accordingly. Additionally, these findings might affect intervention approaches for clinicians.

Bilingsley (1968) stated that the Black family has proven to be "fully capable of surviving by adapting to the historical and contemporary social conditions facing the Negro people; the Negro family has proven to be an amazingly resilient institution" (p. 21). Both Jamaicans and African Americans in this study exemplified this by the results of the findings of

this study. Despite historical challenges, the participants in this study still reported high levels of marital satisfaction with the factors of age, gender, education and social support.

The analysis and findings of this study are an important examination of marital satisfaction factors among Jamaicans and African Americans. Investigating these two cultures in relation to marital satisfaction may lead to an enhanced awareness of the similarities and unique qualities of each group. It may also provide insight to service providers. For example, mental health counselors or marriage and family therapists may gain insight into the similarities and differences of these two groups and therefore tailor their treatment services accordingly. Additionally, these findings may affect intervention approaches for clinicians. For example, social support groups for Jamaican immigrants may provide enhanced satisfaction in their marriages. This investigation may also provide members of these and other cultures with an increased awareness of similarities and differences. Research and service providers may utilize these findings to improve offerings to members of these cultural groups. This study provided an unparalleled opportunity to begin important explorations into the nature of marital satisfaction within these two groups.

APPENDIX A: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL





University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board  
Office of Research & Commercialization  
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501  
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246  
Telephone: 407-823-2901, 407-882-2012 or 407-882-2276  
[www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html](http://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html)

### Notice of Exempt Review Status

From: UCF Institutional Review Board  
FWA00000351, Exp. 10/8/11, IRB00001138

To: Nivischi N. Edwards

Date: November 12, 2008

IRB Number: SBE-08-05914

Study Title: **Black Marital Satisfaction: Factors for African American and Black Caribbean Couples.**

Dear Researcher:

Your research protocol was reviewed by the IRB Chair on 11/12/2008. Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.101, your study has been determined to be **minimal risk for human subjects and exempt** from 45 CFR 46 federal regulations and further IRB review or renewal unless you later wish to add the use of identifiers or change the protocol procedures in a way that might increase risk to participants. Before making any changes to your study, call the IRB office to discuss the changes. **A change which incorporates the use of identifiers may mean the study is no longer exempt, thus requiring the submission of a new application to change the classification to expedited if the risk is still minimal.** Please submit the Termination/Final Report form when the study has been completed. All forms may be completed and submitted online at <https://iris.research.ucf.edu>.

The category for which exempt status has been determined for this protocol is as follows:

4. Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. ("*Existing*" means already collected and/or stored before your study starts, not that collection will occur as part of routine care.)

All data, which may include signed consent form documents, must be retained in a locked file cabinet for a minimum of three years (six if HIPAA applies) past the completion of this research. Any links to the identification of participants should be maintained on a password-protected computer if electronic information is used. Additional requirements may be imposed by your funding agency, your department, or other entities. Access to data is limited to authorized individuals listed as key study personnel.

On behalf of Tracy Dietz, Ph.D., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 11/12/2008 11:41:34 AM EST

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joanne Muratori".

IRB Coordinator

## APPENDIX B: ICPSR AGREEMENT



## Restricted Data Use Agreement

INSTRUCTIONS: Please submit an original-signature copy of this agreement; this will be countersigned and a copy returned to you.

The Restricted Data Investigator and the Receiving Organization agree to the following terms and conditions:

### Terms

1. "Restricted Data" refers to the original restricted data provided by ICPSR and any fields or variables derived from these data, on whatever media they shall exist. (Aggregated statistical summaries of data and analyses, such as tables and regression statistics, are not considered "derived" for the purposes of this agreement.)
2. "Restricted Data Investigator" refers to the investigator who serves as the primary point of contact for all communications involving this agreement. The Restricted Data Investigator assumes all responsibility for compliance with all terms of this agreement by employees of the receiving organization.
3. "Principal Investigator(s)" refers to the Restricted Data Investigator and any Co-Principal Investigators.
4. "Receiving Organization" refers to the organization employing the Restricted Data Investigator.
5. "Research Staff" refers to any individuals other than the "Restricted Data Investigator (s)" with access to the restricted data.
6. The "Representative of the Receiving Organization" refers to an individual who has the authority to represent your organization in agreements of this sort, such as a Vice President, Dean, Provost, Center Director, or similar official. (Note that a Department Chair is not acceptable unless specific written delegation of authority exists.)
7. "ICPSR" refers to the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research.

### Items Incorporated by Reference

8. The Application for Restricted Data, as approved by ICPSR, is incorporated by reference into this Agreement.
9. The Supplemental Agreement with Research Staff, as approved by ICPSR, is incorporated by reference into this Agreement.
10. The Data Protection Plan, developed by the Restricted Data Investigator, is incorporated by reference into this Agreement.

### Ownership of Data

11. Ownership of restricted data will be retained by ICPSR. Permission to use restricted data by the Investigator(s) and Receiving Organization may be revoked by ICPSR at any time, at their discretion. The Investigator(s) and Receiving Organization must return or destroy all originals and copies of the restricted data, on whatever media it may exist, within 5 days of written request to do so.

### **Access to the Restricted Data**

12. Access to the restricted data will be limited solely to the individuals signing this agreement and the Supplemental Agreement With Research Staff, as detailed in the approved Data Protection Plan. The data may not be "loaned" or otherwise conveyed to anyone other than the signatories to this agreement.
13. Copies of the restricted data or any subsequent variables or data files derived from the restricted data will not be provided to any other individual or organization without the prior written consent of the ICPSR.

### **Uses of the Restricted Data**

14. The restricted data will be used solely for the purpose of scientific and public policy research, and not for any administrative, proprietary, or law enforcement purposes.
15. The restricted data will be used to generate only statistical summary information that does not allow any individual, family, household, business, or organization to be identified.
16. The restricted data will be used solely for the research project described in the Application for Restricted Data incorporated by reference into this document.
17. No attempt will be made to identify any individual person, family, household, business, or organization. If an individual person, family, household, business, or organization is inadvertently identified, or if a technique for doing so is discovered, the identification or discovery will be immediately reported to ICPSR, and the identification or discovery will not be revealed to any other person who is not a signatory to this agreement.
18. No attempt will be made to link this restricted data with any other dataset, including other datasets provided by ICPSR, unless specifically identified in the approved Application for Restricted Data.
19. Use of the restricted data will be consistent with the receiving organization's policies regarding scientific integrity and human subjects research.

### **Data Confidentiality Procedures**

20. If the Receiving Organization requires a review of research proposals using secondary survey data by an Institutional Review Board/Human Subjects Review Committee or equivalent body, that review has taken place and all approvals have been granted prior to application for use of the restricted data.

21. The Receiving Organization will treat allegations, by ICPSR or other parties, of violations of this agreement as allegations of violations of its policies and procedures on scientific integrity and misconduct. If the allegations are confirmed, the Receiving Organization will treat the violations as it would violations of the explicit terms of its policies on scientific integrity and misconduct.
22. The Restricted Data Investigator certifies that all aspects of the Data Protection Plan, as approved by ICPSR, will be followed until which time all copies of the restricted data are destroyed.

### **Destruction of Data Upon Completion of Research Project**

23. The Restricted Data Investigator will certify to ICPSR that all originals and copies of the restricted data, on whatever media, will be destroyed at the completion of the research project described in the Application for Restricted Use Data or within 5 days of written request from the ICPSR.

### **Duration of This Agreement**

24. This Agreement will go into effect upon approval of the Agreement by ICPSR, and will remain in effect until the completion of the research project, as noted in the Application for Restricted Use Data, or 24 months from the date this Agreement is accepted by ICPSR, whichever comes first. If, at the end of 24 months, access to the restricted data is still desired, the Restricted Data Investigator must contact ICPSR in writing requesting such continued access. If continued access is denied by ICPSR, or if the Restricted Data Investigator neglects to contact the ICPSR prior to the end of the 24-month period, all originals and copies of the restricted data, on whatever media they exist, must be destroyed by the Restricted Data Investigator.

### **Post-Approval Modifications to Submitted Materials**

25. If changes in research plans or computer environment will alter the information originally submitted as part of this Agreement, the Restricted Data Investigator shall provide the ICPSR with a copy of the revised materials and a memorandum describing the changes in advance of the revisions. These revisions will be considered amendments to this agreement and may not be implemented until written approval is received by ICPSR.
26. A change in the employer of the Restricted Data Investigator requires the execution of a new Restricted Data Use Agreement and preparation of a new Data Protection Plan. These materials must be approved by ICPSR before restricted data may be accessed at the new place of employment.
27. When other research staff join the project, they shall submit the Supplemental Agreement with Research Staff. Such supplemental agreements shall be submitted in a timely manner but, in any event, prior to granting other research staff access to the data on whatever media in which the data may exist.

### Violation of This Agreement


28. If ICPSR determines that the Agreement may have been violated, ICPSR will inform the Restricted Data Investigator(s) of the allegations in writing and will provide them with an opportunity to respond in writing within 10 days. ICPSR may also, at that time, require immediate return or destruction of all copies of the restricted data in possession of the investigators. Failure to do so will be determined to be a material breach of this agreement and, among other legal remedies, may be subject to injunctive relief by a court of competent jurisdiction. If ICPSR deems the allegations unfounded or incorrect, the data may be returned to the Restricted Data Investigator under the terms of the original agreement. If ICPSR deems the allegations in any part to be correct, ICPSR will determine and apply the appropriate sanction(s).
29. If ICPSR determines that any aspect of this agreement has been violated, ICPSR may invoke these sanctions as it deems appropriate:
- Denial of all future access to restricted data files
  - Report of the violation to the researcher's institution's office responsible for scientific integrity and misconduct, with a request that the institution's sanctions for misconduct be imposed
  - Report of the violation to appropriate federal and private agencies or foundations that fund scientific and public policy research, with a recommendation that all current research funds be terminated, that future funding be denied to the investigator(s) and to all other persons involved in the violation, and that access to other restricted data be denied in the future
  - Such other remedies that may be available to ICPSR under law or equity, including injunctive relief

I certify that all materials submitted with this application for this restricted data are truthful.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that I am legally bound by covenants and terms of this agreement, and that violation will constitute unethical professional practice and may subject me to the sanctions listed above.

### Restricted Data Investigator

Study Title: BLACK MARITAL SATISFACTION: FACTORS FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN AND BLACK CARIBBEAN COUPLES.

Signature: 

Date: 11-21-08

Typed Name: NIVISCHI NGOZI EDWARDS

Title: DOCTORAL CANDIDATE

Institution: UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

SUPERCEDED  
BY SECOND FORM!  
DAIRE IS 'PDI'  
EDWARDS SIGNS  
'SUPPLEMENT'  
DATE Grande  
12/9/08  
11/21/2008

<http://icpsr.umich.edu/ICPSR/access/restricted/agreement.html>

Building/Room Number: COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, 222D  
Street Address: P.O. Box 161250  
City/State/ZIP: ORLANDO, FL 32816-1250  
Telephone: 407.733.2660  
Fax: 407.823.0044  
Email: nvischi@mail.ucf.edu

**Representative of the Receiving Organization**

By signing this agreement, this organization agrees that access to these confidential data will be restricted to authorized persons whose names appear on this agreement and the Supplemental Agreement with Research Staff, and that this organization is legally bound by the covenants and terms of this agreement.

Signature: Jennifer Platt  
Date: 11-21-08  
Typed Name: Jennifer Platt  
Title: Executive Associate Dean  
Institution: University of Central Florida  
Building/Room Number: College of Education  
Street Address: P.O. Box 161250  
City/State/ZIP: Orlando, FL 32816  
Telephone: (407) 823-2046  
Fax: (407) 823-5135  
Email: platt@mail.ucf.edu

**Representative of the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research**

Signature:  
Date:  
Typed Name:  
Title:  
(Signatory delegated by Chair of ICPSR Council)

ICPSR  
P.O. Box 1248  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1248  
Fax: (734) 647-8200  
e-mail: netmail@icpsr.umich.edu

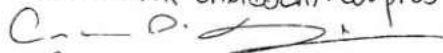


- Report of the violation to appropriate federal and private agencies or foundations that fund scientific and public policy research, with a recommendation that all current research funds be terminated, that future funding be denied to the investigator(s) and to all other persons involved in the violation, and that access to other restricted data be denied in the future
- Such other remedies that may be available to ICPSR under law or equity, including injunctive relief

I certify that all materials submitted with this application for this restricted data are truthful.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that I am legally bound by covenants and terms of this agreement, and that violation will constitute unethical professional practice and may subject me to the sanctions listed above.

### Restricted Data Investigator

Study Title: **Black MARITAL SATISFACTION: FACTORS FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN AND BLACK CARIBBEAN COUPLES**  
 Signature:   
 Date: 12.2.08  
 Typed Name: ANDREW P. DAIRE  
 Title: ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
 Institution: UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA  
 Building/Room Number: COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
 Street Address: P.O. BOX 161250  
 City/State/ZIP: ORLANDO, FL 32816-1250  
 Telephone: 407.823.0385  
 Fax: 407.823.1749  
 Email: adaire@mail.ucf.edu

### Representative of the Receiving Organization

By signing this agreement, this organization agrees that access to these confidential data will be restricted to authorized persons whose names appear on this agreement and the Supplemental Agreement with Research Staff, and that this organization is legally bound by the covenants and terms of this agreement.

Signature: 

Date: 12.02.08

Typed Name: *RET Culp*  
Title: *Dean*  
Institution: *UNIVERSITY of Central FLORIDA*  
Building/Room Number: *College of EDUCATION*  
Street Address: *P.O. BOX 161250*  
City/State/ZIP: *ORLANDO, FL 32816-1250*  
Telephone: *407.823.0549*  
Fax: *407.823.5391 5135*  
Email: *rculp@mail.ucf.edu*

Representative of the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research

Signature: *Peter Granda*  
Date: *9 December 2008*  
Typed Name: *PETER GRANDA*  
Title: *Archivist*

(Signatory delegated by Chair of ICPSR Council)

ICPSR  
P.O. Box 1248  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1248  
Fax: (734) 647-8200  
e-mail: netmail@icpsr.umich.edu

## Restricted Data Use Agreement: Supplemental Agreement With Research Staff

INSTRUCTIONS: Please submit an original-signature copy of this agreement. (It will be countersigned and a copy returned to you.) Use additional copies of this page if necessary.

The undersigned staff, in consideration of their use of this restricted data certify the following:

1. That they have read the associated Restricted Data Use Agreement, and the Data Protection Plan incorporated by reference into this Agreement.
2. That they are "Research Staff" within the meaning of the Agreement (any research staff other than the Restricted Data Investigator).
3. That they will fully comply with the terms of the Agreement, including the Data

Protection Plan incorporated by reference into it.

- 4. That they will not attempt to access this restricted data until approved to do so by the ICPSR.

Study Title Black MARITAL SATISFACTION: FACTORS FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN AND BLACK CARIBBEAN COUPLES

Signature [Handwritten Signature]

Date 12.2.08

Typed Name NIVISCHI N. EDWARDS

Title/Formal Affiliation with Research Project DOCTORAL CANDIDATE / RESEARCHER

Signature

Date

Typed Name

Title/Formal Affiliation with Research Project

The above Research Staff are hereby granted approval to access this restricted data:

Peter Grande  
 Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research


9 December 2008  
 Date

## Restricted Data Use Agreement: Supplemental Agreement With Research Staff

INSTRUCTIONS: Please submit an original-signature copy of this agreement. (It will be countersigned and a copy returned to you.) Use additional copies of this page if necessary.

The undersigned staff, in consideration of their use of this restricted data certify the following:

1. That they have read the associated Restricted Data Use Agreement, and the Data Protection Plan incorporated by reference into this Agreement.
2. That they are "Research Staff" within the meaning of the Agreement (any research staff other than the Restricted Data Investigator).
3. That they will fully comply with the terms of the Agreement, including the Data Protection Plan incorporated by reference into it.
4. That they will not attempt to access this restricted data until approved to do so by the ICPSR.

Study Title BLACK Marital Satisfaction: FACTORS for AFRICAN AMERICAN AND BLACK CARIBBEAN COUPLES  
Signature 

Date 11/21/08

Typed Name DR. ANDREW P. DAIRE

Title/Formal Affiliation with Research Project Dissertation chair

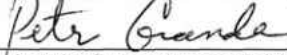
Signature 

Date 11/21/08

Typed Name DR. TRACY M. CARTER

Title/Formal Affiliation with Research Project Dissertation Committee Member

The above Research Staff are hereby granted approval to access this restricted data:

  
Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research

9 December 2008

## APPENDIX C: VARIABLES SURVEY QUESTIONS

**Marital Satisfaction**

E19. Taking things all together, how satisfied are you with your (marriage/current relationship)? Would you say that you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

- 1 – Very satisfied
- 2 – Somewhat satisfied
- 3 – Somewhat dissatisfied
- 4 – Very dissatisfied

**Religion**

B16. How often do you....?	Nearly everyday (1)	At least once a week (2)	A few time a month (3)	At least once a month (4)	A few times a year (5)	Never (6)
a)...read religious books or other religious materials? Would you say nearly everyday, at least once a week, a few times a month, a few times a year or never?						
b)...watch religious programs on TV?						
c)...listen to religious programs on the radio?						
d)...pray?						
e)...ask someone to pray for you?						

**Social Support**

E4a. How close do you feel toward your family members? Would you say very close, fairly close, not too close or not close at all?

- 1 – Very close
- 2 – Fairly close
- 3 – Not too close
- 4 – Not close at all

E5. Would you say your family members are very close in their feelings toward each other, fairly close, not too close, or not close at all?

- 1 – Very close
- 2 – Fairly close
- 3 – Not too close
- 4 – Not close at all

E6. Other than your (spouse/partner), how often do your family members...	Very Often (1)	Fairly Often (2)	Not too Often (3)	Never (4)
a)...make you feel loved and cared for? Would you say very often, fairly often, not too often, or never?				
b)...listen to you talk about your private problems or concerns?				
c) ...express interest and concern in your well-being?				



## APPENDIX D: BIOGRAPHY

## Nivischi Ngozi Edwards, M.A., LMHC, NCC, DCC

P.O. Box 1581  
Winter Park, FL 32790  
(407) 733-2660 Phone  
(407) 823-0044 Fax  
[nivischi@yahoo.com](mailto:nivischi@yahoo.com)

### EDUCATION

---

- August 2009**  
Anticipated      **PhD in Education: Counselor Education (CACREP)**  
University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL  
Dissertation Title: Marital Satisfaction: Factors for Black Jamaicans and African Americans Living in the United States.  
Dissertation Chair: Dr. Andrew P. Daire, Associate Professor
- June 1999**      **Master of Arts: Education (CACREP)**  
Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI  
Concentration: Community Counseling  
Specialization: Marriage and Family Therapy
- May 1997**      **Bachelor of Arts: Psychology**  
Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY  
Minor: African American Studies

### LICENSE AND CERTIFICATIONS

---

- |                        |                                      |           |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>1/06 - Present</b>  | Distance Credentialed Counselor      | # 00287   |
| <b>10/04 - Present</b> | Licensed Mental Health Counselor, FL | # MH 8116 |
| <b>1/00 - Present</b>  | National Certified Counselor         | # 56695   |

### ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

---

- 5/07 - Present**      **Graduate Research Assistant**  
*University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL*
- Compile, input, analyze and interpret statistical data using SPSS
  - Develop, implement and revise program surveys and evaluation
  - Complete literature review and editing as needed
  - Assist with manuscript construction and revision
  - Facilitate and oversee grant needs of Project GRAD for middle school students
- 8/06 - 11/06**      **Graduate Assistant**  
*University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL*
- Performed duties of a Social Investigator for the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court
  - Conducted formal investigation for child custody evaluation
  - Assessed the level of functioning of parent/caregivers

- Evaluated the safety and quality of home environment

## **CLINICAL EXPERIENCE**

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- 8/08 – Present**      **Military and Family Life Consultant**  
*Department of Defense, San Rafael, CA*
- Provide Solution-oriented consultation to individuals, couples, families and groups
  - Provide support and assistance to active duty Soldiers, National Guard & Reserves, military family members and civilian personnel
  - Provide support for a range of issues including: relationships, crisis intervention, stress management, grief, occupational and other individual and family issues
  - Conduct psycho-educational presentations on reunion/reintegration, stress/coping, grief/loss and deployment
  - Conduct Family Readiness Groups, Soldier Readiness Processing and other requested topics
- 12/07 – 8/08**      **Child Custody Investigator**  
*Sixth Judicial Circuit, St. Petersburg, FL*
- Performed child custody social investigations and studies
  - Completed all investigations assigned
  - Wrote and submitted comprehensive reports
  - Attended court hearings and depositions when subpoenaed
- 11/04 - 8/06**      **Counselor**  
*Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences, Orlando, FL*
- Provided counseling to students on a variety of issues using the Brief Therapy Model
  - Created and collaborated with community partnerships
  - Referred students with long-term needs to community resources
  - Coordinated and oversaw crises intervention
  - Coordinated and conducted mental health screening days
  - Coordinated seminars for student success
  - Chaired Counseling Consultation and Staffing committees
  - Assisted with Student Success program planning and implementation
- 10/02 - 10/04**      **Outpatient and Outreach Therapist**  
*Drug Abuse Treatment Association*  
*The Lord's Place, West Palm Beach, FL*
- Provided individual, family and group counseling to clients in the initial stage of recovery from substance abuse
  - Conducted screening, assessment, crises and emergency services
  - Provided prevention, intervention, outpatient and aftercare needs to adolescents and adults
  - Completed bio-psycho-social narratives, initial and individualized treatment plans

- Maintained regular contact with clients to ensure proper services provision and continued care
- Provided counseling as a prevention/intervention specialist in a middle school setting

**5/02 - 10/02**

**Substance Abuse Counselor**

*Comprehensive Alcohol Rehabilitation Program  
The Lord's Place, West Palm Beach, FL*

- Provided screening, intake, orientation, assessment, and treatment planning, to clients in early recovery from substance abuse
- Conducted various forms of counseling, crisis intervention and education
- Provided record keeping, consultation and appropriate referrals as needed
- Counseled clients with a history of domestic violence and HIV

**1/02 - 10/04**

**Licensed Mental Health Counselor Intern**

*Hibiscus Haven, West Palm Beach, FL  
Comprehensive Alcohol Rehabilitation Program, West Palm Beach, FL  
Drug Abuse Treatment Association, West Palm Beach, FL*

- Registered as an Intern with the Florida Board of Mental Health
- Conducted a minimum of 15 hours of counseling sessions weekly
- Obtained supervision from licensed clinicians

**9/01 - 9/02**

**Mobil Screening Specialist II**

*Oakwood Center of the Palm Beaches, West Palm Beach, FL*

- Performed preliminary assessment with clients seeking services on an emergency basis
- Provided consultation and therapy to individuals experiencing suicidal or homicidal ideations
- Determined level of care needed and made appropriate referrals within the community

**10/00 - 5/02**

**Program Coordinator/Counselor**

*Hibiscus Haven at Gratitude House, West Palm Beach, FL*

- Provided a strong therapeutic relationship for HIV positive women, living with various mental illnesses, in early recovery from substance abuse
- Developed and implemented policies, procedures and daily activities
- Conducted conjoint sessions
- Provided Family Night group lectures series to clients and family members

**7/00 - 9/00**

**Head Residential Counselor**

*Upward Bound at Palm Beach Community College, Lake Worth, FL*

- Assisted with the development of schedules and activities
- Trained and supervised a staff of five
- Counseled and mentored high school students while monitoring daily activities
- Chaperoned and supervised all cultural, educational, and recreational activities

- Maintained and oversaw operation for all program activities, field trips, college visits and other related experiences

9/98 - 5/99

**Student Intern**

*Andrews University Counseling and Testing Center, Berrien Springs, MI*

- Provided educational, developmental, individual and group counseling, treatment planning and assessments
- Conducted needs assessment surveys and presentations
- Co-led time limited group for women with low self-esteem/self-worth issues
- Provided career counseling to freshmen students

1/97 - 5/97

**Student Intern**

*Connect: Zimbabwe Institute of Systemic Therapy, Harare, Zimbabwe*

- Conducted literature reviews
- Compiled statistical data on the counseling needs of the urban community
- Observed and assessed counseling sessions in progress

1/95 - 5/95

**Student Intern**

*Newpin: St. Paul's Community Center, London, England*

- Assisted as a playroom facilitator
- Monitored children behavior
- Implemented various forms of play therapy

**RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

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**PUBLICATIONS:**

Young, W. & Edwards, N. N. (2008, October). Scholars mentoring scholars. *Holmes Scholars Newsletter*.

Edwards, N. N. & Lambie, G. (2009). A person-centered counseling approach as a primary therapeutic support for women with a history of childhood sexual abuse, *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Education and Development*, 48(1), 23-35.

Daire, A. P., Torres, J. & Edwards, N. N. (2009). Family caregivers: Psychosocial impacts and clinical needs. *Adultspan*.

Edwards, N. N., Beverly, M. G., & Alexander-Snow, M. (Under Review). The Keys to Success as a Black Female Faculty Member from Interview to Tenure. *NASPA Journal About Women in Higher Education*.

**In Preparation:**

Curry, J. R., Hayes, B. G., Edwards, N. N., & Robinson, E. *School based and systemic leadership: A narrative inquiry with Sharon Robinson*.

**GRANTS AND EXTERNAL FUNDING:**

- Edwards, N. N.** (2009, March). Graduate Travel Fellowship. University of Central Florida, *College of Graduate Studies*. Granted Scholar for \$650.
- Edwards, N. N. & Platt J.** (2008, June). Project GRAD: A School/University Partnership to Support Middle School Students with Exceptionalities and Other Special Needs. *Toni Jennings Exceptional Education Research Institute*. Submitted and accepted proposal for \$4,500.
- Edwards, N.** (2008, July). Quantitative Methods of Social Research: Using Secondary Data for Analysis of Marriage and Family. *Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research*. Granted Scholar in attendance for \$750.
- Edwards, N. N. & Daire, A. P.** (2008, May). Examining the Relationship between African American Marital Health and Depression: Effects of Status, Quality, and Number of Marriages, *Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.*, Submitted proposal for \$10,000.
- Edwards, N. N.** (2008, March). Graduate Travel Fellowship. University of Central Florida, *College of Graduate Studies*. Granted Scholar for \$650.

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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|---------------------|--|
| <b>2008, Fall</b>   | <p><b>Doctoral Instructor</b><br/> <i>University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL</i><br/> <i>SDS 6347: Career Development in Counseling (co-instructed)</i><br/>                     This course is designed to give the student a study of career development theories, occupational and educational information, approaches to career decision-making, lifestyle, and leisure in the development of the whole person.</p>  |
| <b>2008, Summer</b> | <p><b>Doctoral Instructor</b><br/> <i>University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL</i><br/> <i>MHS 6500: Group Procedures and Theories in Counseling</i><br/>                     This course is designed to give the student an understanding of the role of theories in group counseling as well as the many process application of group.</p>   |
| <b>2008, Spring</b> | <p><b>Doctoral Instructor</b><br/> <i>University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL</i><br/> <i>MHS 5005: Introduction to Counseling (co-instructed)</i><br/>                     This course is designed to give entering students an orientation to the profession of counseling and to begin the development of professional identity. In addition, students are exposed to the tools necessary for success in graduate work. It gives an overview of the philosophy, organization, administration and roles of counselors in various counseling settings.</p> |
| <b>2008, Spring</b> | <p><b>Doctoral Instructor</b><br/> <i>University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL</i></p>   |

*MHS 6800: Counseling Practicum I and II (co-instructed)*

This course is designed to provide students with an opportunity to engage in actual counseling sessions with clients using the counseling skills learned in Techniques of Counseling and Group Counseling such as relationship building, assessment, goal-setting, selecting interventions, case management, and evaluation of client outcomes. The course activities are designed to enable learners to perform at their own individual level of competence, grow through helpful suggestions from more advanced learners and peers, and be critiqued by supervisors. Provided weekly triadic supervision to master's students.

**2007, Fall****Doctoral Instructor***University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL***MHS 6800: Counseling Practicum I and II**

This course is designed to provide students with an opportunity to engage in actual counseling sessions with clients using the counseling skills learned in Techniques of Counseling and Group Counseling such as relationship building, assessment, goal-setting, selecting interventions, case management, and evaluation of client outcomes. The course activities are designed to enable learners to perform at their own individual level of competence, grow through helpful suggestions from more advanced learners and peers, and be critiqued by supervisors. Weekly triadic supervision with two supervisees was provided. Co-instructed live supervision of six master's-level supervisees

**2008, Summer****Substitute Teacher***Orange and Seminole County, Orlando, FL*

Taught, supervised and monitored elementary, middle and to high school students in various subject areas and presented lessons as planned.

**2000, Summer****Instructor***Palm Beach Community College, West Palm Beach, FL*

Taught College Preparation course with focus areas including: time management, learning style, college applications, personal statements, SAT preparation and financial aid.

**8/99 – 5/00****Missionary Teacher***Academia Adventista Del Oeste, Mayaguez, PR*

Coordinated, directed and taught a native Spanish speaking pre-kindergarten class of forty-two, four and five year-old students in subject areas of English and Bible. Coordinated and directed graduation culmination exercise entirely in English and supervised a staff of two.

**1/98 - 5/99****Substitute Teacher***Berrien County, Berrien Springs, MI*

Taught, supervised and monitored elementary, middle and high school students in various subject areas and presented lessons as planned.

**REFEREED PRESENTATION/WORKSHOPS**

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- Edwards, N. N.** (2009, April). *Marital Satisfaction: Factors for Jamaican and African American Individuals*. University of Central Florida, Counseling Conference, Orlando, FL.
- Edwards, N. N.** (2009, April). *Marital Satisfaction for African American and Black Caribbean Couples*. University of Central Florida –College of Education 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Faculty & Student Research Symposium, Orlando, FL
- Edwards, N. N.** (2009, April). *Marital Satisfaction for African American and Black Caribbean Couples*. 2009 Graduate Research Forum. Sixth Annual Showcase of Diverse Student Research, Orlando, FL.
- Edwards, N. N.**, Daire, A. P., Carter, T., Edwards, D. J. (2009, March). *Marital Satisfaction: Factors for Black Caribbean and African American Couples*. 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Psychology Conference, Kingston, Jamaica, W.I.
- Edwards, N. N.**, Daire, A. P., Ngazimbi, E., & Patel, S. H. (2009, March). *African American Marriage: Status, Quality and Clarification*. American Counseling Association, Charlotte, NC.
- Edwards, N. N.**, & Platt, J. (2009, February). *Project GRAD: Getting Ready for an Academic Degree*. National Holmes Partnership, Jacksonville, FL.
- Robinson, S. L., Fleener, M. J., Robinson, E. H., Curry, J., Robinson, E. H., **Edwards, N. N.**, Brown, C. M., Horsford, S. (2009, February). *Emerging Leaders and a Promising Future: A Welcome Session for Graduate Students*, American Association for College of Teacher Education, Chicago, IL.
- Edwards, N. N.**, & Shillingford, M. A. (2008, November). *The State of African American Marriages*. Florida Counseling Association, Daytona, FL.
- Young, T., Cunningham, L., **Edwards, N. N.**, Burt, I., & Lewis, S. (2008, October). *Using Mindfulness Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Relapse Reduction in Depressive Symptoms*. Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Houston, TX.
- Evadne, N. E., Shillingford, M. A., Patel, S., & **Edwards, N. N.** (2008, October). *Multi-model Approach to Supervision*. Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Houston, TX.
- Shillingford, M. A., Patel, S., Ngazimbi, E., & **Edwards, N. N.** (2008, October). *Parallel Process: Initial Practicum Supervision Experience of Doctoral Students*. Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Houston, TX.
- Ohr, J. H., Ieva, K., **Edwards, N. N.**, Young, T., & Jones, K. D. (2008, October). *Developing a Professional Issues in Counselor Education Course: Perspectives from First Year Doctoral Students*. Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Houston, TX.
- Ieva, K., **Edwards, N. N.**, & Ohr, J. H. (2008, October). *Scholarly Writing for the Novice Doctoral Student*. Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Houston, TX.



- Edwards, N. N.** (2008, March). *Counseling in International Countries*. American Counseling Association, Honolulu, HI.
- Edwards, N. N., Patel, S., & Young, T.** (2008, March). *Using Person Centered Therapy to Support Women with a History of Childhood Sexual Abuse*. American Counseling Association, Honolulu, HI.
- Robinson, S. L., Fleener, M. J., Robinson, E. H., Curry, J., Robinson, E. H., **Edwards, N. N.**, & Lopez, A. (2008, February). *Emerging Leaders and a Promising Future: A Welcome Session for Graduate Students*, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, New Orleans, LA.
- Shillingford, M. A., **Edwards, N. N.**, Patel, S., & Ngazimbi, E. E. (2008, February). *The Role of Anxiety in Teacher Burnout and Attrition*, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, New Orleans, LA.
- Crawford, F., Blackman, O., **Edwards, N. N.**, Ngazimbi, E. E., Shillingford, A., & Patel, S. (2008, February). *Is Teacher Professional Development Overused in the Attempt to Bring about Large-scale Reform?* National Holmes Partnership, Orlando, FL.
- Edwards, N. N.**, Platt, J., & Johnson, G. K. (2007, October). *UCF Holmes Scholars Benchmarks*, National Holmes Partnership, Orlando, FL.
- Edwards, N. N.** (2007, November). *Using Person Centered Therapy to Support Women with a History of Childhood Sexual Abuse*, Florida Counseling Association, Daytona, FL.
- Edwards, N. N.**, & Rucker, N., Saliba, Y. (2005, November). *Uncovering Your "Stuff,"* Florida Counseling Association, Orlando, FL.
- Edwards, N. N.**, (2001, September). *Incorporating Your Spiritual Beliefs into the Workplace*, Syracuse University, Coming Back Together VI, Syracuse, NY.
- Edwards, N. N.**, (1998, October). *Transforming Acting-Out Behavior (TAB)*, Michigan Counseling Association, Grand Rapids, MI

#### **INVITED WORKSHOPS/PRESENTATIONS**

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- Edwards, N. N.**, Serrano, B., & Piccard, J. (2008, April). *A Parent's perspective to Approaches and Therapies for Children of Autism*, TENFEE, Orlando, FL.
- Edwards, N. N.**, & Ohrt, J. (2007, October). *Theories of Counseling*. University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL.
- Edwards, N. N.**, (2007, October). *The Process of Grief*, Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences, Orlando, FL.
- Auguste, P., Reid, C., **Edwards, N. N.**, & Rucker, N. (2006, August). *Domestic Violence*, Maranatha SDA, Orlando, FL

- Edwards, N. N. & Rucker, N. (2006, June).** *Eating Disorders*, Maranatha SDA, Orlando, FL.
- Edwards, N. N. & Rucker, N. (2006, May).** *Teen Suicide*, Maranatha SDA, Orlando, FL.
- Edwards, N. N. (2006, February).** *Uncovering Your "Stuff,"* Ephesus SDA, West Palm Beach, FL.
- Edwards, N. N. (2006, February).** *A Single Cause*, Ephesus SDA, West Palm Beach, FL.
- Edwards, N. N., & Rucker, N. (2005, October).** *Helping Children Heal from Divorce*, Miami Temple Church, Miami FL.
- Edwards, N. N., & Rucker, N. (2005, October).** *Helping Children Heal from Divorce*, Florida Hospital Church, Orlando, FL.
- Edwards, N. N. (2005, September).** *Interpersonal Relationships*, Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences, Orlando, FL.
- Edwards, N. N. (2005, July).** *The Process of Grief*, Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences, Orlando, FL.
- Edwards, N. N. (2004, July).** *Challenges of College*, Palm Beach Community College, Lake Worth, FL.
- Edwards, N. N., & Gutzmore, C. (2004, May).** *Breaking Down Barriers: Forgiveness*, Ephesus SDA Church, West Palm Beach, FL.
- Edwards, N. N. (2002, June).** *What is Dating?*, Ephesus, SDA Church, West Palm Beach, FL.
- Edwards, N. N. (2001, November).** *Am I The One?*, Hope SDA Church, Bloomfield, CT.
- Edwards, N. N. (2001, November).** *The Youth of Today and Their Needs*, Ephesus SDA Church, West Palm Beach, FL.
- Edwards, N. N. (2000, July).** *Color Code*, First SDA Church of Royal Palm, Royal Palm Beach, FL.
- Edwards, N. N. (1999, October).** *Who is He*, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND OFFICES HELD**

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|------------------------|--|
| <b>11/07 - Present</b> | Florida Association of Marriage and Family Counseling<br><i>Student Representative</i> |
| <b>6/07 - Present</b>  | South Eastern Conference Sexual Assault<br><i>Consultant</i>                           |
| <b>6/07 - Present</b>  | Mothers of Incarcerated Sons Inc.<br><i>Volunteer</i>                                  |
| <b>11/05 - Present</b> | Florida Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development<br><i>Treasurer</i>   |

<b>3/02 - Present</b>	Mentor
<b>5/08 - 8/08</b>	ACA Northern Illinois University <i>Pro Bono Crisis Counselor</i>
<b>6/07 - 12/07</b>	ACA Virginia Tech <i>Pro Bono Crisis Counselor</i>
<b>3/02 - 5/04</b>	Voices of Youth <i>Mentoring Chairperson</i>
<b>5/00 - 12/03</b>	Center for Information and Crisis Counselor <i>Volunteer</i>

### **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AFFILIATION**

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<b>2/09 – Present</b>	Chi Sigma Iota
<b>1/09 – Present</b>	Counselor Education Department Student Organization
<b>4/08 – Present</b>	American Business Women’s Association
<b>10/06 - Present</b>	UCF Holmes Scholars Program
<b>3/05 – Present</b>	American Counseling Association
<b>9/97 - Present</b>	National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women’s Club Inc.
<b>9/97 – Present</b>	Who’s Who among Students in American Colleges and Universities
<b>6/07 – 11/08</b>	Florida Association for Counselor Education and Supervision
<b>6/07 – 11/08</b>	Florida Association for Spiritual, Ethical and Religious Values in Counseling
<b>6/07 – 11/08</b>	Florida Career Development Association
<b>7/05 – 11/06</b>	Metropolitan Orlando Urban League Young Professionals
<b>3/05 – 11/06</b>	American College Counseling Association
<b>3/05 – 11/06</b>	Association for Spiritual Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling
<b>3/05 – 11/08</b>	Florida Counseling Association
<b>3/05 – 11/07</b>	Florida School Counseling Association
<b>3/05 – 11/07</b>	Florida Association of Counselor Education and Supervision
<b>3/01 - 7/02</b>	Palm Beach County HIV Care Council
<b>1/01 - 7/02</b>	Community Planning Partnership

### **RESEARCH INTERESTS**

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Marriage and family relations  
 Couple relationships  
 Marriage education  
 Distance counseling  
 Underrepresented populations

**SKILLS**

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***COMPUTER:***

Microsoft Word  
Microsoft Excel  
Microsoft Power Point  
SPSS

***LANGUAGE:***

Bilingual Spanish (Moderate reading and writing ability)

## References

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Executive Director, UCF Marriage & Family Research Institute  
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