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**THE LONG-TERM PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF
PARENTAL DIVORCE ON YOUNG SINGLE ADULTS**

SUBMITTED BY

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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation hereby submitted by me for the M.A. degree. at the University of the Free State is my own independent work and has not previously been submitted by me at another university/faculty. I furthermore cede copyright of the dissertation in favour of the University of the Free State.

Diane Cathrine Mallaby

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DEDICATED TO MY PARENTS...

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Chapter 1

Introduction

They said, "Let's get a divorce! And they lived happily sad ever after" Jennifer, five years old

(Johnston & Campbell, 1988, p.23)

INTRODUCTION

The psychological implications of the divorce process on children have been a major interest of researchers during the past thirty years. This increasing interest in studying the effects of divorce is related to the rapidly growing divorce rate in modern western society and to concerns about the psychological impact that divorce may have on a growing number of children who will experience the divorce of their parents (Everett, 1992; Hodges, 1991).

Although there is less research on the impact of marital dissolution when children of divorce reach adulthood than in childhood, the results of a meta-analysis (Amato & Keith, 1991) indicate that the effects may be larger for young adults than for children. It is suggested that young adults whose parents divorced when they were children are more likely than those with married parents to have problems in intimate relations and in work. They are more likely to marry early and have marital problems, to choose unstable partners, and to divorce earlier and with greater frequency. They also appear to have financial stress, lower educational attainments, income and occupational prestige (Amato & Keith, 1991). These unsuccessful relationships and experiences are associated with less general life satisfaction, less happiness, and more depression and health problems (Hetherington, Law & O'Connor, 1993; Jones & Nelson, 1996).

This study investigates the long-term consequences of divorce on the young adult who experienced parental divorce as a child. The researcher will specifically examine adjustment in terms of self-esteem, general life satisfaction, attitudes towards marriage, love styles and sexual attitudes and behaviour. The results may be useful in making certain recommendations for the post-divorce family in order to adjust to the divorce process as effectively as possible.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Clinicians recognise on an everyday basis that children of divorced families carry with them extra dimensions of developmental struggles into their young adulthood and later into their adult relationships (Everett, 1992). Although much research has been done with regard to the effects of divorce on young children, the number of investigations on the effects of parental divorce on the adult child of divorce is still relatively small (Duran-Aydintug, 1997). Furthermore, although love has become a popular topic to study in recent years, very few investigations have examined how young adults' beliefs about love are affected by relationship experiences such as parental divorce, in the family of origin (Sprecher, Cate & Levin, 1998). Given the developmental processes significant to this age group and how divorce may impact these processes, information regarding the effects of divorce on this age group is necessary. The impact of parental divorce on young adults may be the outcome of a complex interaction of their developmental needs and the *prevailing conditions in the postdivorce family* (Lopez, 1991).

Erickson's theory of psychosocial development (1968) states that the developmental tasks of late adolescence and young adulthood include resolution of identity issues and intimacy issues. According to Erickson's theory (1968), children experience successive developmental crises which are separated by periods of equilibrium. Crises resolutions during childhood and adolescence influence later crises. Erickson proposes that a successful resolution of each life crisis prepares the individual for the next psychosocial conflict. By contrast, the person who fails to resolve one or more of life's social conflicts is almost certain to encounter problems in the future. He theorises that positive resolution of such crises as the development of initiative, identity, and intimacy provides the foundation for a fulfilling social and work life. A positive identity is thought to precipitate the next crisis, and once the individual has a self-defined identity, the need for intimacy is thought to emerge naturally (Adams, Gullotta, & Markstrom-Adams, 1994).

It would seem then that the failure of one's primary model of intimate relationships- the parental marriage, would have a significant impact on the young adult's own resolution of intimacy issues. Furthermore, literature (e.g., Kinnaird & Gerrard, 1986; Wallerstein, 1989) supports the importance of a strong parental marriage to the intimate relationships of children of divorce. Young adults of

divorce may fear choosing the wrong partner or suffer from fears of rejection, and so do not commit to one relationship, but rather have several partners. This may lead to an increase in sexual behaviour and promiscuity (Hendrick, Hendrick, Slapion-Foote & Foote, 1985). Divorce in the parental generation has been strongly related to unhappy family and marital relationships of married children. This suggests that there is the possibility of transmission of divorce over several generations (Willett-Bloom & Nock, 1992). Divorce, as has finally been recognised, is not a single circumscribed event, but a multi-stage process of changing family relationships that begins with the failed marriage and extends over many years.

There is also evidence that adult children of divorce compare unfavourably with adult children of intact families on other measures of psychological well being, including happiness, health, general life satisfaction and self-esteem (Amato, 1993). Researchers have found that children's self-esteem is positively correlated with a supportive family environment. The quality of family interactions appears to play a significant role in the development of children's self-esteem. Presumably if changes occur in the family environment as a result of parental divorce, the sense of self is affected. Similarly these children suffer a great sense of loss that they carry into their adult lives. Many report depression, anxiety, and feelings of inadequacy that are the result of parental conflict and breakdown in the family unit (Amato, 1993).

1.1.1 The impact of the family on young adults' development:

1.1.1.1 The importance of the family

As children are born into families, their first relationships, first encounters, and their first experiences of the world around them are with or through their families. Children develop and grow within the context of their families. Embedded within the larger socio-political culture, the individuals' problems are often framed by the formative course of their family's past, present and future aspirations (McGoldrick, Heiman & Carter, 1993). While some families accept children's feelings and needs as important, others devalue their children. Healthy families allow for individuality, personal responsibility, and independence. They can form the solid foundation for personal development. In healthy families, open communication and negotiation are encouraged as successful ways of coping with everyday situations and challenges (Witchel, 1991).

One of the goals of the family is, therefore, to meet the needs of its members. When the family system is no longer accomplishing that goal, it can be termed dysfunctional. Research studies have examined several aspects of divorce that can initiate dysfunctional family patterns. There are many types of dysfunctional interactions, including neglect or overindulgence of the parents, negative communication, and a lack of flexibility in the roles taken on by each member of the family (Nelson, Allison & Sundre, 1992).

In dysfunctional families there is often a lack of open dialogue and problem resolution. Children observe and assimilate both healthy and unhealthy behaviours exhibited by their parents, who serve as important role models. As a result, many children growing up in dysfunctional families have poor problem-solving abilities and inadequate life-skills. Some children growing up in dysfunctional families manage to acquire more healthy life-skills and become capable adults and parents, while others adopt such behaviours as drinking and fighting, exhibit poor coping methods, and may even experience psychological disturbances (Morrison, MacDonald & LeBlanc, 2000). Furthermore, young adults growing up in dysfunctional families may unconsciously utilise their parents' poor interactional styles as models for their own intimate relationships. It appears that while all families experience conflict and stress, some respond to these challenges in unhealthy and sometimes destructive ways. The family experience, whether positive or negative, often makes a lasting impact on the child and consequently the young adult who is attempting to separate from the home (Witchel, 1991).

1.1.1.2 Impacts of family dysfunction: Divorce

The family has been identified as one of the major factors that influence the values and standards of young adults. It is the family members, and primarily the parents that provide many years of nurturance and are viewed by many children as their one stable and reliable source of comfort. In addition, there are certain needs that can only be met with parental love and admiration, creating a sense of warmth and familiarity, which contributes to a sense of comfort and security (Witchel, 1991).

There are however, a significant number of young adults from divorced families where emotional neglect, conflict, and abuse have occurred. Many of these young adults have experienced a life

based on fear, social isolation, poor communication patterns and inadequate control. They view the family, not as a stable, reliable source of comfort, but as a source of pain and confusion. These young adults carry extra emotional baggage with them, and this often impacts their own relationships and adjustment to college or work (Witchel, 1991). According to Hoffman and Weiss (1987) young adults can be adversely affected by conflictual relationships within the family, even though they may be physically separated from the family.

The purpose of the divorce may have been to dissolve a dysfunctional family situation, but often the results of this may not be what were expected. Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989) report more severe reactions to divorce than were reported in the 1970s, with more violence, more child abuse, more parental dependence on children, and many more troubled, depressed and even suicidal children (Morrison et al., 2000). These effects raise questions about the impact on children exposed to parental divorce. As one nine-year old stated, "I feel like a candle burned at both ends. It's a weird feeling because I don't know which way to drop" (Johnston & Campbell, 1988, p.151).

Farber, Primavera, and Felner (1983) interviewed 83 clinical directors of university mental health centres about reactions of university students to divorcing parents. Numerous problems were seen as statistically more likely for university students facing the divorce of their parents, as compared to those from intact families. These included: difficulty with studies, drug use, depression, anxiety, intimacy problems, sexual-identity problems, feelings of insecurity, financial difficulties, fears of abandonment and loyalty conflicts. There is no doubt that divorce in families contributes to the increase in psychological disturbances among young adults and university students (Witchel, 1991).

1.1.2 Children's Adjustment to divorce

Research examining the effects of parental divorce on children and adolescents' adjustment to divorce has reported inconsistent results. The reason for this may be due to the fact that a great deal of variability is present among children of divorce, with some experiencing problems, and others adjusting well or even showing improvement (Amato, 1993). The individuality of divorce situations results in difficulty generalising the effects on children (Nelson et al., 1992). Researchers have found various factors that affect how family members react and recover from a divorce, and

explanations have been proposed from several perspectives to account for children's adjustment to divorce (Amato, 1993; Howell, Portes & Brown, 1997).

Some researchers have viewed divorce as a single, stationary event that is traumatic for most children. They put emphasis on the actual physical dissolution of the marriage: a child is adversely affected because of the breaking apart of his/her family. This has been referred to in the literature as the *physical wholeness* position. Problems in adjustment are tied to the loss of a parent in the family system (Stone & Hutchinson, 1992). Other researchers tend to see divorce as a process rather than an event. The divorce experience, according to this perspective, includes the tension and conflict that are often a part of the pre-divorce experience. This approach has been referred to in the literature as the *psychological wholeness* position; problems in adjustment are not tied directly to the loss of the parent but rather to the conflict that is often so much a part of the divorce process (Stone & Hutchinson, 1992). Research that examines more closely both the physical and the psychological wholeness positions will probably give a clearer idea of factors contributing to children's adjustment to the divorce process.

Most explanations concerning children's adjustment to divorce revolve around one or another of five central concepts (Amato, 1993, p. 23, 43; Holdnack, 1992, p. 141). These explanations concern the following:

- Absence of non-custodial parent/ family structure in post-divorce family
- Adjustment of custodial parent
- Inter-parental conflict
- Economic hardship/lowered standard of living
- Stressful/disruptive life changes

Variables such as these may be central variables mediating the effect of divorce on children.

1.1.2.1 Demographic variables related to child adjustment

Certain demographic variables such as the child's gender, age and religious orientation, also appear to play a role in their short and long term adjustment to the divorce (Demo & Acock, 1988). The individual characteristics of parent and child, external influences like the extended family, and peer relations must be considered, as well as the larger legal, cultural, educational and welfare systems within which the family lives (Demo & Ganong, 1994). Although the literature is consistent regarding the influence of family dynamics, it is much less clear regarding the role gender and age play in mediating child adjustment (Howell et al., 1997).

1.1.2.1.1 Gender differences

While some researchers (e.g., Hetherington, et al., 1993) agree that boys appear to have more problems than girls adjusting to divorce academically, behaviourally, and in socio-emotional areas, it is unclear whether gender differences are due to an interaction between child gender and gender of the custodial parent, or due to the type of behaviour being measured (Howell et al., 1997).

In a review of the literature on gender differences, it seems to be the case that boys fare worse when living in custody of a single mother, whereas living with a remarried mother or with a father may be more detrimental for girls. Boys in mother-custody households tend to be more likely to experience depression than girls, who tend to adapt more rapidly to the situation. Boys in mother-custody also seem more likely to be aggressive, and have problems in behaviour and self-esteem than those in father-custody households. Likewise girls in father-custody households have been reported to display more anti-social behaviour than boys, and to have more problems in behaviour and self-esteem than girls living in mother-custody households (Hetherington et al., 1993; Howell et al., 1997).

The higher adjustment among those living with the same-sex parent might be due to the presence of a role model for sex identity development. It is possible that the mother's remarriage might mediate positive adjustment among boys as they benefit from the entry of a stepfather as a role model and source of support, but increase problematic behaviour for girls, as they might perceive the new marriage as a threat to the mother-daughter bond (Howell et al., 1997)

Another explanation for boys appearing to experience poorer adjustment following parental divorce than girls may be due to the way they exhibit their disturbance. Boys may primarily exhibit their disturbance through externalised behaviour such as aggression, delinquency, or substance abuse, and girls through internalised behaviour such as anxiety, depression or somatic complaints. The girls' complaints are therefore less likely to come to the attention of parents or health care professionals. Furthermore, in general, girls seem to get more support and were more likely to disclose their feelings and solicit support from peers and parents, thereby improving their adjustment to the divorce (Hetherington et al., 1993).

1.1.2.1.2 Age differences

While the literature does indicate that age has an impact on child adjustment to divorce, it is rather unclear regarding what the immediate impact is. Some researchers have found older children and adolescents to be at a greater risk for adjustment difficulties, possibly due to their greater social and cognitive maturity, which might increase their risk for feeling "caught" between divorcing parents. Furthermore adolescence is already a difficult transitional stage in the developmental process and a divorce could trigger more social and behavioural problems. Adolescents from divorced parents are at greater risk for experimenting with substance abuse and other non-compliant behaviour (Amato, 1993). Wallerstein, Corbin and Lewis (1988) found more problems with those older at the time of the divorce, claiming that younger children have fewer painful memories of family conflict with which to cope.

However, other researchers report that due to their internal locus of control and higher degree of interpersonal knowledge, older children of divorce are more likely to develop a healthier response to parental divorce in the immediate aftermath. Over the long-term, however, adjustment may become more difficult for those older at the time of the disruption. Wallerstein (1989) reports those younger at the time of the divorce to be better adjusted at the ten-year follow-up than older children, possibly because younger children have fewer memories of the divorce period. Duran-Aydingtug (1997) also found that young adults who experienced divorce at an early age were more likely to have overcome the effects of this experience.

In summary, there seems to be a lack of consistency regarding the effects of divorce on different age groups with some studies indicating that adjustment problems increase with age, some

claiming decreased adjustment, and some arguing that each age group experiences their own unique problems. One of the aims of this study is to investigate the long-term consequences of parental divorce and how it impacts children once they reach late adolescence and early adulthood.

1.1.2.2 Conclusion

When considering the effects of divorce on children's adjustment it is therefore necessary to consider the resources and stressors apparent in the pre-and post divorce family. Studying particular factors out of context, rather than trying to grasp the larger pattern, will probably only generate more findings that are inconsistent and contradictory. A general framework that considers the total configuration of resources and stressors would be useful in understanding the impact of divorce on children. Such a perspective also has the potential to highlight more clearly variations in children's reactions to divorce, and both the immediate and long-term consequences of the divorce on their adjustment.

1.2 AIM OF THE STUDY

Researchers are only now beginning to focus on the detrimental and long-term negative impact of parental divorce. While there is a substantial body of literature concerning the influence of parental divorce on children and adolescents, only recently investigators have begun to systematically study the effects of parental divorce on adult 'children' of divorce (Duran-Aydintug, 1997; Sprecher, Cate & Levin, 1998). The aim of this study is therefore, to investigate these long-term consequences and focus on the new generation of young adults from divorced families. By focusing on the needs of young adults at this particular developmental level, the researcher will therefore attempt to address the following goals:

1. The primary goal of this study is to examine multiple behavioral and psychological aspects of adjustment in order to achieve a fuller understanding of the complex ways in which young adults respond to divorce. Measures of adjustment will include:

- Self-esteem
 - General life satisfaction
 - Attitudes towards marriage
 - Love styles
 - Sexual attitudes and behavior
2. The researcher would also like to identify and discuss post-divorce conditions that may be more conducive to the adjustment of both the parents and children.

1.3 NECESSITY OF THE STUDY

While the average family in western society is encountering stressful conditions, mental health and higher education professionals are recognising increases in psychologically disturbed young adults. They have become more aware of the number of young adults experiencing behavioural and psychological problems, often as a result of growing up in unhappy home environments. Such problems as depression, anxiety, sexual promiscuity, eating disorders, alcohol abuse and suicide seem to be almost daily occurrences on university campuses (Witchel, 1991). Several questions need to be raised among mental health professionals:

- Is there a connection between the stressful conditions experienced by families today and the perceived rise in difficulties among young adults?
- Do young adults from dysfunctional families face greater challenges in adjusting to academic and work life?
- Does society have an obligation to provide counseling and intervention services that respond to the needs of these students and young adults?

Requests for prevention programmes, and the need for counselling services to respond to young adults who have these concerns, have placed demands on student affairs professionals and mental health agencies. As they encounter these difficult issues, many families continue to struggle with such critical problems as divorce, violence, child abuse, alcoholism, and spouse abuse. There has thus been a growing interest in dysfunctional family systems and in adults who grew up in such systems (Witchel, 1991).

This study explores these issues critically examining the impact of parental divorce and the major effects on young adults and their development. Divorce is one of the greatest social issues affecting South African families today, with a third of all marriages ending in divorce. In 1996, a total of 32 775 divorces were reported and there were 41 971 minor children involved. In all the population groups, the most frequent number of children involved in divorce was 2 per couple. More recently, the statistics for 1998 indicate a total of 35 762 divorces, with the majority occurring in the white population group with a total of 14 443 reported (Department of Statistics, personal communication, 3 November 2001). This challenges our traditional conceptions of the family and has raised important questions about how this stressful life event subsequently affects those individuals whose lives it has directly touched (Lopez, 1991).

Unfortunately, much of the available research has limited its consideration to the effects of parental divorce on those family members most vulnerable to stress - young children. Most of the literature concerning the effects of divorce on children's adjustment has focused on young children or adolescents' school performance, teacher ratings of behaviour problems, juvenile delinquency, and similar indicators. (Sprague & Kinney, 1997; Sprecher et al., 1998). Moreover, these investigations have generally focused on children's short-term adjustment and have failed to consider the possible influence of larger contextual changes, set into motion by the action of parental divorce, that may also affect longer-term individual adjustment (Lopez, 1991).

Without question, systematic research on the long-term effects of parental divorce is a difficult undertaking as there are many background and intervening variables that contemporaneously affect the course of children's adjustment (Lopez, 1991). There are also differences in the nature of samples and measurements used, and for these reasons most of these studies have yielded inconsistent and contradictory results (Duran-Aydintug, 1997).

Further efforts to advance the understanding of the relation of parental divorce to individual adjustment may thus profit from a wide-angle view of this phenomenon that adequately accounts for the context of young adults at particular developmental stages and circumstances. In light of this information, the present study will focus on the experiences of *adult children* of divorce in order to have a better understanding of their adjustment and the long-term effects of divorce. It will be of value to clinicians and mental health professionals who are faced with the challenge of effectively responding to the needs of young adults from dysfunctional families.

1.4 LAYOUT OF THE STUDY

In Chapter 2, the long-term effects of parental divorce on *identity* issues, namely self-esteem and general life satisfaction, will be discussed. Chapter 3 will focus on the long-term effects of parental divorce on *intimacy* issues, such as attitudes towards marriage, love styles, and sexual attitudes and behaviour. The fourth chapter will discuss the practical implementation of the research methods and the procedures that were followed to gather and analyse the data. Chapter 5 will discuss the results obtained in this study in detail, as well as potential limitations in this study, and future recommendations for further studies. Finally, Chapter 6 will summarise the results of this study and enter the conclusions based on a combined interpretation of the research results and the literature review.

Chapter 2

Identity Issues of Young Adults: Self-Esteem

General Life Satisfaction

2.1 INTRODUCTION:

Why should such sleeper effects of divorce in intimate relations, life experiences and work emerge in late adolescence and early adulthood? It seems that delayed effects may emerge when a new set of developmental tasks related to autonomy and individuation, intimacy and sexuality, and educational and occupational attainment emerge in adolescence and continue into adulthood (Hetherington et al., 1993). A divorce and the resulting upheaval in family structure usually occur during some point in a child's psychological development. According to Erickson's theory of psychosocial development (1968), significant changes, such as divorce, can be detrimental to a child's progression through the developmental stages. It is therefore beneficial to examine how divorce affects the young adult's progression through the relevant developmental stages and the psychological tasks involved in the *identity* and *intimacy* stages (Nelson et al., 1992).

This chapter will therefore focus on the psychological implications of divorce with regard to identity issues and also the effect on self-esteem and general life satisfaction. The following chapter will focus on the other important developmental task of the young adult: the formation of a capacity for intimacy.

2.2. IDENTITY

Much of adolescence and young adulthood is spent exploring psychological aspects of the self. It is a salient period in identity formation and the effects of variations in family structure and interactions on self-concept and self-esteem may be particularly apparent at that time (Adams et al., 1994). Marital transitions and reorganisations in the family have been found to have marked effects on various aspects of child development, including that of self-esteem (Pasley & Healow, 1988). The establishment of an identity is thought to include such diverse components as a sense of self worth, a positive self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-definition (Adams et al., 1994; Shaffer, 1994).

It has been argued that the nature of self-concept during childhood and adolescence provides the foundation on which identity formation is based, and is thought by many to be the central developmental task of middle and late adolescence. At this time, adolescents focus intensive energy on issues of self-definition. They often look at earlier life crises and experiences to draw conclusions about the self. It is for this reason that early family disruption and conflict can have lasting implications for the adult child of divorce as they confront new developmental stages and the relevant tasks (Adams et al., 1994; Shaffer, 1994).

According to Erickson's theory (1968), the psychological task of identity formation in adolescence is to integrate the past, present and future plans into a whole sense of self. During this time of identity formation, the adolescent is in psychological moratorium, which is an experimentation period. It is therefore important that they have role models to imitate as this facilitates the formation of their own identity. It is for this reason that much of the success with identity formation is determined by a child's relationship with both parents. As the divorce process usually involves the loss of one parent, it is this loss of a role model that may affect children years later, as they approach adolescence and young adulthood (Nelson et al., 1992).

Adolescence is also viewed as a time of heightened self-awareness. It is a time of intense preoccupation with the imagined evaluation of others and comparison of the self with others. This self-evaluation component is generally referred to as self-esteem and is part of the self-concept that an adolescent has formed. It has been suggested that children who hold confident pictures of

themselves develop a sense of identity more readily than those with confused or ambiguous self-concepts. It is because of the development of identity and the need of the adolescent to develop positive self-esteem that adolescence is seen as a time when the child is particularly vulnerable to the effects of family reorganisation and changes in family structure due to divorce (Pasley & Healow, 1988; Yang & Blodgett, 2000).

2.3 SELF-ESTEEM

Self-esteem can be defined as the overall attitude held by an individual toward him/herself, and can be either positive or negative (Shook & Jurich, 1992). It is recognised as a powerful motivational force that is based on a human need to be valued or to hold a positive self-evaluation. A positive or high self-esteem refers to “a sense of *self-acceptance*, a *personal liking* for one’s self, and a form of proper *respect* for oneself” (Adams et al., 1994, p. 253). Rosenberg (1965, p. 31) offers the following explanation of high self-esteem:

When we speak of high self-esteem...we shall simply mean that the individual respects himself, considers himself worthy; he does not necessarily consider himself better than others, but he definitely does not consider himself worse; he does not feel that he is the ultimate in perfection but, on the contrary, he recognises his limitations and expects to grow and improve.

Mckay and Fanning (1992) believe that self-esteem is essential for psychological survival. They describe it as one of the main factors differentiating humans from other animals, as it is an awareness of self: an ability to form an identity and then attach a value to it. They believe that without some measure of self-worth, life can be enormously painful, with many basic needs going unmet. Theories on adolescent and young adult development correlate positive self-esteem with more positive psychological wellbeing. Rosenberg (1965) has delineated some of the major characteristics contributing to positive self-esteem, and these include self-worth, low levels of anxiety and a sense of personal control.

Furthermore, theories of self-concept development (Rosenberg, 1965) and research evidence indicate that the formation of self-esteem is strongly influenced by relationships with primary

groups, especially with the family. The relevant literature has revealed that children and adolescents generally develop high self-esteem in a family with two parents where they feel loved and supported, have adequate discipline and where the family has effective communication patterns with minimal conflict (Pasley & Healow, 1988). Adams et al. (1994) also indicate a variety of social conditions that influence feelings of self worth such as family structure, living environment, socio-economic background, parental effects, social relationships, school settings, academic success and stressful life events.

2.3.1 Family structure and self-esteem

According to Shook and Jurich (1992) self-esteem is something that is learned within the context of the family. When infants come into the world they have no previous feelings about the self and must, therefore, rely on those around them for messages that convey approval. Messages of worthiness or unworthiness are almost exclusively derived from parents and other family members, during the first five or six years of children's lives. As children grow older, other agents can help children shape the attitudes that they hold about themselves, but the effect of parents and family can continue to significantly influence the self-esteem of children even during adolescence and young adulthood (Shook & Jurich, 1992).

It appears that the very foundation of self-esteem appears to emerge in the family itself. Numerous studies (e.g. Holdnack, 1992; Shook & Zurich, 1992) have shown that high self-esteem among adolescents and young adults is associated with positive perceptions of and interactions with parents. Parental interest in their child's welfare also appears to be a primary factor in adolescent self-esteem. Furthermore, family cohesion is positively correlated with adolescents' self-esteem, and conflict is negatively correlated with it. Conflict and discord may decrease self-esteem through interpersonal stress, fear, continual uncertainty about confrontation and negative emotional experiences in the household. Past research has linked parental divorce with lower levels of self-esteem in children, possibly affecting their psychological adjustment (Everett, 1992). Such findings are of considerable interest when examining the context of parental discord and family structure on young adults' self-esteem levels (Adams et al., 1994).

2.3.2 Effects of divorce on self-esteem

Various changes in the family structure as a result of divorce, also impact on the development of the child's self-esteem.

2.3.2.1 Adjustment of the custodial parent and the impact on children involved

Divorce is one of life's most stressful experiences and the majority of parents experience some difficulty in adjustment. The custodial parent in particular may experience severe financial and emotional stress as the majority of child-rearing responsibility falls on this individual. This increased stress on the custodial parent can impair their child-rearing skills, and this is likely to have negative consequences for the children. Hetherington et al. (1993) found that during the first two years of divorce, custodial mothers were more anxious, depressed, angry and self-doubting than were married mothers. They also showed comparatively less affection to their children, communicated less with them, punished them more and were more inconsistent in their use of discipline. This perspective, therefore assumes that decrements in the custodial parent's psychological state and ability to function effectively in the parental role following marital divorce can lower the well being of the children (Amato, 1993).

It follows that the disruption of the parental marriage during childhood may directly produce feelings of worthlessness or lower self-esteem in offspring because of the emotional unavailability of a parent or both parents following divorce (Shook & Jurich, 1992). The theoretical implication of this research is based on a finding that the divorce process often leads to a decrease in the emotional closeness between parent and child. Both parents and children may experience a feeling of distance as they try to adjust to their new roles in the post-divorce family and children may interpret this as rejection. The child may attempt to understand the parent's perceived rejection by attributing the cause of the rejection to personal qualities. The child assumes the blame for the poor relationship with the parent and although it may increase the child's perception that they are in control of this uncontrollable situation, it also results in low self-esteem. This suggests that parental divorce can have detrimental effects on the parent-child relationship, which indirectly affects the self-concepts of the children involved (Holdnack, 1992).

2.3.2.2 Loss of the non-custodial parent

The psychological 'loss' of the non-custodial parent can also be detrimental for the child, and research indicates that children who have less frequent contact with their non-custodial parents have more negative attitudes towards themselves (Hetherington et al., 1993). Furthermore, many young adults reported that they experienced greater conflict, anger and guilt in their relationships with their fathers (usually the non-custodial parent) than their counterparts who had not experienced parental divorce. This finding indicates that many of these young people had not yet achieved a sense of independence from their feelings of anger and resentment towards their fathers. This is not surprising, in view of data indicating that only a minority of the children of divorce see their fathers on a regular basis, and often feel abandoned and rejected (Kruk, 1991; Lopez, 1991). The non-custodial parent's level of contact with their children is, however, constrained by legal access restrictions and what the custodial parent will allow, and this is often the reason that so many children have little contact with their fathers following the divorce (Cohen & Shnit, 2001; Kruk, 1991).

Regular contact can provide children with the reassurance that the departed parent still cares and this can strengthen the relationship between the non-custodial parent and child. In addition to the physical contact, the emotional closeness between the non-custodial parent and child has been found to have a significant impact on the post-divorce adjustment of children (Holdnack, 1992). Males and females may react differently to the loss of a steady relationship with the non-custodial parent and certain aspects of the divorce process may differentially affect the emotional well-being of male and female children, as discussed in 1.1.2.1.1.

Children from families that are able to maintain cohesive parent-child relationships after divorce, have a better chance of adjusting to the new family structure with their self-image intact than those children whose parents become uninvolved with them. It is also important that non-custodial parents understand that they play a vital role in the welfare of the child and that their absence from a relationship with the child has negative consequences. Their support of the custodial parent, both financially and emotionally, will allow the custodial parent more freedom from stress, which will enhance their ability to establish a cohesive and active relationship with the child. They need to

reframe their support of the custodial parent as a means of helping the children. All too often, however, this is not the case (Holdnack, 1992).

2.3.2.3 Family conflict

The quality of family interactions seems to play a significant role in the development of self-esteem in children (Holdnack, 1992). Divorce is often preceded and followed by parental and family conflict. Research has shown reduced levels of self-esteem in children from homes associated with higher levels of family and marital conflict. One reason for this could be due to the fact that the younger child who tends to be more egocentric may attribute self blame for conflict between parents, resulting in feelings of rejection and lowered well being (Amato, 1993).

The continuation of parental conflict after the divorce has been associated with deleterious effects for offspring. These negative changes in family relationships may result in prolonged periods of conflict and stress, which may have long-term effects on the adult child's self-esteem (Holdnack, 1992). Conflict over visitation rights and child support can further accelerate conflict in the post-divorce family. This continuing conflict between ex-spouses increases the likelihood that adolescents or young adults may be inappropriately enlisted by one or both parents to serve as a special confidant, intermediary, or defender in managing this tension. Unresolved tensions between ex-spouses may also draw the adolescent or young adult into loyalty conflicts and inappropriate alliances with one or both parents (Lopez, 1991).

Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989) observed that some children of divorce experience poor self-concepts even fifteen years after the divorce of their parents. It seems that self-concept is directly related to the family environment in which the child is raised and that parental divorce will affect self-concept, indirectly, through poorer family relationships and increased conflict in the home environment. This suggests that divorce per se does not adversely affect children's self-esteem, but it is actually parental discord that is negatively associated with children's self-esteem (Demo & Acock, 1988).

A statement derived from a synthesis of previous research (Everett, 1992; Hodges, 1991; Johnston & Campbell, 1988) reveals that the ability of parents to put aside differences and co-operate in child rearing and establishment of harmonious relationships, will result in more positive outcomes

for the children. Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989) have reported that the best outcome for the child is when both parents are committed to the child's well being and development.

2.3.2.4 Socio-economic status

A large percentage of children of divorce live in single parent families. Demographically, the greatest proportion of these children live in female-headed households (Lopez, 1991). Typically, these families suffer a dramatic decline in household income as a result of the divorce, which in turn leads to a reduced standard of living. It is suggested that limited financial resources may be predictive of maladjustment for children of divorce. These families are not able to offer their children some of the privileges, such as books, home computers, extra lessons and other goods facilitating their academic success, that wealthier families are able to. Limited means may also force these families to live in neighbourhoods where schools are poorly financed, services are inadequate and crime rates are high, leading to a decline in their quality of life and poorer life satisfaction (Amato & Keith, 1991).

Furthermore, due to limited means, these children may be denied the opportunity to achieve social competency and personal goals that lead to high self-esteem (Shook & Jurich, 1992). High academic ability and performance are often predictors of high self-esteem during high school. Thus school-related and socio-economic factors can contribute to self-esteem and feelings of competence during high school and this in turn can have an important effect on educational attainment and job success later in adulthood (Adams et al., 1994).

Related to this concern may be the child's worry for the parent (usually the mother) who is disadvantaged economically by the divorce. It is reported that the average household income of single-parent mothers declines quite drastically during the first post-divorce year (Lopez, 1991). This significant drop in income often demands that the parent either enters the work force or significantly increases previous workloads. An adolescent in such a family may therefore be inclined to ease the financial and emotional burden on this parent, by terminating educational activity and going into the work-force, sacrificing their own needs and goals for the future. Wrestling with these decisions and their immediate and long-term consequences may be another significant stressor for these children. This may result in feelings of depression, low self-worth and

despondency. A decline in parental support and supervision can also increase the likelihood of problems such as poor academic achievement, misbehaviour or even premarital pregnancy (Amato, 1993).

2.3.2.5 Stressful life changes

It is important that divorce be regarded not as an isolated event but as part of an extended series of transitions involving multiple changes in the experiences of parents and children. Divorce is often associated with stressful life changes such as moving, changing schools, giving up friends, loss of contact with grandparents and remarriage of parents. These stressful events may disrupt children's school attainment, social relationships, and personality development - all of which may have long-lasting implications. This emphasises that it is not the presence of a single stressor, but the accumulation of negative events, that may result in future problems for adult children (Hetherington et al., 1993).

2.3.2.5.1 Physical relocation

In a study conducted by Hutchinson and Spangler-Hirsch (1989) it was found that 40% of American children having experienced divorce, had moved to new neighbourhoods. Physical relocation to a new neighbourhood or city means new changes and adjustments, making contact with the non-custodial parent, and with previous sources of peer and extended family-support, difficult. Church and other affiliated connections may be disrupted, altered or discontinued. This may be complicated by further changes such as increased domestic and child-care responsibilities, affecting school performance and limiting time spent with peers (Demo & Acock, 1988).

Furthermore, research indicates that a variety of social conditions influence feelings of self-worth. Changes in the school setting, for example, can have strong effects on self-esteem. Evidence indicates that the discontinuity of moving from grade six to grade seven in a different school has detrimental effects on self-esteem. In contrast those children that stayed in the same school from grade one through to grade eight showed no detrimental effect. The change in school setting may be difficult due to having to cope with a new environment, new friends, teachers and a new school program (Adams et al., 1994). The divorce process can influence self-esteem levels, indirectly

through various life changes and adjustments to new life circumstances and social conditions (Lopez, 1991).

2.3.2.5.2 Parental remarriage

One change that has attracted a good deal of attention is parental remarriage. The remarriage of a parent can be a stressful change for both adults and children, and can inadvertently affect the self-image of the children as they may feel alienated from the new family and take this as a sign of rejection. Remarriage in itself involves a series of unique problems not common in first marriages - problems that can complicate the adjustment process for all family members. The remarried parent's greater involvement with a new family or household often means less contact with the original family and often the children experience intense feelings of abandonment. Adolescents in particular may feel very threatened by the remarried parent's new family as they struggle to establish their own identity and sense of self at this critical stage in their development (Pasley & Healow, 1988).

Remarriage has a marked influence on the experiences and adjustments of both parents and children, and interactional processes within stepfamilies have been found to be important determinants of adjustment in children. The process is complicated by the quality of the stepparent-stepchild relationship and the influence this has on the quality of the child's relationship with the non-custodial parent. The child may experience a loyalty conflict between the new stepparent and the non-custodial parent. The non-custodial parent may also feel alienated or awkward relating to the new stepparent and reduce contact with children to avoid the situation. This reduction in visitation may be upsetting to children who, after remarriage, may fear replacement of the 'outside' parent. Furthermore the remarriage of a parent may also disrupt the child's hopes for reconciliation of their biological parents (Brand, Clingempeel & Bowen-Woodward, 1988).

Remarriage families are often in transition from former households to an integrated stepfamily household. It is a process that takes time and there are many necessary adjustments to be made, and individuals and subgroups in the extended family often adjust to these changes at differing rates. This discrepancy of movement can lead to stressful interpersonal relations. Although everyone in stepfamilies must make many adjustments to new situations, children often have additional complexities because they retain 'citizenship' in two households and may experience different

customs and different ways of doing things. They also experience loyalty conflicts and a lack of belonging, as one family unit. Parents and stepparents who allow their children the opportunity to experience the rewards of each family and enjoy these varied experiences reduce the children's loyalty conflicts and contribute much towards creating their own successful families. This takes acceptance, tolerance, understanding and familiarity, and is not always an easy undertaking (Visher & Visher, 1993).

2.4 GENERAL LIFE SATISFACTION

Recent years have seen an increase in research on subjective well being and general life satisfaction, although the measurement of the latter seems to have received less attention (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985). Life satisfaction refers to a cognitive, judgmental process. It can be defined as "a global assessment of a person's quality of life according to his chosen criteria" (Diener et al., 1985, p. 71). Judgements of satisfaction are dependent upon a comparison of one's circumstances with what is thought to be an appropriate standard. Satisfaction can be measured by asking questions like 'How satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?' People can also be asked to report their feelings of happiness or unhappiness along with their thoughts about how satisfying their lives are. The concepts of happiness and life satisfaction are subtly different yet share much in common. People who *feel* happy also tend to *think* of their lives as satisfying (Myers, 1992). It is also possible to ask about satisfaction in different areas of peoples lives, giving an indication of how they rate the importance of several domains, and how well they predict their overall satisfaction. It can be seen from a large American sample (Argyle, 1992) that family life and marriage score high on the criteria of both life satisfaction and happiness.

2.4.1 The causes of general life satisfaction:

The most obvious cause of life satisfaction is the real satisfaction of needs by the objective conditions of life. A number of factors are found to be predictive of happiness - marriage and other social relationships, high-status work, satisfying leisure, income and health (Argyle, 1992). It appears that marriage, family life, friends and other social relationships are major sources of satisfaction, followed by interesting and challenging work conditions and active, involving, forms

of leisure. Other objective circumstances or conditions, such as income, educational attainment, and health have a somewhat smaller effect on satisfaction (Argyle, 1987).

2.4.1.1 Relationships

In some ways this is central to the topic of this dissertation. Relationships are the basis of social support and one of the main sources of happiness, life satisfaction and psychological and physical health. Relationships are central to the main activities of family life, of work and leisure. However, in addition to being major sources of happiness, relationships can also be sources of conflict and unhappiness. Destructive or abusive relationships can cause great distress, including ill health and mental illness. Furthermore it seems to contribute to poorer quality of life and can be damaging to parents and children alike (Argyle, 1992).

Many studies have confirmed the effects of a loving relationship on happiness and life satisfaction (Argyle, 1987; Myers, 1992). According to Myers (1992) married people report being happier and more satisfied with life, compared to those single or widowed, and especially compared to those divorced or separated. People in stable, loving marriages do appear to enjoy greater well-being and life satisfaction (Myers, 1992). This applies not only to the marriage partners, but also to their offspring, as a conflicting relationship between parents is damaging and destructive for all members of a family. This can also have a negative effect on parenting styles and decrease life satisfaction (Lee, Law & Tam, 1999). The effect of ending marriage, by death, separation or divorce, is very strong – as in this instance, something has been lost. This is partly due to the loss of material help, emotional support and shared interests. For children, experiencing the loss of a parent is damaging as they rely on them as sources of emotional support as well as material support. There may be a more fundamental point here. Human beings are basically sociable and co-operative; many things cannot be done alone – family life, most work and most leisure. Since various forms of co-operation are so important for human life, those living alone or with the loss of a family member, may experience life as incomplete and less meaningful (Argyle, 1992).

2.4.1.2 Family environment

Satisfaction with family life is also a strong predictor of happiness, and compared to children growing up in conflict-laden homes, children of divorce seem to fare better. However, this is not entirely reassuring, as research (Hetherington et al., 1993) has indicated that compared to those growing up in intact families, the average child of divorce is exposed to more parental conflict and disharmony, and grows up with a diminished sense of well-being. Furthermore, adult children of divorce are more likely to divorce and less likely to feel happy with life (Myers, 1992). Divorce, often followed by the intrusion of a new stepparent, also places "children at increased risk for developing social, psychological, behavioural and academic problems" (Myers, 1992, p. 165).

Disruptions and stressful life changes in the family environment as a result of divorce, also result in certain disadvantages for children. (Refer to 2.3.2.5). An established family system can be viewed as a mechanism for identifying and framing the roles, activities, and daily life of each family member. When a divorce occurs, it means not only the loss of patterns of everyday family interaction and a family member, but also a loss of a way of life. Pervasive alterations in expectations, life experiences, and the sense of self in parents and children are associated with the uncertainty found in divorce, or even in the addition of a family member through remarriage (Hetherington et al., 1993). Such uncertainty can lead to negativity and hopelessness, which can have lasting implications often resulting in a lowered sense of well being and maladjustment in adulthood.

The breakdown of the routine and structure in the household can be very disturbing for both the custodial parent and the children. The problems of overwhelming responsibility for parent and child are often exacerbated by extra workloads and shared household tasks. This means less time for parent-child interaction, as well as less interaction with friends and other support networks. Furthermore there is less time for leisure activities, often resulting in increased stress levels and poor coping mechanisms. This has a negative influence on the sense of well-being and life satisfaction for both parents and children (Demo & Acock, 1988).

2.4.1.3 Educational attainment and income

Several studies (e.g., Campbell, 1981) have examined the effects of educational achievement and income on life satisfaction, and although there is a rather small effect on life satisfaction, it can still influence a person's well being and happiness. Higher educated people appear to be somewhat happier as it has been suggested that the educational experience and occupational advantages have freed them in part from financial and material demands, and broadened their values relating to social relationships and self-evaluation (Campbell, 1981). It has also been found that that job satisfaction is greater for those in more highly skilled, higher status jobs. Those who are most satisfied are people in professional positions while the least satisfied are those in repetitive, unskilled jobs (Argyle, 1987). Furthermore, mental health is worse at the lower end of the social scale, possibly because of the high level of everyday frustration. Physical health is also worse, partly because of poor health habits (smoking, less exercise) and less access to medical facilities (Argyle, 1987).

As discussed previously (refer to 2.3.2.4) the socio-economic status of the family is often influenced by the divorce process. In the first year following divorce, the average family income of women decreases considerably, in some cases by almost 40 %. This loss of income following marital dissolution often determines where families live, where children go to school, the quality of neighbourhoods and peer groups, and the accessibility of jobs, health care and support networks. Although income level or loss explains only a small amount of the variance related to children's adjustment following divorce, poverty does increase the probability of encountering additional stressors. This influences the ability of parents and children to cope effectively and adjust to conditions in the post-divorce family (Hetherington et al., 1993). Furthermore economic deprivation often presents obstacles to children's educational attainment, as many single parents cannot afford the costs of tertiary education and other commodities that facilitate academic success. This has lasting implications as low educational attainment is often associated with low occupational attainment, unemployment, poverty and even welfare dependency later in life (Amato & Keith, 1991).

2.5 SUMMARY

The primary question of whether parental divorce has an effect on adolescents' and young adults' identity issues such as self-esteem and general life satisfaction later in life, is not answerable without examining the above-mentioned mediating factors. Examination of available research implies the existence of such intervening factors. The differential effects of divorce on self-esteem and general life satisfaction may thus be attributable to events which precede or succeed the divorce (Holdnack, 1992). The child's age at the time of the divorce and gender may also mediate the impact of these events on dimensions of their later well being (Demo & Acock, 1988).

Those children who experience a minimal loss of resources and minimal change at the time of divorce are unlikely to experience a decrease in well being. They may, in fact, even benefit if stress decreases or resources increase following divorce. Other children, however, who lose access to parental resources and are exposed to many unwelcome and aversive changes, are probably at risk for developing problems at the time and later in life (Amato, 1993). Once again it seems that post-divorce conditions play a large role in determining the adjustment of children to parental divorce.

Chapter 3

Intimacy Issues of Young Adults:

Attitudes towards marriage

Love Styles

Sexual Behaviour

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The effect that parental divorce may have on young adults' issues such as physical and emotional intimacy, love styles, and attitudes towards marriage have not been adequately examined (Gabardi & Rosen, 1992; Sprcchr et al., 1998). Though the numbers of studies in this area are limited, some have suggested that parental divorce does impact the beliefs and attitudes involving intimate relations and the sexual behaviour of young adults (Gabardi & Rosen, 1991). Further exploration of a variety of variables is necessary to clearly understand how the divorce of one's parents may affect intimacy resolution for young adults.

Hetherington et al. (1993) have suggested that the presence of two parents is beneficial to children as they learn to be skillful and secure, both in loving, and being loved by a member of the opposite sex. They also acquire problem-solving skills by viewing two adults attempting to negotiate and resolve their differences. These are skills essential to developing and maintaining successful intimate relationships. They have also has suggested that adult children of divorced parents may have more unrealistic views of their partners and their relationships, and are less adept at marital problem-solving. Even before marriage, they are more likely than those from intact families to expect to distrust a future spouse and to have expectations of an unsuccessful marriage. Furthermore they are likely to believe that the success of a marriage is externally controlled and depends not on their own, but on the other person's attributes and behaviour. These expectations are strongest for those adults who report the greatest degree of continued conflict between their

divorced parents. These findings suggest that experiencing parental divorce as a child has an impact in adulthood on beliefs and behaviours that are linked specifically to attitudes, expectations, and behaviour in their own intimate relationships and marriages (Hetherington et al., 1993).

3.2 INTIMACY

The need for closeness, a sense of emotional feeling for another, and the ability to share feelings honestly are some of the attributes of intimacy (Adams et al., 1994). It reflects a deep emotional involvement with another. Fulfilment of intimacy requires a sense of shared identity and a feeling of solidarity reflected in compatibility and sharing. As young people approach adolescence and early adulthood, their gradual drift away from their parents encourages them to seek peers with whom to share their innermost thoughts. Furthermore, as they are propelled into the career world they begin to establish relationships with the intention of future marriage. There is, at this point, a growing need for partnership and affiliation.

According to Erickson (1968) the search for intimacy is founded in mutual sharing and trust, and the accomplishment of a sense of intimacy results in a fusion of two identities in the form of sexual union and close friendship. The negative counterpart of intimacy is isolation and loneliness. Due to a fear of losing themselves in the identity of another, some individuals are incapable of forming an intimate relationship (Adams et al., 1994). Because intimacy involves the ability to be empathic and to give oneself to another, it is necessary that a strong sense of self exist. The establishment of intimate relationships is important to young adults and the formation of a capacity for intimacy occurs after the identity stage is complete (Erickson, 1968).

Research suggests (e.g., Gabardi & Rosen, 1992; Nelson et al., 1992) that certain factors influence the establishment and maintenance of young adult's intimate relationships, and these include the parent's marital relationship, parental divorce, and levels of conflict in the pre and post-divorce family. Relationship factors that are particularly affected involve attitudes toward marriage, love styles, number of sexual partners, and degree of sexual involvement while dating. It appears that there is a complex interaction between the experience of divorce in one generation and the

influence this has on the next generations' approach and attitudes towards intimacy and marriage (Everett, 1992).

Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1989) have found that children of divorce often feel rejected and abandoned by their parents. This may be due to the emotional or physical unavailability of one or both parents. It is suggested that children, who feel neglected, sometimes experience a fear of intimacy that is countered by a fear of abandonment. They learn not to be emotionally dependent on others because they are afraid that their needs will not be met. Kelly (1981) found that, five years after the divorce, some subjects who were otherwise well adjusted, had not yet succeeded in maintaining healthy, heterosexual relationships. Other research found that same vulnerability in intimate relationships (Nelson et al., 1992).

Even in families where the parent's divorce was amicable, the emerging young adults may approach their formation of relationships with extra neediness or perhaps greater caution, or even avoidance. Patterns of mate selection and intimacy are shaped, at least in part, by parental role models and experiences in the families of origin. When that experience is disrupted by the hurt and anger of a parental divorce, young adults may no longer approach intimacy and marriage with the innocence and expectations often idealised in society (Everett, 1992).

3.2.1 Family and Intimacy

Consistent with the Freudian assumption that a two-parent group constitutes the minimal unit for appropriate sex-typed identification (Shaffer, 1994), anthropologists, sociologists and social psychologists have long maintained the necessity of such a group for normal child development. These disciplines focus on the scientific study of the way that people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviour are influenced by their social environment and by other people (Aronson, Wilson & Akert, 1997).

Similarly, social learning theory emphasises the importance of role models, focusing on parents as the initial and primary reinforcers of child behaviour. Much of the research adopting this perspective centres on parent-child similarities, analysing the transmission of response patterns and the inhibitory or disinhibitory effect of parental models. The presence of the same-sex parent is assumed to be critical in order for the child to learn appropriate sex-typed behaviour. This

assumption is shared by several theories including the developmental and cognitive approaches towards socialisation (Adams et al., 1994; Shaffer, 1994). It logically follows that departures from the nuclear family norm may be problematic for the child's development, especially for adolescents and young adults, inasmuch as this represents a crucial stage in the developmental process (Demo & Acock, 1988).

3.3 ATTITUDES TOWARDS MARRIAGE

The role of the family cannot be overestimated, as this is the environment in which children learn to develop their own ideas of what families should be. The style of parenting, system of values, and relationships with loved ones are all taught in the family setting. If the family structure is not maintained because of divorce, separation or death, it is likely to affect the concept that the children of the family hold about their own future marriage and family relations (Marlar & Jacobs, 1992). In the family, children learn about relationships and how they are to be conducted, through observation and modelling, reinforcement and instruction from parents. They often build up a mental image of what is supposed to happen in a marriage; about roles and expectations, and about how children should be raised. The skills of a relationship also have to be learnt, and this is often through modelling and direct experiences in the family of origin (Argyle, 1992).

3.3.1 Negative attitudes towards marriage

Several studies have found only weak effects of past or early parental divorce on current attitudes toward marriage and divorce among offspring (e.g. Landis-Kleine, Foley, Nall, Padgett & Walters-Palmer, 1995). Their study indicates that parental marital status does not have a significant effect on the attitudes of the adult children regarding marriage and divorce, and that those from both divorced and intact homes agree equally with statements reflecting a lifelong commitment to marriage. Landis-Kleine et al. (1995) acknowledge certain limitations in their study, however, as it was limited to a student population, where most subjects were only in their early twenties. Perhaps the results would have been different had they included young adults from the general population.

Other studies (e.g. Amato, 1988) have found that young adults from divorced families report less idealised views of marriage. Wallerstein (1989) found that although the majority of young adults she studied from divorced homes were committed to the ideas of a lasting marriage, many were apprehensive about repeating their parents' mistakes. This reaction may be an indication of a desire to marry but an apprehension about doing so. Furthermore, young adults from divorced families reported that they were more in favour of cohabitation prior to marriage (Black & Sprenkle, 1991). These findings confirm a greater caution towards marriage found among children of divorce in past studies (Kozuch & Kooney, 1995; Wallerstein, 1989).

Further studies (e.g., Gabardi & Rosen, 1991) have found that children from divorced parents have significantly more negative attitudes towards marriage than children from married parents. Children of divorce possibly fear the failure of their own marital relationship and may be discouraged and cautious due to their parents' own marital failure. Results from a study conducted by Kinnaird and Gerrard (1986) indicate that children from intact families have significantly more positive attitudes towards marriage than those from divorced or reconstituted families. Tasker (1992) also found support for the hypotheses that children from divorced families are more anti-marriage and more likely to say that they will not marry in comparison to those from intact families.

It therefore appears that adolescents and young adults from divorced homes are more apprehensive about getting married and seem less idealistic about the institution of marriage than those from intact homes (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). They possibly defend against their fear of failure in relationships by rejecting the option of marriage or becoming cynical and critical regarding partner selection and the institution itself. Even those that are committed to the idea of marriage indicate that they are apprehensive and cautious about the future success of their own marriages and the institution in general. It is possible that through identification with their parents, these young adults develop negative images of the consequences of marriage and fear the experience of a failed marriage.

It is apparent that research examining the effects of parental divorce on adolescents and young adults' attitudes towards marriage reports inconsistent results. Such attitudes are important to understand; as they will affect the decisions young adults make about their own marriages and will

affect future generations. It may also partly explain the increased likelihood of divorce for young adults from divorced families, and the apparent pattern of family disruption in one generation carrying over to family disruption in the next generation (Kozuch & Cooney, 1995; Mueller & Pope, 1977). The researcher would, therefore, like to examine these attitudes towards marriage among young adults from divorced homes.

3.3.2 Marital instability

There is also evidence that adult children of divorce are more likely to be divorced themselves than children of intact families. From a longitudinal study of divorced families, Wallerstein (1989) indicates that divorce indeed affects adult children's relationships. It is reported that separation from families and transition into young adulthood is burdened by fear of disappointment in love relationships, lowered expectations, and a sense of powerlessness by those who have experienced divorce or separation in the home. It is suggested that children from divorced families who have experienced these difficult transitions may react differently to marriage in the future. Wallerstein (1989) suggests that new families being formed by adult children of divorce may be particularly vulnerable. Other studies (e.g., Kinnaird & Gerrard, 1986) support her contention and suggest that there is the potential for adult children of divorce to have marriage and family relationships of lower quality, and to be significantly more likely to report marital problems than those from intact families.

Further studies have suggested that divorce seems to be passed on from one generation to the next (e.g., Black & Sprenkle, 1991; Greenburg & Nay, 1982) although there is no conclusive evidence to indicate what causes the high relationship between the divorce of parents and that of their offspring. Values and behaviour patterns important to marital success and stability may be passed from generation to generation in some families. Greenburg and Nay (1982) reported a national survey that revealed that children from marriages that were disrupted during their childhood have a higher rate of divorce than children from intact marriages. This higher rate of divorce is coupled with the divorced group espousing the more favourable attitude towards divorce. This indicates that their attitudes towards marriage and divorce are somewhat different from those of children from intact families.

Mueller and Pope (1977) also examined the intergenerational transmission of marital instability. They have concluded that respondents from parental homes that were disrupted by death or divorce during their childhood had higher rates of divorce or separation in their own marriages. It seems that children from divorced families are becoming involved more often in divorce in the next generation than children from intact families.

3.3.3 Parental conflict and attitudes towards marriage

It remains unclear whether parental divorce directly influences children's attitudes towards marriage and family life. One explanation for this may be due to the lack of attention that has been given to the role of family and parental conflict in influencing attitudes. Levels of conflict may vary markedly in intact marriages and those that end in divorce. Research (e.g., Kozuch & Kooney, 1995) has suggested that children that are exposed to divorce generally experience more parental conflict in the home than those from intact marriages. Furthermore, if a divorce leads to custody disputes and further ongoing conflict, children may become disillusioned about the outcome of marriage and may adopt a more negative concept of marriage. Perceived degree of parental conflict may thus be a stronger predictor of children's attitudes towards marriage and divorce than parents' marital status (Jones & Nelson, 1996; Kozuch & Kooney, 1995).

Previous research (e.g., Kinnaird & Gerrard, 1986) has shown that family dysfunction and conflict may be more detrimental than a divorce itself, and some studies have suggested that the quality of the parents' relationship and the degree of conflict between parents, whether married or divorced, are more salient factors influencing young adults' relationships and beliefs about marriage (Boothe, Brinkerhoff & White, 1984; Hetherington, 1972). In a study conducted by Willetts-Bloom and Nock (1992) on the effect of parental marital happiness on marital aspirations, results indicated that those young adults, who viewed their parents' marriage as unhappy, were more cautious in their own marital aspirations. The levels of conflict in the home were significantly related to negative attitudes towards marriage. In this particular study, the perceptions of parental marital happiness in the home appeared to be a more significant factor in young adults' familial aspirations than the structure of their childhood family.

It seems that open, ongoing conflict has both immediate and long-term consequences for children, although the effects of conflict may be more deleterious in divorced families. Styles of conflict resolution and the degree of co-operation between parents, in both divorced and intact families, predict levels of adjustment in children. Hostile, angry, and avoidant parental conflict styles contribute to ongoing conflict and polarised family relationships. Co-operation between parents and the use of compromise produces positive resolution of conflict and increased closeness among family members. Conflict management skills show a strong positive relationship with interpersonal relationship quality in young adults. Given the potential for conflict in close relationships and the overwhelming evidence underscoring the significance of conflict resolution to the quality of relationship, young adults stand to gain from programmes and interventions addressing the skills involved in resolving conflict (Robinson, Garthoeffner & Henry, 1995).

3.3.4 Factors influencing the role of parental divorce on attitudes towards marriage:

Gabardi and Rosen (1992) suggest that some parents may influence their children's perceptions of marriage by conveying negative messages about their marriage and the negative experiences in their marriages. Prolonged exposure to these parental perceptions may then impact young adults' relationship beliefs. Furthermore, young adults who experience a lack of positive interaction or low levels of happiness between their parents may learn negative beliefs about relationships and marriage through parental example. Low levels of rewarding experiences for parents within their marriage or following the divorce may lead parents to complain to children about their spouse, portraying a negative image of marriage, and this may lead young adults to have great doubts about entering marriage, and low levels of idealism about the institution (Gabardi & Rosen, 1992).

Wallerstein (1989) explains that a divorce occurring during the formative years becomes a part of children's inner world and may influence their own relationships ten to fifteen years later. It is at this time when they are trying to establish their own families, that they feel the lack of role models for a loving relationship between a man and a woman. Anxiety over this lack of role models may threaten their ability to create a lasting, loving relationship of their own. It is also possible that divorce may be less threatening to those whose parents have divorced, allowing them to more easily turn to divorce when problems arise in their own marriages. This could also be attributable

to a more negative attitude toward marriage and a lower commitment to marriage from the onset (Glen & Kramer, 1987)

3.4 LOVE STYLES

Love attitudes and beliefs are phenomena of central importance to certain types of intimate relationships. Certain family dynamics, such as parental divorce and family conflict may have an impact on the love attitudes and beliefs held by young adults. The impact of these family relationships on love styles and attitudes toward, and behaviours in, specific romantic relationships for young adults will be investigated in the current study. The researcher will also examine young adults' interpersonal styles of love in their romantic relationships as a function of parental marital status.

The study of love attitudes and love styles in the current study is based on the theoretical work of John Alan Lee (1977) who proposed a typology of six love styles. They consist of *Eros* (passionate, romantic love), *Ludus* (game-playing love), *Storge* (friendship-based love), *Pragma* (practical love), *Mania* (possessive, dependent love) and *Agape* (altruistic love).

3.4.1 The Love Styles

The approach to the study of love by Lee (1977) is relatively recent. Lee, a sociologist, began by interviewing over one hundred adults, across a wide age group and from different backgrounds, in great detail about their most important love relationship. He attempted to create an empirically based typology by grouping similar accounts of love in ways suggested by western literature and philosophy. Davis and Latty-Mann (1987), Hendrick and Hendrick (1987) and Shaver and Hazan (1988) offer the following definitions of the love styles:

3.4.1.1 The Eros Love Style

Strong physical preferences, early attraction and intensity of emotion are attributes of the Eros lover. Love is highly valued by this type. The Eros love style is characterised by romance or

passion, and includes a wide range of powerful emotions that are often sexual. This type of partner is committed to the other person and finds enough sensation in the relationship itself. The Eros lover has strong ideas about the type of person she/he desires for a partner and attempts to achieve a close and intimate relationship when they find that person. This person is open and honest, strives for sincerity, and seeks a deep, pervasive rapport with their partner as quickly as possible. The Eros type seems to be content with life and work and seems self-fulfilled, they believe their childhood to have been happy, and feel that they had a warm relationship with parents and siblings.

3.4.1.2 The Ludus Love Style

The Ludic lover, on the other hand, is orientated to casual, permissive and sometimes manipulative sexuality within a relationship. This type of partner is generally uninhibited and easily bored. No single relationship is likely to meet this person's need for novelty and excitement. Ludus represents the lover who is interested in multiple partners and not in making a deep commitment to another person. This person believes that their childhood was 'average' and their life now seems okay, although it may be somewhat frustrating at times. This person goes on with life as usual after meeting their partner and continues to remain casual and in control over emotions, seeking sexual enjoyment rather than emotional rapport.

3.4.1.3 The Storge Love Style

The Storge love style is characterised by a developing friendship type of love. Shared interests and a trust and acceptance acquired over time seem central to this love style. This type of love is characterised by intimacy, commitment, and the formation of a closely-knit bond that is free of conflict. Storgic lovers are similar to Erotic lovers in terms of their commitment to the relationship, but Storgic lovers are much less aroused and less passionate. It seems that the typical Storgic lover is from a happy, secure family background with a large dependable family. The Storgic lover feels that life is good, and dependable, and that she/he can rely on friends. This type of lover expects that true love, like friendship will not be very exciting and goes along with life as usual after becoming aware of love. They continue to remain relaxed, as they have no strong emotions to control, and feel no anxious anticipation about the future.

3.4.1.4 The Pragma Love Style

The Pragmatic lover is somewhat instrumental about sex and love. The Pragmatic lover is looking for similarities of interests and background that are likely to make the other a good life partner. This is the love style in which the suitability of the partner to one's position and place in the community is central. Pragmatic lovers are not lovers at all in the emotional sense, and are not likely to refer to themselves as having fallen in love; rather they seem to have arranged a satisfying relationship. Rational calculation with a focus on desired attributes of the lover is central to Pragmatic love. Because Pragmatic types use criteria matching, it is easy to view them as 'computer matching' people, and it may possibly reflect intimacy avoidance. The typical Pragmatic lover shows no particular childhood pattern or attitude according to Lee's research (1977).

3.4.1.5 The Mania Love Style

Mania is the love style that is characterised by intense emotional involvement, concerns over the loss of the other, and feelings of jealousy and exclusiveness. The Manic lover often feels insecure in a relationship. This person feels that childhood was unhappy, and they had a difficult relationship with parents. They now experience loneliness and are anxious to fall in love, although they expect love to be difficult and probably painful. The Manic lover soon becomes preoccupied with thoughts of the partner and need for the partner's love, demanding to see their partner at least daily and becoming upset by delays and postponements. This type of love is characterised by an intense, anxious need for attention and commitment.

3.4.1.6 The Agape Love Style

Agape, or 'self-sacrificing' love, seems to be related to the care-giving component of love. It is an all-giving, non-demanding love. The Agapic lover seeks complete spiritual and emotional identification, and is quite willing to make sacrifices in the interest of the lover. They may experience conflict about sexual expression. This love style is characterised by altruism and idealism, with less emphasis on sensuality. Lee has suggested that people may encounter brief Agapic episodes in continuing relationships, but it does not appear to be a style of love in its own

right. He has suggested that it is difficult to find this style of love manifested fully in actual human beings. Other researchers (c.g., Borrello & Thompson, 1990; Thompson & Borrello, 1992) have found, however, that this love style does in fact exist and is apparent in the relationships they have researched.

3.4.2 Factors influencing the role of parental divorce on young adults' love styles

Based on the literature concerning Lee's (1977) love styles, there seems to be a relation between the love styles and family background. Certain love styles can be characterised by a warm and secure family background, while others seem to be characterised by instability and conflict in the family background. It is therefore quite likely that parental divorce will have a significant effect on the love styles of young adults.

It is suggested that children who have experienced divorce between their parents may have problems when searching for love and companionship in their own relationships. Several researchers, (c.g., Jones & Nelson, 1996; Sprague & Kinney 1997; Tayler, Parker & Roy 1995) have examined the effects of parental divorce on the quality of young adults' intimate relationships and their styles of love in their current romantic relationships.

Tayler et al. (1995) discuss the influence of parental divorce during childhood on the quality of subsequent intimate relationships in adulthood. The view that there may be 'continuity' in the quality of attachments over time has received substantial support, with the general proposition being that children's early attachment to each parent generates a sense of security or insecurity, forming the basis for constructing subsequent close relationships in adulthood. Thus, early separation from either parent through divorce may risk a developmental 'freeze' in children with compulsions in adulthood to remain rejected and possibly repeat the pattern of divorce chains. Similarly, early parent-child separation stemming from divorce may dispose some children to experience loneliness and emotional freezing (i.e., the inability to love or be loved) in adulthood. They may also experience difficulties with commitment and emotional intimacy (Tayler et al., 1995), which may influence their love styles.

Sprague and Kinney (1997) have indicated that young adults from divorced homes reported lower levels of trust in their current relationships and less altruistic love (agape love). Additionally among young adults from divorced homes, men reported more game-playing love (ludic love). Jones & Nelson (1996) also found a higher degree of game-playing love (ludic love) endorsed by young adults with a pessimistic attitude towards marriage (often characteristic of young adults from divorced parents). This could indicate a fear of commitment and an anxiety in relationships resulting in more ambivalence in relationships and a non-committal attitude. Other researchers have also hypothesised that young adults from divorced homes would view love relationships in a less committed fashion, and thus be more playful (ludic) and less storgic in their love relationships (Sprecher et al., 1998). This will be investigated.

Based on the above literature, the researcher will also investigate whether young adults from divorced homes are more pragmatic in their love styles than those from intact homes, as a means of avoiding intimacy issues. Furthermore, they may display more of the mania love style as this love style is characterised by insecurity in relationships, and an intense need for attention and love. The mania lover also indicates an unhappy childhood and difficult relations with parents. The researcher will also investigate whether young adults from divorced homes are less erotic in their love styles, as this love style is characterised by an intense need for a deep and committed relationship with another, the very thing these young adults seem to be avoiding.

3.4.3 Parental conflict and young adult's love styles

Research (e.g., Greenburg & Nay, 1982; Mueller & Pope, 1977) has documented a range of negative consequences of parental divorce and conflict on children's later functioning, and several researches have begun to explore the complexities underlying the intergenerational transmission of marital instability. As mentioned in the previous section, it has been suggested that parental marital status influences children's romantic relationships and subsequent marital trajectories. There are, however, several mechanisms that might underlie this relationship in addition to parental marital status.

Some researchers (e.g., Mueller & Pope, 1997) suggest that the divorce of one's parents is the most important factor predicting subsequent marital success. Other researchers (e.g., Booth & Edwards,

1990) have suggested that additional factors such as parental marital happiness and parental conflict are important to examine when attempting to understand the transmission of marital instability. Consistent with the latter perspective, researchers (e.g. Booth et al., 1984; Gabardi & Rosen, 1992; Kinnaird & Gerrard, 1986; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980) have begun to investigate the romantic relationship attitudes and behaviours of young adults who have experienced both conflict and/or divorce of their parents. Within the emerging literature, there is evidence to suggest that both the quality of parental relationships and parental marital status are predictors of the romantic relationships of young adults.

Sprague and Kinney (1997) found that among the young adults from divorced homes, the perception of high levels of family conflict while growing up was associated with lower levels of trust and less altruistic feelings (agape love) towards one's partner, whereas perceptions of family cohesion were associated with more altruistic feelings toward their current partner. These attitudes were not found among young adults from intact families, suggesting that perceptions of childhood cohesion and conflict have a unique contribution to make to the subsequent relationship behaviours engaged in by young adults from divorced homes.

It is suggested that parents who divorce may facilitate their children's later romantic relationships by maintaining healthy living environments despite their differences, in order to limit conflict and make the divorce process as painless as possible. Specifically, family process variables such as conflict and cohesion seem to be especially important to these outcomes. Clinical interventions such as family therapy at the time of marital dissolution may provide parents with the information necessary to safeguard their children from the negative consequences of divorce and /or conflict.

3.5 SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

An important developmental task of adolescence and early adulthood is to satisfy their sexual needs in a socially acceptable way so that it contributes to the development of their identity. As adolescents and young adults become increasingly aware of their sexuality, it begins to form a part of their interpersonal relationships, and provides them with the opportunity for a certain degree of sexual gratification and the opportunity to develop their identity as sexual beings. Sexual behaviour

includes sexual activities associated with an intimate relationship such as kissing, petting and sexual intercourse (Louw, Van Ede & Louw, 1999).

It is suggested that intimacy is often interwoven with the impulse for sexual expression. If the need for intimacy is coupled with physical sexual drives, as it is in adolescence and early adulthood, a conflict may arise between the parental and societal teachings about the standards for sexual intimacy, and the young person's desire for contact (Adams et al., 1994). Although sexual activity is a normal consequence of physical development, social factors play an important role in the expression of sexual activity, and the sexual behaviour of adolescents and young adults is shaped not only by their own needs, but also by their upbringing and familial influences (Adams et al., 1994; Louw et al., 1999).

Reiss (1967) found that even in the sixties there seemed to be a shift in the moral and sexual standards of young adults in the western world, and a gradual movement away from traditional standards of approving sexual intimacy only within marriage, to new sets of standards based on the degree of affection existing between two partners. This seems to have become even more apparent in recent years. Furthermore, there is widespread evidence that adolescents are becoming more sexually active and becoming sexually active at a younger age, than previously (Louw et al., 1999). There are several possible reasons for this, including a more liberal society, changing attitudes and greater marital instability (Whyte, 1990).

Compared to large bodies of research on personal adjustment, self-concept and cognitive functioning, few studies have examined courtship activities and sexual behaviour among adolescents and young adults in different family structures (Duran-Aydintug, 1997; Gabardi & Rosen, 1992). Though the numbers of studies in this area are limited, they suggest that parental divorce does impact the courtship activities and sexual behaviour of young adults. Further exploration is necessary to clearly understand how the divorce of one's parents may affect the dating patterns and sexual behaviour of young adults.

3.5.1 Increased dating and sexual behaviour

Several studies (e.g., Black & Sprenkle, 1991; Gabardi & Rosen, 1991, 1992; Kinnaird & Gerrard; 1986) have indicated that adult children of divorce date more frequently, are sexually active at a

younger age and are more sexually involved compared to those from intact homes. Kinnaird and Gerrard (1986) found that young adults from divorced families had more sexual partners and desired more sexual involvement when going steady than young adults from intact families. Furthermore, Gabardi and Rosen (1991) indicated that young adults from divorced families had significantly more sexual partners than young adults from intact families. Boothe et al. (1984) also found parental divorce to be associated with increased courtship activity for young adults.

In further studies by Gabardi and Rosen (1992) it has been shown that when sexual activity is measured by the total number of sexual partners, both men and women from divorced families experience greater sexual activity than their peers from intact families. The results also showed that young adults from divorced homes desired greater sexual involvement within their steady relationships than those from intact homes. These results did not indicate the degree of sexual involvement the young adult had actually experienced but rather what the young adult desired to experience. These findings suggest that the differences between the two groups are related to expectations involved within their relationships. This could indicate that there is a greater discrepancy between what young adults from divorced families hope for and expect in a serious relationship and what they actually experience. This could lead to disappointments within the relationship, which may relate to findings from previous studies that have indicated that young adults from divorced families experience less satisfaction, poorer quality, and shorter duration in relationships (Booth et al., 1984). Further investigation of this dynamic may prove fruitful in understanding the development of intimate relationships for young adults from divorced families.

In a qualitative study conducted by Duran-Aydintug (1997) more than half of the respondents in the study said that compared to their friends whose parents were still married, they had more dating partners. Their explanations were very much the same and included the "need to play the field" in order "to find the right person so as to have a better start." Another common explanation was a fear of conflict. Many of the respondents associated intimacy and a committed relationship with the high possibility of facing conflict. According to previous literature, adult children of divorce are characterised by a fear of commitment and express a fear of forming a long-lasting bond (Wallerstein, 1989). These young adults often replace a committed relationship with several sexual relationships.

Other studies (e.g., Demo and Acock, 1988) have demonstrated that males and females not living with both biological parents initiate coitus earlier than their counterparts in intact families. It has been proposed that parental marital status is associated with a broad range of deviant behaviours, and these may stem from a general loss of parental control rather than simply a loss of control over sexual behaviour.

3.5.2 Parental conflict and sexual behaviour

Boothe et al. (1984) reported that, compared with young adults from intact homes, those from divorced homes exhibited higher levels of dating activity, and this activity increased further if parental or parent-child conflict persisted during and after the divorce. This is possibly associated with hostility in the home environment and attention seeking or acting out behaviour.

Gabardi and Rosen (1992) found parental conflict to be a significant predictor of increased sexual activity and sexual involvement among young adults. They also found less parental marital happiness to be associated with greater negative relationship beliefs and a greater number of sexual partners. This result is consistent with research indicating that parents' level of marital conflict significantly impacts children, whether parents are married or divorced. Parental conflict during and after the divorce may leave young adults bitter regarding their parents' marriage and this explains their need for accelerated courtship activity and the need to create their own relationship. This may also be an attempt to establish greater intimacy and support outside of the family, and to escape from a hostile home environment (Gabardi & Rosen, 1992).

Duran-Aydingtug (1997) found the quality of the parental marriage and the degree of conflict between parents to be salient factors affecting the relationship behaviour of young adults. Those young adults who had experienced parental conflict while their parents were married and after the divorce were the most fearful of committing to a serious relationship.

3.5.3 Factors influencing the role of divorce on sexual behaviour

A possible explanation for this increase in sexual behaviour among young adults from divorced homes may be explained by the social-control theory (Adams et al., 1994). According to this

perspective, young adults' sexual behaviour is socially shaped and learned. It has been suggested that deviant behaviour, including adolescent sexual behaviour, is the result of inadequate societal controls. This position maintains that, due to weakened social bonds, there is an increase in promiscuity and sexual activity among young adults. This increased sexual activity among young adults raised in single parent homes may be due to reduced parenting or limited supervision (Miller & Bingham, 1989).

It has also been suggested that young adults from divorced families have experienced less parental control and, in some cases, less stringent rules of morality, which may provide more freedom to become sexual with more people (Gabardi & Rosen, 1992). The loss of parental control has been associated with other deviant behaviour including anti-social behaviour, alcoholism, and delinquency. Young adults, who do not have sufficient parental control, can possibly fall in with the wrong peer group, and their influence could result in increased promiscuity and sexual activity (Demo & Acock, 1988).

Furthermore, the control-theory holds that society communicates its behavioural expectations through parents, the media and other sources, and young people then imitate this behaviour. Several researchers have used the social-control theory to explain the finding that young adults living in single-parent families in which the parent is dating, are often more sexually active than those living in intact families. The implication here is that these young adults are modelling the behaviour of their parent (Adams et al., 1994). In some families, children of divorce may have observed their parents having sexual relationships as a means towards finding a more intimate partnership. Sexuality then becomes an important aspect of establishing relationships in efforts to resolve intimacy issues (Gabardi & Rosen, 1992).

Another explanation is that these young adults may also be experiencing fears regarding their ability to form intimate heterosexual relationships. Perhaps they resolve their fears of failure in intimate relationships by replacing an emotionally intimate, committed relationship with several sexual relationships. In this way heightened sexual activity may serve to replace emotional attachment and intimacy. Sexual activity within a relationship may also be a means of trying to establish greater intimacy and support outside of the family, following the loss of parental support after the divorce (Wallerstein, 1989).

3.6 GENDER DIFFERENCES:

Though not directly related to the hypotheses, it is interesting to note that in several studies, there were a number of significant differences between genders on sexual behaviour and relationship variables.

3.6.1 Attitudes Towards Marriage

The results of a study by Black and Sprenkle (1991) indicate that males in the divorce group seem to be more favourable in their attitudes toward divorce than females, while females seem more apprehensive about committing to a life-long partner and marriage. This is consistent with Wallerstein's ten-year longitudinal study (1989) that found that boys had difficulty with the initial divorce, but girls faced special difficulties as young adults. She refers to this as the 'sleeper effect' that seems to affect girls as they approach young adulthood. Many appear to avoid commitment, fear betrayal and rejection by men, and choose to become involved in short term sexual relationships. They also appear to be apprehensive about repeating their parent's unhappy marriage during their own adulthood and especially appear eager to avoid divorce for the sake of their own children. In the words of a female respondent this is stated as:

I always had feared that I would be dumped, you know. After you have built your hopes and all that, there would be a terrible end; I even couldn't stand the thought of it. So when things have got somewhat serious I would create fights, fights about stupid little things, and we'd break up. But then at least I'd know I have left him, and haven't been left behind. I have seen my mother going through loneliness when my father left her for another woman. I can't bear facing the same experiences" (Duran-Aydintug, 1997, p. 80).

Perhaps the process of socialisation can explain the gender differences with regard to attitude toward divorce. Possibly females are socialised to maintain and value the family in a different way to males: therefore females are less willing to endorse divorce as a positive outcome. They may be more apprehensive about committing to a marriage because of the expectations placed upon them. In general, however, it seems that both males and females from divorced families are more negative in their attitudes toward marriage.

3.6.2 Love Styles

In addition to gender differences in marital attitudes, there also appear to be gender differences in attitudes towards love. It is suggested by several researchers (e.g., Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986; Hendrick, Hendrick, Foote & Slapione-Foote, 1984) that different attitudinal orientations toward love may exist between the sexes. Hendrick et al. (1984) conducted a study to investigate whether women and men love differently. The study was aimed at young adults from intact homes and reflected more general differences in the love styles between the sexes.

Their research indicated that males appeared somewhat more erotic in orientation than females, responding to more of the items on the Eros scale. They also appeared to be more game playing (ludic) than females, which is consistent with what Sprague and Kinney (1997) reported in their research. Females appeared more storgic (love as friendship) and pragmatic in their conceptions of love than males. There was also a tendency for females to be more manic and reported more physical symptoms in response to love problems than males. There did not appear to be any significant gender differences in the agape love style.

These differences may be due to the fact that the sexual attitudes of women have historically been more conservative than men. The female emphasis on pragmatic, storgic love in the study by Hendrick et al. (1984) appears to reflect greater female conservatism. Traditionally women have been socialised to marry both a love partner and a potential provider. Although more women than ever before are in the work force and provide for themselves and their families, their attitudes still appear to differ from their behaviour. One would assume that the younger adults would have less stereotypical thinking, but this does not appear to be the case with this sample of young adults. The tendency for women to report more manic attitudes may simply be a reflection of their willingness to report symptoms or it may accurately represent a female tendency in love relationships. Both dependency and emotional expressivity are underlying themes of manic love.

The male tendency to be more ludic and erotic than females is consistent with previous sex attitude research that shows males to be more liberal and less commitment-oriented in their attitudes than are females. The popular media stereotype exaggerates certain male qualities with an emphasis on one-night stands and superficial sexuality. Thus one must remember that generalisations are just

that. To some extent, traditional males have been socialised to seek sensuality (eros) in an instrumental way (ludus) while their female counterparts have been socialised differently. It would be rather surprising, given these considerations, if there were no differences in gender differences in love attitudes. It will be most interesting to see whether female love attitudes will shift toward male attitudes as they gain greater behavioural equality in the years ahead. Conversely, as males come to accept females as equals in more areas of life, male attitudes may shift in the pragmatic, storgic direction of female attitudes (Hendrick et al., 1984). The present study will further examine gender differences in love attitudes between young adults from both divorced and intact homes.

3.6.3 Sexual Behaviour

In terms of sexual behaviour and gender, researchers (e.g., Gabardi & Rosen 1991) found that a significantly larger percentage of females from divorced families had engaged in sexual intercourse compared to females from intact homes. This, however, was not true for males. This finding is consistent with previous research (e.g., Hetherington, 1972) showing that the sexual activity of adolescent females is affected by parental divorce. More specifically, prior research has shown that the effect of parental divorce in a girl's childhood may not be apparent until the girl reaches adolescence, at which time she may have a tendency to become sexually promiscuous.

Other studies (Gabardi & Rosen, 1992) found that men from both intact and divorced homes desired and experienced a greater degree of sexual involvement when dating and had a greater number of sexual partners than women. These results indicate that in general, men appear to desire and experience more sexual activity and diversity in sexual activity than women. These gender differences may be related to sex roles regarding stereotypical perceptions of sexual experience. Another explanation may involve responding in a socially desirable way on the questionnaire. It may be that the above-mentioned sex role stereotypes influence men to exaggerate desired and experienced sexual activity in order to be perceived in the socially desirable "masculine" way, while leading women to minimise desired and experienced sexual activity in order to be perceived in the socially desirable "feminine" way.

Results in Gabardi and Rosen's study (1992) also indicated gender differences on intimacy issues and relationship attitudes. Women appeared to experience a greater degree of emotional intimacy

in their relationships. Again, this could be attributable to sex-role socialisation, where women have greater permission to be more verbal, open and expressive with feelings than men, qualities that serve to deepen intimacy in relationships.

Further hypothesising regarding the meaning of these gender differences is beyond the scope of this study. These findings, however, are interesting and provoke questions regarding the importance of sex roles and gender differences in understanding relationship development in young adults.

3.7 SUMMARY

Establishing intimate relationships is developmentally important to young adults. Research suggests that certain factors may impact the establishment and maintenance of their intimate relationships, and these include the parent's marital relationship, parental divorce, and factors such as conflict and family relations following the divorce. Relationship factors that are particularly affected involve attitudes toward marriage, love styles, number of sexual partners, and sexual involvement while dating. The quality of the parental relationship seems to be a significant part of the process of young adults resolving their own struggles in intimate relationships (Gabardi & Rosen, 1992).

At the point in young adulthood, at which children of divorce are entering intimate relationships of their own, an understanding of the possible influence of past events may prove beneficial for them. It is hoped that researchers will continue to explore this path to examine family functioning and the complex behaviours related to love attitudes and romantic relationships.

The study of the love styles adds to the emerging body of research exploring the effect of parental divorce on love and companionship in young adults own lives (Sprague & Kinney, 1997). Existing literature on this population has primarily focused on the effects of parental divorce and family relationships on attitudes towards marriage and on sexual behaviours. This research also examines the relative contribution of these variables to the interpersonal styles of love associated with specific romantic relationships. The examination of love styles and attitudes within a specific relationship adds to the existing literature base by providing information that may prove important

in understanding the role of parental divorce on individual relationship attitudes and beliefs held by young adults.

Chapter 4

Research Methods and Procedures

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to describe the theoretical and practical implementation of the research methods that were used as well as the procedures that were followed in gathering and analysing the data. The research design refers to the plan according to which data, relating to certain variables is collected in order to investigate a research hypothesis, and usually includes the involvement of research participants (Huysamen, 1994). This study is an example of ex post-facto research and a criterion research design is being used.

4.2 RESEARCH AIMS

The aims of this study are to quantitatively investigate the long-term effects of divorce on young adults' *identity* issues and *intimacy* issues, based on their own self-reports.

- The identity issues include self-esteem and general life satisfaction and the researcher will investigate whether young adults from divorced homes have lower self-esteem and less general life satisfaction than those from intact homes.
- The intimacy issues include attitudes towards marriage, love styles, and sexual attitudes and behaviour. The researcher will investigate whether those from divorced homes have more negative attitudes towards marriage, different love styles and more liberal sexual attitudes and behaviour than those from intact homes.

The outcome of this information will have certain implications. Firstly it can give an indication of the long-term negative consequences of divorce and, secondly, it can provide a scientific basis for

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making recommendations on how to facilitate children's adjustment to the divorce, both in the aftermath of the divorce, and also in late adolescence and young adulthood.

4.2.1 Hypotheses

Regarding the research aims mentioned above, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

4.2.1.1 *Self-esteem*

According to the literature review, young adults from divorced homes appear to experience lower self-esteem in the long-term, often due to the divorce itself, but also due to circumstances preceding or following the divorce. Poor family relations and conflict also seem to play a significant role. Young adults from intact homes, who have not been exposed to parental divorce, seem to have higher self-esteem. The following hypothesis is thus implied:

Hypothesis 1: Young adults from divorced parents have lower self-esteem than young adults from married parents.

4.2.1.2 *Life satisfaction*

The literature also indicates that young adults from divorced homes experience less life satisfaction and may have a poorer quality of life, both following the divorce and in the long term, than young adults from intact homes. This can be due to several factors such as poor family relationships, loss of income and resources, and disruptive and stressful life changes. The researcher will therefore investigate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Young adults from divorced parents have less general life satisfaction than young adults from married parents.

4.2.1.3 *Attitudes towards marriage*

Due to the experience of their parents' divorce, many young adults from divorced homes appear to be more cautious and less optimistic about the ideals of marriage than those from intact homes.

The literature indicates that some of them reject the notion of marriage altogether, preferring cohabitation and avoiding a life-long commitment to one person. The researcher will therefore investigate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: Young adults from divorced parents have more negative attitudes towards marriage than young adults from married parents.

4.2.1.4 Love styles

Based on the literature, it seems that young adults from divorced homes may display less altruistic love in their romantic relationships, a lack of trust, and a fear of emotional intimacy and commitment. This is often due to the divorce itself, as well as conflict and disharmony in the home environment. This has an effect on their attitudes towards love and their love styles. The following hypotheses will be investigated:

As a means of escaping commitment and emotional intimacy, it seems probable that young adults from divorced parents are more likely to have several partners and prefer game-playing (ludic) love.

Hypothesis 4: Young adults from divorced parents are more ludic in their relationships than young adults from married parents.

Pragma love is characterised by a more practical love, described as 'computer matching.' Young adults from divorced parents may endorse this love style as a means of avoiding an intimate and emotional relationship with another person. It is also very likely that young adults from divorced homes are more careful in their selection of romantic partners, since they have a greater fear of the dissolution of the relationship, and thus would tend to be more selective (i.e. practical) than young adults from intact homes.

Hypothesis 5: Young adults from divorced parents are more pragmatic in their relationships than young adults from married parents.

The mania love style is characterised by dependency and possessiveness in relationships. Those endorsing this love style often report a poor relationship with parents and a need for attention and

love. They are also more likely to choose inappropriate partners and may exhibit characteristics of 'addictive love' such as desperation. It is possible, therefore, that young adults from divorced parents could be more manic in their love style as they seek to replace a lacking emotional bond with their parents.

Hypothesis 6: Young adults from divorced parents are more manic in their relationships than young adults from married parents.

The experience of divorce, often accompanied by conflict in the home, may lead those children from divorced homes to be more sceptical and distrustful of relationships than those from intact homes. This may lead young adults from divorced parents to be less self-sacrificing and less trusting in their love style.

Hypothesis 7: Young adults from divorced homes are less altruistic (agapic) in their relationships than young adults from married parents.

The eros lover is characterised by a strong desire for a passionate and intimate relationship with another person. They also desire a strong commitment. As young adults from divorced homes seem to avoid intimacy and commitments, it seems probable that they are less likely to endorse this love style.

Hypothesis 8: Young adults from divorced parents are less erotic in their relationships than young adults from married parents.

The storge love style is based very much on friendship and stability in relationships. It reflects a secure type of love with a need for a commitment. Storgic lovers often come from secure and dependable family backgrounds. Young adults from divorced homes seem more likely to avoid a commitment than those from intact homes and are therefore less likely to endorse this love style.

Hypothesis 9: Young adults from divorced parents are less storgic in their relationships than young adults from married parents.

4.2.1.5 Sexual behaviour

According to the literature review, it appears that young adults from divorced homes seem to be more liberal in their sexual attitudes and sexual behaviour than young adults from intact homes. They appear to start dating earlier, have more partners, and experiment more frequently with various behaviours, such as kissing, petting and sexual intercourse. This is sometimes due to a fear of commitment, lack of parental control, or a dysfunctional family environment. The researcher will investigate the following hypotheses:

Hypotheses 10: Young adults from divorced parents are more liberal in their sexual attitudes than young adults from married parents

Hypotheses 11: Young adults from divorced homes are more liberal in their sexual behaviours than young adults from married parents

4.3 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.3.1 Quantitative Methodology

Quantitative research makes assumptions about the probability hypotheses being proved correct based on statistical inferences. The purpose of quantitative statistics is to summarise, compare and to make easy and precise generalisations. Standardised measures are used to fit the diverse and various opinions of many respondents to a limited number of questions, into predetermined response categories. Careful attention is given to the development of standardised, reliable, and valid measuring instruments (Kerlinger, 1986; Patton, 1987).

The intention of standardised measurement procedures is to assign numbers or numerals to persons to reflect differences among them in some attribute. Certain attributes cannot be measured as directly as in the case of a person's height or mass, and certain psychological attributes such as anxiety and happiness can be measured only indirectly. One therefore makes inferences about

these attributes on the basis of observations of the person's responses to a standard collection of questions (Huysamen, 1996). The quantitative data in the study was gathered by the use of a biographical questionnaire and five self-report questionnaires.

The advantage of quantitative measures is that they tend to be systematic, standardised and easily aggregated for analysis. They also take less time and are more convenient than qualitative measures (Patton, 1987). Furthermore, although qualitative research has become a prominent strategy in the social sciences, it is by no means as pervasive as quantitative research (Bryman & Cramer, 1994). The disadvantage of quantitative measures is that they are not always reliable in a context where the educational backgrounds and cultural backgrounds of the participants differ, as these differences may influence their performance in tests and questionnaires (Machet, 1991). For this reason, the researcher targeted young adults from similar educational and cultural backgrounds.

4.4 THE RESEARCH SAMPLE

Sampling involves taking any portion of a population or universe as representative of that population or universe. This definition does not say that the population taken *is* representative, but rather that it is considered to be representative (Kerlinger, 1986). As the total population of interest is usually so large that it is impossible to observe all of its members, the researcher uses a representative sample that can be generalised to a wider population. It usually consists of a relatively small group of people from the population and can be achieved through random sampling. By means of inferential statistics, inferences are then made about the entire population on the basis of the results obtained for such a sample (Bryman & Cramer, 1994; Huysamen, 1996).

4.4.1 Sample Size

A frequently asked question in the context of sampling is how large the sample size needs to be. According to Kerlinger (1986) the basic rule is to use as large a sample as possible. Whenever a mean, percentage, or other statistic is calculated from a sample, a population value is being estimated. A question that needs to be asked is how much error is likely to be found in statistics

calculated from samples of different sizes. It is indicated that the smaller the population size, the larger the error, and the larger the sample, the smaller the error (error meaning deviation from population values). Statistics calculated from large samples are more accurate than those calculated from small samples (Kerlinger, 1986).

A second important consideration in determining sample size remains the feasibility of gathering the data. The researcher almost always works within time and resource constraints, so that decisions about sample size must always recognise these boundaries. Thirdly, the problem of non-response should be borne in mind, as most sample surveys attract a certain degree of non-response. In addition, even when a questionnaire is answered, there may still be questions that are not answered, making the questionnaire incomplete. The issue of non-response draws attention to the fact that a well-crafted sample can be jeopardised by the failure of individuals to participate. It is necessary therefore, to allow for a percentage of non-response, and distribute more questionnaires than ultimately needed, in order to combat this problem (Bryman & Cramer, 1994).

With the required sample size of 200, the researcher initially distributed 250 questionnaires, of which 210 questionnaires were returned. Of those returned, 175 were completed correctly while 35 were rejected as incomplete. A further 50 questionnaires were then distributed, of which the researcher used 25 questionnaires. The sample size thus consisted of 200 completed sets of questionnaires.

4.4.2 Research Participants

The research participants for this study consisted of 200 young adults from across South Africa who were randomly selected, and volunteered to participate in this study. The *divorce* group consisted of 100 single young adults from divorced parents, while the *married* group consisted of 100 single young adults from married parents. Both of these groups were divided equally in terms of gender (i.e. each group thus consisted of 50 males and 50 females). Only young adults from the white population group were used to eliminate the possibility of cross-cultural differences. To decrease the demographic variance of the subject pool, only young adults who were between the ages of 20 and 27 years, heterosexual, and who were children or young adolescents at the time of their parent's divorce, were included in the study.

Furthermore, the sample consisted of both young working adults and students (both of which fall into the required age bracket). It was felt that no significant differences would exist between these groups on any of the variables being studied, and the broader scope of the sample would assist in increasing the representativeness of the sample.

4.5 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

As indicated in 4.3.1., the quantitative data was gathered by using a biographical questionnaire and five self-report questionnaires, which will be described in this section. Respondents who volunteered to participate were asked to complete the questionnaires, consisting of questions regarding biographical information, self-esteem, general life satisfaction, attitudes towards marriage, love styles, and sexual attitudes and behaviour.

Permission to distribute questionnaires to volunteers in several classes was obtained from the relevant lecturers at the University of the Free State (U.F.S.). The rest of the questionnaires were distributed to friends and colleagues who volunteered to participate in the study. Questionnaires were randomly distributed and respondents maintained anonymity. All respondents were informed that the survey information was completely confidential and that they would get feedback if they required it.

All the data collection for this study took place over a period of six months from July 2000 to December 2000. In total 300 questionnaires were distributed, of which 200 questionnaires (response rate of 66.6%) were completed correctly and could be utilised in the study.

4.5.1 Measuring Instruments

4.5.1.1 Total battery

Each questionnaire set consisted of a biographical section followed by a battery of self-report questionnaires. The questionnaire sets all contained the different questionnaires in the same order. The questionnaires that were used consisted of the Satisfaction With Life Scale, Rosenberg Self-

Esteem Scale, Love Styles Scale, the Sexual Attitudes Scale and the Attitudes Towards Marriage Questionnaire. To facilitate the process, all the Likert-scale questionnaires were given a four-point scale, allowing one of four responses from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree.' A short description of the structure of each questionnaire will be given.

4.5.1.2 Biographical questionnaire

Respondents completed a series of questions regarding age, gender, home language, and current relationship involvement (current dating status, length of current relationship, if not in a relationship then the time since last relationship, duration of last relationship, and who ended the relationship). Respondents were also asked several questions regarding their biological parents' marital history. These included their parents' marital status, the levels of conflict in the home, respondents' age at the time of parental divorce, the custodial parent with whom the child lived after the divorce, and whether either of their parents remarried (see Appendix A). Although some of these questions were related to potential confounding variables, the sample sizes for the respective cells created by these variables were very small, and these were thus not used in the actual analyses conducted in this study.

4.5.1.3 Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

4.5.1.3.1 Aim and rationale

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (SES) is a ten-item scale originally designed to measure global positive or negative attitudes towards oneself (Rosenburg, 1965). The researcher chose to use this scale as it has found wide acceptance and it has a high degree of reliability.

4.5.1.3.2 Composition

The ten items that make up the SES were designed to optimise ease of administration, economy of time, and face validity. The items require the respondent to report feelings about the self directly. Examples of items include: "I feel that I have a number of good qualities," "All in all, I am inclined to do things as well as most people," "I feel I do not have much to be proud of," "All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure." Positively and negatively worded items are in alternate order to

reduce response set. The items are scored in such a way that a high total score indicates high self-esteem, while a low score indicates a low self-esteem. High self-esteem signifies that the young adult respects and worthies him/herself. Low self-esteem reflects a lack of self-respect and sense of inadequacy (Gabardi & Rosen, 1992).

4.5.1.3.3 Reliability and validity

The original sample was normed against 5,024 American high school juniors and seniors from ten randomly selected high schools. A test-retest correlation of .85 with college students was reported (Rosenburg, 1965). Evidence of construct reliability has also been demonstrated (Rosenburg, 1965). The scale is highly correlated with measures of depressive affect and psycho-physiological indicators of anxiety (Gabardi & Rosen, 1992). The reliability of the scale will be assessed in this study.

4.5.1.4 Satisfaction With Life Scale

4.5.1.4.1 Aim and rationale

The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) is a self-report questionnaire designed by Diener et al. (1985). The aim of the scale is to measure general life satisfaction. The researcher chose to use this scale because it is concise and asks respondents to comment on current life satisfaction as well past experiences. This will be helpful in assessing the correlation between negative past experiences such as parental divorce, and current life satisfaction.

4.5.1.4.2 Composition

The SWLS has been designed for use with different age groups and is narrowly focussed to assess general life satisfaction and does not tap related constructs such as positive affect or loneliness. It is therefore designed around the idea that respondents must report an overall judgement of their life in order to measure the concept of life satisfaction. The scale consists of five items consisting of positively worded statements such as "The conditions of my life are excellent," "I am satisfied with my life," "If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing," and "so far I have gotten the important things in life." These statements are designed to assess the subject's current

life satisfaction as well as past experiences. Higher scores indicate greater general life satisfaction while lower scores indicate less general life satisfaction.

4.5.1.4.3 Reliability and validity

Diener et al. (1985) reported a two-month test-retest correlation coefficient of .82, and a coefficient alpha of .87 for the SWLS, with a good degree of internal consistency. They also found it to correlate well with related measures, providing at least an indication of construct validity. The reliability of the scale will be assessed in this study.

4.5.1.5 Attitudes Toward Marriage Questionnaire

4.5.1.5.1 Aim and rationale

The Attitude Towards Marriage Questionnaire (ATMQ) was compiled by Le Roux (n.d.) in order to measure current beliefs and attitudes towards marriage, and expectations regarding future marital status.

4.5.1.5.2 Composition

The questionnaire consists of 30 items, comprising of both positively worded statements and negatively worded statements. Examples of positive statements include: "Marriage provides lots of security," "Marriage takes away one's selfishness," and "Marriage provides space for unconditional love," and negative statements such as "Marriage is out of fashion," "Marriage increases conflict," and "Marriage is a farce." These statements are designed to assess the respondents' expectations and desires regarding their future marital status. Higher scores indicate more favourable attitudes towards marriage while lower scores indicate more unfavourable attitudes towards marriage.

4.5.1.5.3 Reliability and validity

Le Roux (n.d.) had not computed any reliabilities for the ATMQ, nor correlations with related measures. The reliability of this scale will be estimated in this study.

4.5.1.6 Love Attitudes Scale

4.5.1.6.1 Aim and rationale

The Love Attitudes Scale (LAS) was developed by Hendrick and Hendrick (1986) and is based on Lee's (1977) theory of the six basic love styles: Eros; Ludus; Storge; Pragma; Mania; Agape. The researcher chose to use this scale as it has been used in various other studies, measuring love styles, and the reliability is relatively high.

4.5.1.6.2 Composition

The scale consists of forty-two items, with sets of seven items representing each of the six love styles. Each subject is given a score on each sub-scale representing a love style, thus yielding a particular pattern of scores. The scoring was reversed, so that, contrary to the Hendrick's original scale (1986) a high score on a sub-scale indicates a high level of agreement for that particular love style. The following examples are representative items of each love style:

Eros: I feel that my partner and I are meant for each other

Ludus: I enjoy playing the game of love with a number of different partners

Storge: The best kind of love grows out of a long friendship

Pragma: It is best to love someone with a similar background

Mania: When my partner doesn't pay attention to me I feel sick all over

Agape: I would rather suffer myself than let my partner suffer

Instructions for the use of the LAS were that respondents were to complete the scale with their current romantic relationship in mind. Had they not been in a current relationship, then they were to complete it with their last relationship in mind (within the past year). If they had not been in a relationship within the past year, or if they had never been in a relationship, then they were to complete the questionnaire with their ideal relationship in mind.

4.5.1.6.3 Reliability and validity

The Hendrick's (1986) found reasonably high reliabilities for the sub-scales of the LAS, the lowest being for storge, with an alpha of .66. and the highest being agape with an alpha of .83. These reliabilities were almost perfectly matched by Raubenheimer (1997). The Hendrick's (1986) also reported that the scales demonstrated internal reliability and that they possessed reasonable independence from each other. The Hendrick's (1989) found the LAS to correlate well with other existing measures of love. The reliabilities for each of the sub-scales will also be estimated in this study.

4.5.1.7 Sexual Attitudes Scale

4.5.1.7.1 Aim and Rationale

This scale was used to assess subject's sexual attitudes as well as their current sexual behaviour. The researcher added a behavioural component to Reiss's original Sexual Permissiveness Scale (1964) to form the scale used in this study.

4.5.1.7.2 Composition

The Sexual Permissiveness Scale (SPS) of Reiss (1964) is a Guttman scale measuring respondents' attitudes towards three types of physical behaviour: kissing, petting and intercourse. The degree of affection involved in a relationship (engaged, being in love, strong affection, no affection) was then related to these three behaviours. The four affectional states related to each of the three types of sexual behaviour comprise the 12 questions of the scale. Thus each question refers to a particular type of sexual behaviour under a particular condition of affection.

The Guttman-scale nature of the attitude scale component of the SPS gave the respondents a score on a scale from 1 to 5 on the basis of the degree of affection which they required before deeming a behaviour acceptable, with engagement being the most restricted degree and acquaintance being the least restricted, and also gaining the highest score. Respondents who could not deem the behaviour appropriate for any of the levels of affection thus obtained the lowest score.

In addition, respondents were asked to indicate the frequency of their current and past sexual behaviour and, if they were sexually active, the age at which they first engaged in sexual intercourse or other sexual behaviour. If the subject had engaged in any of these sexual behaviours, they were asked to indicate the total amount of partners. This made up the behavioural component of the scale, and was scored as follows: A baseline age of 30 years was selected, as no respondent was older than 29. The age at which the respondent was first involved in a behaviour was then subtracted from the baseline age, under the premise that the younger the respondent was at the time, the more promiscuous the respondent could be deemed to be. Thus subtracting the age would give respondents who were younger at first involvement a higher score. Secondly, the number of partners with whom the respondent had enacted the behaviour was added to the first score, again under the premise that a greater number of partners would indicate a higher level of promiscuous behaviour. This gave a final score which indicated the behavioural component related to the attitude measured by Reiss's (1964) original scale. It should also be noted that it stands to reason that the number of partners would be inversely related to the age at which the behaviour was first enacted, so that the younger a respondent was at the time of first enactment, the more partners that respondent would have been involved with. It thus seems sensible to add the two measures to allow the researcher to work with a single score.

4.5.1.7.3 Reliability and validity

Although no previous reliabilities exist for the behavioural component added by this researcher, Reiss (1964) did examine the psychometric properties of his Sexual Permissiveness Scale. He found all the sub-scales to have coefficients of reproducibility of above .90. Furthermore, the coefficients of scalability for all the sub-scales were above .65.

4.6 Control of Co-variates

Several researchers have indicated that there are many variables affecting children's adjustment to parental divorce that should be statistically controlled. These variables include parental remarriage, custody agreements, socio-economic status, support systems, and religion (Booth et al., 1984; Gabardi & Rosen, 1991; Lopez, 1991). The researcher recognises the significance of these

variables, but due to limitations in the scope of the current study, it was not possible to include them. They are however important and should be considered for further research.

4.7 METHODS OF DATA PROCESSING

Having discussed the methodology of the data collection and procedures, this section focuses on the statistical procedures used to process, analyse and systemise the data collection.

4.7.1 Statistical Procedures

The hypotheses stated in 4.2.1 can be summarised as follows:

There is a difference between young adults from divorced parents and young adults from married parents across the measures of self-esteem, general life satisfaction, attitudes towards marriage, love styles, and sexual attitudes and behaviour.

The testing of the stated hypotheses involves one independent variable and several dependent variables. The independent variable consists of two levels (divorced parents / married parents) and according to Tabachnick and Fidell (1989) the Hotelling T^2 -test is, in this case, the statistical technique of choice. With the T^2 -test, the two vectors of means of the dependent variables can simultaneously be compared to one another, and in doing so the occurrence of Type I errors can be limited. If a significant T^2 -value should be found, the analysis will be supplemented with *post hoc* *t*-tests in order to establish which of the dependent variables show significant differences in the means for the two groups.

It was decided to use the 1% level of significance. However, in order to comment on the practical importance of the statistically significant results that are found in the research, the practical significance of the results will also be investigated. As a measurement of practical significance, the effect sizes will be calculated. In determining the practical significance of the Hotelling T^2 -value, the mean vectors will be compared and the effect sizes (f) will be calculated as follows (Steyn, 1999):

$$f = T / \sqrt{N}$$

In order to interpret these effect sizes, the following guidelines can be used:

$f = 0,1$:	small effect
$f = 0,25$:	medium effect
$f = 0,4$:	large effect

If a significant T^2 -value with large practical significance is found, the analysis will be supplemented with *post hoc t*-tests. With respect to the latter tests, the adjusted effect sizes will be calculated as follows:

$$\delta_a = \mu_1 - \mu_2 / \sqrt{p\sigma_1^2 + q\sigma_2^2}$$

where p and q are indicative of the proportion of the number of persons from the two populations respectively. The guidelines which can be used here are as follows:

$ \delta = 0,2$:	small effect
$ \delta = 0,5$:	medium effect
$ \delta = 0,8$:	large effect

(the absolute value of δ is given, since negative values can be obtained when $\mu_1 < \mu_2$.)

4.8 SUMMARY

This chapter reflected on the research aims and design of this study. Furthermore this chapter presented both the theoretical and practical basis for the research methodology and the procedures of data collection and processing. It provided a foundation for the discussion of the research results in the following chapter.

Chapter 5

Research Results

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the focus will be on the discussion and interpretation of the quantitative data gathered in this study. The conclusions drawn from the results will be discussed in the following chapter.

5.2 RELIABILITIES

Table 1: Reliability scores for the Likert-scale questionnaires

Scale	Mean inter-item correlation	Alpha	Standardised item alpha
Satisfaction With Life Scale	0.513	0.8310	0.8404
Self-Esteem Scale	0.4077	0.8699	0.8732
Attitude Towards Marriage Scale	0.2978	0.9259	0.9271
Eros	0.3028	0.7443	0.7525
Ludus	0.4499	0.849	0.8513
Storge	0.3084	0.755	0.7574
Pragma	0.2515	0.7029	0.7017
Mania	0.3944	0.8184	0.8201
Agape	0.4934	0.847	0.8458

An important characteristic of any measuring instrument is its reliability. For such an instrument to be reliable, it should, when measuring a certain construct, yield a comparable result for a specific individual, even when administered at different times or by different administrators (Huysamen, 1994). For this purpose Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used as a measure of reliability. It is generally preferable that the reliability coefficients of the questionnaires are greater than .65. It can be seen from table 1 that the reliability coefficients, of all the questionnaires and of the sub-scales

on the Love Styles Questionnaire are, according to Cronbach's alpha coefficient, greater than .65. This indicates that the reliabilities of the questionnaires are satisfactory.

5.3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Before investigating the stated research hypothesis (refer to 4.2.1.), the descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) with respect to the dependent variables of the two groups (parents divorced / parents married) will be presented in table 1. Raw scores will be used in the calculation of the results.

Table 2: Means and standard deviations of the dependent variables for the two groups

Dependent variables	Parents divorced			Parents married		
	N	X	s	N	X	s
Self-esteem	100	29.69	4.21	100	31.01	4.58
Life Satisfaction	100	13.72	2.83	100	14.50	2.41
Attitude Towards Marriage	100	76.78	13.02	100	88.69	9.51
Love styles- Eros	100	20.80	3.54	100	21.97	3.21
- Ludus	100	14.50	5.23	100	14.32	3.68
- Storge	100	19.65	3.83	100	20.23	3.19
- Pragma	100	17.56	2.75	100	18.75	3.25
- Mania	100	18.78	4.03	100	17.93	3.67
- Agape	100	18.60	3.17	100	21.22	3.39
Intimacy issues - Kissing behaviour	96	36.61	18.45	78	34.68	20.37
- Kissing attitude	100	4.60	0.72	100	4.36	0.82
- Petting behaviour	94	23.59	11.18	67	22.25	12.62
- Petting attitude	100	4.33	0.73	100	3.55	1.40
- Sexual behaviour	71	16.92	6.86	41	16.61	7.01
- Sexual attitude	100	3.49	1.15	100	2.40	1.50

5.3.1 Mean Scores for the self-report questionnaires

5.3.1.1 Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (SES) consists of ten items and has a scale range of 10-40 with higher scores representing higher self-esteem. No comparable mean scores were available for self-esteem amongst young adults from divorced and intact homes. The mean score for young adults in

the divorced group in this study was 29.69 and the mean score for young adults in the married group was 31.01.

5.3.1.2 Satisfaction With Life Scale

The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) consists of five items and has a scale range of 5-20, with higher scores representing higher life satisfaction. In a sample of 176 graduates in introductory psychology classes, Diener et al. (1985) found the mean score on the SWLS to be 13.42. This is similar to the young adults in the divorced group in this study, with a mean score of 13.72, while the young adults in the married group in this study have a slightly higher mean score of 14.50.

5.3.1.3 Attitude Towards Marriage Scale

Le Roux (n.d) has not computed any mean scores for The Attitude Toward Marriage Scale (ATMS). As the ATMS has a total of 30 items, it has a scale range of 30-120, with higher scores representing more positive attitudes towards marriage. Theoretically the mean score would be 75.00. This compares with the mean score for the young adults in the divorced group, 76.78, while the mean score for young adults in the married group is considerably higher, 88.69.

5.3.1.4 Love Attitudes Scale

The Love Attitudes Scale (LAS) consists of a total of 42 items, with six sub-scales consisting of seven items each. The scale range for each sub-scale is 7-28, with a higher score indicating a respondent endorses that love style more strongly. The mean scores of the sub-scales of the LAS, for the current study and the study by Sprecher et al. (1998) are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Means for the scores on the sub-scales of the Love Attitudes Scale

	Current study		Sprecher et al. (1998)	
	Divorced	Married	Divorced	Married
Eros	20.80	21.97	22.26	21.7
Ludus	14.50	14.32	13.244	12.208
Storge	19.65	20.23	19.516	19.264
Pragma	17.56	18.75	12.712	13.804
Mania	18.78	17.93	16.352	17.192
Agape	18.60	21.22	20.888	22.176

As indicated from table 3, the mean scores on the sub-scales from both studies are relatively similar, with the largest differences between the two studies being on the pragmatic love style. This is possibly due to differences in the sample population as the current study used a South African sample, while Sprecher et al. (1998) used an American sample. It is also interesting to note that most of the differences between the divorced group and married group in both studies, seem to be in the same direction.

5.3.1.5 Sexual Attitudes Scale

The Sexual Attitudes Scale (SAS) consists of two components. The original Sexual Permissiveness Scale of Reiss (1964) consists of the attitude component and this has 12 items, with a scale range of 4-48. As this scale was developed in 1964 in America, it was felt that the mean scores calculated at the time would not constitute a valid standard of comparison to those obtained in this study. Furthermore, as the researcher added the behavioural component on the scale, there are no available mean scores with which to compare the current mean scores.

5.4 HYPOTHESES TESTING

In order to investigate the formulated research hypotheses, the vectors of means for the respective dependent variables of the two groups will be compared. The comparison of the vectors can be statistically formulated as follows:

$$H_0 : \bar{\mu}_{dv} = \bar{\mu}_{nd}$$

$$H_1 : \bar{\mu}_{dv} \neq \bar{\mu}_{nd}$$

Where μ_e = the vector of means (μ) of the dependent variables for the young adults whose parents are divorced (dv).

μ_k = the vectors of means (μ) of the dependent variables for the young adults whose parents are not divorced (nd).

The Hotelling T^2 -test for independent groups is used for this purpose and is done with the help of the BMDP P3D-programme (Dixon, 1985). The results are presented in table 4.

Table 4: Results of the T^2 - and F -values for the comparison of the vector means for the young adults whose parents are divorced and those whose parents are not divorced.

Mahalanobis D^2	Hotelling T^2	F-values	p-values
2.250	112.525	8.856	0.0000*

Degrees of freedom: 12 and 187

* $p \leq 0,01$

From table 4 it is clear that the calculated T^2 -value is 112, 525, with an F -value of 8,856 for 12 and 187 degrees of freedom. These values are significant on the 1%-level ($p = 0,0000$) such that the null hypothesis ($H_0 : \bar{\mu}_{dv} = \bar{\mu}_{nd}$) can be rejected. However, as was mentioned, in order to comment

on the practical importance of the statistically significant results, the practical significance of the results is also investigated. The effect size ($f = T / \sqrt{N}$) is calculated as 0,70 which is indicative of a large effect size and therefore the results are of great practical value.

The group differences will now be analysed by means of *t*-tests for independent groups. Before continuing with the *t*-tests, it is important to note that where different dependent variables are present (as in this case, where working with 15 dependent variables) it is preferable, according to Shaw and Du Toit (1985) that the obtained *p*-value of each individual comparison be at least $0,01/15 = 0,0007$, in order for it to be significant on the multivariate 1% level.

Consequently, the analysis of multiple comparisons is done by means of separate *t*-tests for the 15 dependent variables and the results of these, together with the calculated effect sizes (δ), appear in table 5.

Table 5: Means, standard deviations, *t*- and *p*-values and effect sizes with respect to the 15 dependent variables for the two groups.

Dependent variables	Parents divorced		Parents married		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	δ
	<i>X</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>s</i>			
Self-esteem	29.69	4.21	31.01	4.58	-2.12	0.0351	
Life Satisfaction	13.72	2.83	14.50	2.41	-2.10	0.0371	
Attitude Towards Marriage	76.78	13.02	88.69	9.51	-7.39	0.0000*	1.04
Love styles- Eros	20.80	3.54	21.97	3.21	-2.45	0.0151	
- Ludus	14.50	5.23	14.32	3.68	0.28	0.7786	
- Storge	19.65	3.83	20.23	3.19	-1.16	0.2459	
- Pragma	17.56	2.75	18.75	3.25	-2.79	0.0057	
- Mania	18.78	4.03	17.93	3.67	1.56	0.1206	
- Agape	18.60	3.17	21.22	3.39	-5.65	0.0000*	0.80
Intimacy issues - Kissing behaviour	36.61	18.45	34.68	20.37	0.66	0.5123	
- Kissing attitude	4.60	0.72	4.36	0.82	2.19	0.0298	
- Petting behaviour	23.59	11.18	22.25	12.62	0.71	0.4814	
- Petting attitude	4.33	0.73	3.55	1.40	4.92	0.0000*	0.70
- Sexual behaviour	16.92	6.86	16.61	7.01	0.23	0.8221	
- Sexual attitude	3.49	1.15	2.40	1.50	5.74	0.0000*	0.81

* $p \leq 0,0007$ (significant on the multivariate 1%-level)

It is apparent from table 5 that the *t*-values for four of the 15 dependent variables (attitude towards marriage, agape love style, attitude towards petting, and attitude towards sexual intercourse) gives a *p*-value smaller than 0,0007, giving the obtained results for these variables significance on the multivariate 1% level. When the effect sizes are investigated, it is clear that for these four dependent variables large effect sizes are present, which indicate that the results are also of practical value.

It is therefore clear, as indicated in table 5, that young adults whose parents are not divorced obtain a higher mean score on the variables measuring attitudes towards marriage and agape love, than those persons whose parents are divorced. This means that young adults from divorced parents are significantly more negative in their attitudes towards marriage than young adults from married parents, and supports Hypothesis 3 (refer to 4.2.1.3). Furthermore, it indicates that young adults from divorced parents are significantly less altruistic (agapic love) in their relationships than young adults from married parents. This is in support of Hypothesis 7 (refer to 4.2.1.4).

It is also clear from table 5 that young adults whose parents are not divorced obtain a lower mean score on the variables measuring attitudes towards petting and sexual intercourse. This indicates that young adults from divorced parents are more liberal in their attitudes towards petting and sexual intercourse with regard to the degree of affection needed before engaging in these behaviours, and is in support of Hypothesis 10 (refer to 4.2.1.5).

In addition to this, the results indicate modest differences among the other variables, although they were not statistically significant. As can be seen from table 5, these differences indicate that young adults from divorced parents obtained slightly lower mean scores on the self-esteem and the general life satisfaction variables than young adults from married parents. In addition to this, young adults from divorced parents had slightly lower mean scores on the erotic, storgic and pragmatic love styles and slightly higher mean scores on the ludic and manic love styles compared to young adults from married parents. Finally in terms of their sexual behaviour, young adults from divorced parents had slightly higher mean scores on the sexual behaviours involving kissing, petting and sexual intercourse having engaged in these behaviours at an earlier age and with more partners than young adults from married parents.

5.5 SUMMARY

This chapter reflected on the research results of this study. As indicated there were significant differences across four of the 15 dependent variables (attitude towards marriage, agape love style, attitudes towards petting, and attitudes towards sexual intercourse). The differences between the two groups on the other dependent variables were not significant, but will be discussed in further detail in the following chapter as they are an indication that differences could exist between young adults from divorced and married parents.

Chapter 6

Interpretation and Recommendations

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The overall purpose of this study was to investigate the long-term consequences of divorce on young adults along several measures of adjustment. The measures of adjustment included self-esteem, general life satisfaction, attitudes towards marriage, love styles, and sexual attitudes and behaviour. The results of this study indicated that, compared to young adults from married parents, young adults from divorced parents were significantly more negative in their attitudes towards marriage and significantly less altruistic (agapic love) in their relationships than young adults from married parents. Furthermore, the results indicated that young adults from divorced parents were significantly more liberal in their sexual attitudes regarding petting and sexual intercourse and the degree of affection needed before engaging in these behaviours.

There were also modest differences along several of the other measures of adjustment, although they were not statistically significant. These differences indicate that young adults from divorced parents had slightly lower self-esteem and general life satisfaction than young adults from married parents. In addition to this, young adults from divorced parents were slightly less erotic, storgic and pragmatic in their love styles and slightly more ludic and manic in their love styles compared to young adults from married parents. In terms of their sexual behaviour, young adults from divorced parents had slightly more liberal sexual behaviours involving kissing, petting and sexual intercourse, having engaged in these behaviours at an earlier age and with more partners than young adults from married parents.

The research results and the implications thereof will be discussed in this chapter. The researcher will also attempt to make recommendations regarding post-divorce conditions that may be more conducive to the adjustment of adult children of divorce entering their own intimate relationships.

6.2 INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

In this section the focus will be on the interpretation of research results that were reported (Chapter 5). The researcher will also attempt to explain these findings in terms of the theoretical overview offered in the literature review (Chapters 2 and 3) as well as discuss the underlying factors that may have an influence on research results.

6.2.1 Identity issues of young adults: Self-esteem and General Life Satisfaction

6.2.1.1 Self-Esteem

As discussed previously (refer to 2.3.1.) signs of low self-esteem have been found in the literature for younger children of divorce (Everett, 1992; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980) and past research has linked parental divorce with lower levels of self-esteem in children after the divorce (Everett, 1992). One of the researcher's objectives was to investigate whether parental divorce also had a *long-term* effect on the self-esteem of young adults from divorced homes. The research results indicated that those from divorced homes had slightly lower self-esteem than those from intact homes. Although these differences were not statistically significant, it is an indication that parental discord and family structure have an effect on young adults' self-esteem levels.

This is consistent with theories of self-concept development, discussed in the literature (Rosenberg, 1965) indicating that the formation of self-esteem is strongly influenced by relationships within the family, and that have revealed that children and adolescents generally develop high self-esteem in a family with effective communication patterns and minimal conflict (Pasley & Healow, 1988). Other researchers have also indicated (e.g., Adams et al., 1994) that a variety of social conditions influence feelings of self worth such as family structure, living environment, socio-economic background and stressful life events, which are all influenced by the divorce experience (refer to 3.4.2.).

There are several factors that could contribute to the fact that the researcher only found modest differences between the two groups on self-esteem. It is possible that because the event occurred in the past when most respondents were still young, their perception of the divorce process has been redefined and the effects thereof are no longer as negative on their self-esteem. Another explanation, is that they may have moved out of a negative family environment which could have contributed to feelings of low self-worth, and have since been in a more positive living environment, improving their self-esteem. The researcher also acknowledges that most of the respondents in this study were from middle to upper class backgrounds, and so the effect of the divorce financially may not have been as severe as those coming from poorer backgrounds. This implies that their educational opportunities were not necessarily affected and they did not suffer the negative consequences thereof, on their sense of self-worth and achievement. In fact, the majority of the respondents in this study were either students or young working adults.

6.2.1.2 General Life Satisfaction

As discussed in the literature (refer to 2.4.1.) a number of factors are found to be predictive of happiness and general life satisfaction, including marriage and other social relationships, high-status work, satisfying leisure, income and health (Argyle, 1992). It appears that marriage, family life, friends and other social relationships are the major sources of life satisfaction, followed by other conditions, such as income, educational attainment, and health, although these have a somewhat smaller effect on life satisfaction (Argyle, 1987).

It was therefore argued that, due to factors, such as poor family relationships, loss of income and resources, and disruptive and stressful life changes following the divorce, young adults from divorced homes would be more likely to have less life satisfaction and report a poorer quality of life than young adults from intact homes. The data supported this argument, with young adults from divorced homes indicating slightly less general life satisfaction than those from intact homes, although the differences were not statistically significant. This does, nonetheless, indicate that there are differences in response to this variable between the two groups.

A possible explanation for the fact that only modest differences were found between the two groups on this measure, is that most young adults are at a developmental level where they are

entering into their own social relationships and experiencing a lot of changes, such as becoming more independent and moving away from the family environment. This in itself can be positive as mentioned in the previous paragraph, social relationships and friends are major sources of happiness and life satisfaction, and these relationships are contributing towards the life satisfaction of these young adults at this stage in their development. Furthermore, young adults from divorced homes may have overcome the stressful life changes from parental divorce and have gained more independence and control over the events in their lives. This may have an influence on how they currently perceive the conditions of their life.

6.2.2 Intimacy issues of young adults: Attitudes towards marriage, Love Styles and Sexual Behaviour

6.2.2.1 Attitudes towards marriage

As indicated in the literature review (refer to 3.3.1), previous research (e.g., Gabardi & Rosen, 1991; Kinnaird & Gerrard, 1986; Tasker, 1992) has indicated that parental divorce has a significantly negative effect on young adults' attitudes towards marriage. This is also confirmed by other research (e.g., Kozuch & Kooney, 1995; Wallerstein, 1989) that has found a greater caution towards marriage among children of divorce in past studies. Their explanation for this is that it may be due to a fear of failure in their own marriages, and a rejection of the option of marriage. It may also be an indication that they are more cynical and critical regarding partner selection and the institution itself.

The researcher therefore argued that young adults from divorced parents would have a significantly more negative attitude towards marriage than young adults from married parents. The research results supported this argument, indicating that young adults from divorced homes were significantly more negative in their attitudes towards marriage than young adults from intact homes. Perhaps, through identification with their parents, they had developed negative images of the consequences of marriage and feared the experience of a failed relationship. This could then have resulted in doubts about entering into marriage and low levels of idealism about the institution of marriage. It is also possible that they wanted to prevent their own children from

getting hurt through the experience of divorce, the way they had been and therefore they rejected the option of marriage.

It is interesting that some researchers found only weak effects of parental divorce on attitudes toward marriage and divorce among offspring (e.g., Landis-Kleine et al., 1995). Their study, however, had several limitations, such as utilising a student population, where most subjects were only in their early twenties. Perhaps the results would have been different had they included young adults from the general population.

6.2.2.2 The Love Styles

As discussed in the literature (refer to 3.4.2.) it is suggested that certain family dynamics, such as parental divorce and family conflict may have an impact on the love attitudes and beliefs held by young adults. Love attitudes and beliefs are phenomena of central importance to certain types of intimate relationships, and several researchers, (e.g., Jones & Nelson, 1996; Sprague & Kinney 1997; Tayler, Parker & Roy 1995) have examined the effects of parental divorce on the quality of young adults' intimate relationships and their love attitudes and beliefs in their romantic relationships.

The researcher argued that young adults from divorced homes would have different beliefs and attitudes towards love than young adults from intact homes, with those from divorced homes displaying less altruistic love in their romantic relationships, a lack of trust, a fear of emotional intimacy and commitment, and a more practical approach towards love. The results of the study with regard to each of the love styles will be discussed.

6.2.2.2.1 The Ludus Love Style

As a means of escaping commitment and emotional intimacy, the researcher argued that young adults from divorced parents would be more inclined to have several partners and prefer game-playing (ludic) love. Although the results of this study indicate that there were differences between the two groups on this variable, these differences were minor. Young adults from divorced homes indicated that they were only slightly more ludic in their relationships. Other research (e.g., Jones & Nelson, 1996; Sprague & Kinney, 1997) found more significant differences between the two

groups on this measure. Sprecher et al. (1998) have also found differences between the two groups on this measure, however the differences were modest.

A possible explanation for the fact that the differences between these two groups on this measure were only modest, is that this study made use of students and young working adults, who are at the developmental stage of late adolescence and young adulthood. As they are still entering into intimate relationships, they may still be experimenting with relationships, and both groups of young adults may still possibly be looking for novelty and excitement in their relationships, rather than commitment and emotional intimacy.

6.2.2.2.2 The Pragma Love Style

Pragmatic love is characterised by a more practical approach to love, and the researcher argued that young adults from divorced parents would be more inclined to endorse this love style as a means of avoiding an intimate and emotional relationship with another person. It was also argued that due to a fear of a failed relationship, they would tend to be more selective (i.e. practical) than young adults from intact homes. The results of this study, however, indicated the opposite, with young adults from married parents indicating more pragmatic love in their relationships, than young adults from divorced parents.

This is interesting as other research has also found young women from married parents to be more pragmatic than young women from divorced parents (Sprecher et al., 1998). Their explanation for this is that those from married parents have a more realistic approach towards marriage and are therefore more practical in their love attitudes and expectations. Another possible explanation is that young adults from divorced parents are more inclined to want to experience specific emotions as indicators of a happy relationship, while young adults from married parents may take this for granted and focus more on the practical aspects of the relationship.

6.2.2.2.3 The Mania Love style

The mania love style is characterised by dependency and possessiveness in relationships. It is also characterised by an obsessive need for attention and love. Those endorsing this love style often report a poor relationship with parents and an unhappy childhood. The researcher argued that young adults from divorced parents would be more likely to endorse this love style as a means of

replacing a lacking emotional bond with their parents. The results are consistent with this and indicate modest differences between the two groups on this measure, with young adults from divorced parents endorsing more of this love style in their relationships than young adults from married homes. Other researchers (e.g., Jones & Nelson, 1996; Sprague & Kinney, 1997) also did not report any significant differences between the two groups on this variable.

The reason for this may be due to reluctance on the part of the respondents to report symptoms of manic love and a need to respond to the questions in a socially desirable way. It is also possible, that due to the unhealthy nature of this type of love, that those endorsing this love style are not fully aware of their insecurity in relationships and their intense emotional need for attention and commitment, and they do not respond to these items on the questionnaire. This could also possibly explain why other researchers have also not reported any significant differences between the two groups.

6.2.2.2.4 The Agape Love Style

The experience of divorce is often accompanied by conflict in the home and this may result in young adults from divorced homes being more sceptical and distrustful of relationships than those from intact homes. They may also be less giving and less self-sacrificing as they have not experienced their own parents negotiating problem resolution through sacrifices and compromise.

The researcher hypothesised that young adults from divorced parents would therefore be less altruistic and less self-sacrificing in their relationships. The results of this study support this hypothesis and indicate that young adults from divorced parents are significantly less altruistic (agape love) in their relationships than young adults from married parents. This is consistent with what Sprague and Kinney (1997) found in their research. Sprecher et al (1998) also found this to be true for the women in the divorced group in their research study, although this was not true for the men in the divorced group. Their explanation for this is that women may be more inclined to express their emotions and may be more eager to resolve conflict through compromise. This is an interesting concept, and the researcher would have liked to explore gender differences in the love styles, however, due to the limitations in the size of this study, gender was not investigated.

It is also possible that due to a lack of role models and limited parenting in some cases, young adults from divorced homes are more self-sufficient and self-reliant. They may find it difficult to rely on another person and to give completely of themselves to another. Furthermore, the experience of divorce at a young age may have resulted in young adults becoming cynical about love and less idealistic about the nature of their own relationships, and they are then less willing to sacrifice their own needs for the sake of a love relationship.

6.2.2.2.5 The Eros Love Style

The Eros love style is characterised by intensity of emotion and a strong desire for physical and emotional intimacy with another person. As young adults from divorced homes seem to avoid intense emotional intimacy, the researcher argued that they would be less likely to endorse this love style. Furthermore, this love style seems to be characteristic of those reporting a happy and secure childhood, not always reported by young adults from divorced homes. The results of the indicate that there are minor differences between the two groups on this variable, with the young adults from divorced parents being slightly less erotic in their love styles.

Interestingly, other researchers (e.g., Sprecher et al., 1998) found that young men from the divorced group had higher Eros scores than the married group. They argue that the physical component of this love style is more predominant among men in general due to larger societal trends, and among the divorced group due to the association found in previous research (e.g., Kinnaird & Gerrard, 1986) between parental divorce and early dating and sexual activity (refer to 3.5.1).

This is an interesting concept as the young adults in this study from divorced parents were less erotic than young adults from married parents, however they indicated more liberal attitudes towards petting and intercourse, thereby indicating a strong physical preference. This could, however, indicate that although they have the preference for the physical component, they still avoid the emotional commitment that accompanies this love style.

6.2.2.2.6 The Storge love Style

The storge love style is based very much on friendship and stability in relationships. It reflects a secure type of love with a need for commitment. It is characterised by a secure and dependable

family background. Young adults from divorced parents seem to be more likely to avoid a commitment, and the researcher argued that they would be less storgic in their relationships than those from married parents. The results of this study indicate that there are minor differences between the two groups, with young adults from divorced parents indicating less storgic love in their relationships than those from married parents. Although the difference are not significant they nevertheless indicate that differences do exist between the two groups on this variable. Other researchers (e.g., Sprague & Kinney, 1997; Sprecher et al., 1998) also found only modest differences between the two groups on this variable.

A possible explanation for this is that both groups may value the friendship component of love, as both young adults from both married and divorced homes are at a developmental stage where they value social relationships and friendships. For this reason they may put more emphasis on building a friendship type of love, and for this reason the two groups may not differ as much on this measure of love.

6.2.2.3 Sexual Attitudes and Behaviour

It has been suggested in the literature that parental divorce has an impact on the courtship activities and sexual behaviour of young adults. Previous research (e.g., Black & Sprenkle, 1991; Gabardi & Rosen, 1991, 1992; Kinnaird & Gerrard; 1986) has indicated that young adults from divorced homes seem to be more liberal in their sexual attitudes and behaviours than young adults from intact homes. They appear to start dating earlier, have more partners, and experiment more frequently with various behaviours, such as kissing, petting and sexual intercourse. They also appear to desire more sexual involvement when going steady than young adults from intact families.

The researcher argued therefore that young adults from divorced parents would be more liberal in their sexual attitudes and behaviours than young adults from married parents. The research results indicate that there were significant differences between the two groups only with reference to their sexual attitudes, regarding petting and sexual intercourse, and the degree of affection necessary before engaging in these behaviours. There were only modest differences found between the two groups with regard to their sexual behaviour.

This means that young adults from divorced parents are more liberal in their attitudes towards petting and sexual intercourse and indicates that they felt it was not always necessary to be in love or to be married in order to engage in these acts. As discussed previously, it is possibly due to a fear of commitment and the replacement of a committed relationship with several sexual relationships (Wallerstein, 1989). They may be attempting to resolve their own fears of failure in intimate relationships by replacing an intimate relationship with several sexual relationships and may be attempting to replace emotional intimacy with heightened sexual activity.

Another explanation may be that in some cases there is less parental control and supervision for young adults from divorced homes, which may provide more freedom to experiment with sexual behaviour. This loss of parental control may also lead to these young adults falling in with the wrong peer group, resulting in increased sexual activity and other deviant behaviour.

It is possible that there were no significant differences between the two groups, with regard to their attitudes towards kissing, because it is more common and culturally accepted in modern western society than petting and sexual intercourse. Kissing is therefore, not necessarily seen as a sexual behaviour as such, but rather as something quite acceptable and common in most romantic relationships.

The results also indicated modest differences between the two groups with regard to sexual behaviour indicating that young adults from divorced parents were slightly more liberal in their behaviour, having engaged in kissing, petting, and in some cases, sexual intercourse at a younger age. They also indicated having had slightly more partners than young adults from intact homes. The fact that that the differences in their attitudes were more significant than the differences in their behaviour may be attributed to limited opportunities to engage in sexual behaviour. These young adults may not always have had the opportunity to experiment with sexual behaviour, but they indicated that they would find it more acceptable if in the situation. The respondents may also have answered the questions regarding their sexual *behaviour* in a more socially acceptable manner, and not indicated the total number of partners and their real age in which they first engaged in this behaviour. Or they may have also attempted to create an impression that they were more liberal in their *attitudes*, when in fact this was exaggerated due to peer pressure, and not in line with their actual behaviour.

6.3 IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present research could increase our understanding of the spiralling effects of divorce on children, who eventually become adults and have their own intimate relations and may engage in the institution of marriage. Along with future research, this could contribute towards young adult development research, as establishing intimate relationships is developmentally important to young adults. Being able to identify a young adult's attitudes towards marriage and expectations of marriage, as well as why they have such expectations could be very beneficial. Young adults from divorced parents, who have unrealistic attitudes and expectations (either pessimistic or idealistic) could be encouraged to enrol in a family counselling programme, as this is one way to stop the pattern of unrealistic expectations and dispel certain myths about marriage.

It is especially important for young adults who are considering marriage to examine their attitudes towards marriage and become aware of their assumptions and expectations regarding marriage as this will directly affect their own marriages. Negative attitudes and underlying assumptions may result in poor problem resolution, an inability to compromise and emotional distancing. These young adults need to learn effective communication skills and problem-resolution skills as well learn to communicate empathy and positive regard for their partner, in order to have a better chance in their own marriages and break the cycle of divorce patterns across generations.

Furthermore, as indicated in the results, young adults from divorced homes appear to be less altruistic in their relationships, and it is important that they examine their beliefs about love. It is important that they are able to learn to compromise, make sacrifices, and to trust their partner, as this is essential for healthy relationship functioning. An understanding of the possible influence of past events may prove beneficial to these young adults as they enter into their own intimate relationships and marriage. Research such as this may help them in this process, and may also help to establish 'pre-marital counselling' as a norm where these issues can be addressed and dealt with.

The results of this study suggest that, practitioners in contact with young adults should be aware of the young adults' developmental task of resolving intimacy issues and the role parental divorce plays in this process. In order to assist young adults' from divorced families, practitioners need to have an accurate and detailed understanding of the young adult's beliefs and behaviours regarding

current relationships, as well as information regarding the events and emotional climate surrounding the divorce. It is also important that the issues of their sexual attitudes and behaviour be addressed. These young adults need to become aware that it is not healthy to replace emotional intimacy with heightened sexuality and that there are negative consequences thereof. They need to be given the necessary insight into their sexual attitudes and behaviour in order to understand what constitutes healthy sexual relations.

According to the literature, conflict in the family would also seem to be a negative event for the children involved. Children growing up in a home filled with tension and strife, often accompanying divorce, are inevitably affected by such turmoil. In order for a child to grow up healthily, both physically and emotionally, it is best that he or she experience a positive nurturing environment. Determining how familial conflict affects the adjustment of young adults is central to understanding the potentially deleterious nature of this home environment, and ultimately, to the development of treatment and prevention methods to overcome these effects. Intuitively, it would seem that family structure and conflict are interacting variables associated with long-term adjustment. And it is necessary to explore this relationship empirically and integrate findings with theory, in order to develop a more complete understanding of the effects of family structure and family conflict. Such an understanding should have therapeutic implications for both the children living in the conflictual environment and their parents who seek counselling for relationship difficulties.

6.4 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The primary intention of this study was to examine the long-term effects of divorce on the adult child of divorce. Although the results did appear to support those reported in the research literature, it is important to address some of the potential limitations of this study and recommend suggestions for future research.

This study did not include a measure of family conflict and the effects of parental conflict on children's functioning were not investigated. It is suggested that further research examine specific

aspects of interparental conflict in order to gain a better understanding of the specific dynamics of family functioning and their effects on young adults' own romantic relationships.

Other limitations of this study are that it has limited generalizability in that it used a restricted sample of generally middle to upper middle class, white young adults. Furthermore, as with any comparative research, definite statements regarding the causality among variables can not be made. Future studies need to use larger samples and there is a need to establish temporality through longitudinal research to eliminate objections against a causal relationship between parental divorce and the various measures of adjustment.

Another limitation is that it is retrospective in nature and also asks young adults to express their future expectations. The answers to such questions may or may not be accurate, although the method employed may be the best way of identifying current perceptions. Other limitations of using a survey include the loss of depth of information and potential problems related to social desirability.

Due to limitations in the size of the current study, gender differences between the two groups were not investigated. Future research can consider adding this variable in the investigation of parental marital status on the long-term adjustment of children. This is an important variable when developing methods to study and to assist adult children of divorce, as the effects of divorce will differ in males and females.

6.5 SUMMARY

It is simplistic and inaccurate to think of divorce as having uniform consequences for all young adults of divorce. The consequences of divorce vary along different dimensions of well-being, characteristics of children (e.g. pre-divorce adjustment, gender, and age at time of divorce) and characteristics of families (e.g. socio-economic history, pre-and post-divorce levels of conflict, parent-child relationships, and maternal employment).

Young adults who have experienced their parents' divorce represent a heterogeneous population that is not uniformly distressed by this significant family event. How well the young adult, and the

larger family, adapts to necessary changes precipitated by the divorce probably depends on several factors that, for the most part, have not received sufficient research attention. This study has reviewed the available research and explored some of the challenges that may face young adults from divorced parents. Emphasis has been placed on identifying divorce-related processes that may obstruct or complicate their adjustment and development. Counsellors and other practitioners working with young adults from divorced families are encouraged to assess these important process dimensions and to develop therapeutic interventions and programmes that will support adaptive family functioning and reduce young adults' involvement in dysfunctional family roles.

Chapter 7

Summary / Opsomming

The divorce rate in modern western society is steadily on the rise and has reached alarming proportions. As divorce is a major disruption of the family unit and often occurs when children are at a young and vulnerable age, many researchers are concerned about the psychological impact that divorce has on these children, and have questioned how they are affected by this disruption in their families. Until recently, however, there has not been much research on how it influences them in their own adulthood, particularly as they confront the specific developmental stages of late adolescence and early adulthood and the psychological tasks involved in these stages.

In light of this information, the present study focussed on the experiences of *adult children* of divorce in order to have a better understanding of their adjustment and the long-term effects of divorce. It examined how divorce affected their progression through Erickson's identity and intimacy stages, concentrating along several measures of adjustment including self-esteem, general life satisfaction, attitudes towards marriage, love styles, and sexual attitudes and behaviour. It was suggested that young adults from divorced homes would have lower self-esteem, less general life-satisfaction, different love styles, and more liberal sexual attitudes and behaviour.

The research sample comprised of 200 young adults from across South Africa who were randomly selected, and volunteered to participate in this study. The *divorce* group consisted of 100 single young adults from divorced parents, while the *married* group consisted of 100 single young adults from married parents. The data was gathered by using a biographical questionnaire and five self-report questionnaires, and subjects who volunteered to participate completed the questionnaires, consisting of questions regarding biographical information, self-esteem, general life satisfaction, attitudes towards marriage, love styles and sexual attitudes and behaviour. The two groups were then compared along these measures of adjustment. The Hotelling T²-test for independent groups was used for this purpose and was done with the help of the BMDP P3D-programme (Dixon, 1985).

The results of this study indicated that there were significant differences across four of the measures. It was indicated, that compared to young adults from married parents, young adults from divorced parents were significantly more negative in their attitudes towards marriage and significantly less altruistic (agapic love) in their love styles than young adults from married parents. Furthermore the results indicated that young adults from divorced parents were significantly more liberal in their sexual attitudes regarding petting and sexual intercourse than young adults from married parents. There were also differences along several of the other measures of adjustment, although they were not statistically significant. These differences indicated that young adults from divorced parents had slightly lower self-esteem, slightly less general life satisfaction, different love styles, and slightly more liberal sexual behaviour compared to those from married parents.

The implications of this were that young adults from divorced homes faced certain challenges regarding identity and intimacy issues and had their own set of beliefs and expectations in intimate relationships. It was suggested that practitioners working with young adults from divorced parents identify divorce-related processes obstructing or complicating their adjustment and development. Furthermore, it was suggested that they have an accurate and detailed understanding of young adults' beliefs and behaviours regarding current relationships, as well as information regarding the events and emotional climate surrounding the divorce. An understanding of the possible influence of past events would also prove beneficial to young adults entering intimate relationships of their own. It was especially important for young adults entering marriage to identify any assumptions and expectations regarding marriage. It was suggested that they learn to assess these important process dimensions and to utilise the available therapeutic interventions and programmes that would assist them in their own intimate relationships.

Opsomming

Westerse samelewings gaan steeds gebuk onder stygende egskeidingstatistieke met hartverskeurende gevolge. Egskeidings bly steeds die belangrikste faktor wat gesinsverbokkeling in die meeste Westerse lande veroorsaak. Navorsers is steeds bekommerd oor die psigologiese gevolge wat egskeiding vir kinders in hou, veral dié kinders wat op 'n jong en kwesbare ouderdom daaraan blootgestel is.

Tot onlangs toe was daar weining navorsing beskikbaar t.o.v. die psigologiese impak op jong adolessente, wie se ouers gedurende hul kinderjare geskei is, en meer spesifiek wat die impak op hul sielkundige ontwikkelingsstadia en die ontwikkelingstake tydens hierdie stadia sou wees.

In die lig van bogenoemde is die fokus van die navorsingstudie om die belewenisse en ervarings van “volwasse kinders” wat tydens hul kinderjare aan egskeiding blootgestel is, te bepaal. Die doel was om insig met betrekking tot hul aanpassing, sowel as die langtermyn gevolge van die egskeiding, te verkry. Die studie ondersoek ook in watter mate die egskeiding van die jong adolessent se ouers vordering gedurende die identiteits- en intimiteitsstadia van Erickson beïnvloed.

Klem is veral gelê op die volgende aanpassingsaspekte: selfbeeld, algemene lewenstevredenheid, houdings teenoor die huwelik, liefdesstyle en seksuele houdings en gedrag. Die hipotese is gestel dat jong volwassenes met geskeide ouers 'n swakker selfbeeld en 'n laer algemene lewenstevredenheid sou openbaar, verskillende liefdesstyle sou handhaaf en 'n meer liberale seksuele houding en -gedrag sou hê.

Die navorsingsteekproef het uit 200 jong Suid-Afrikaanse volwassenes bestaan wat vrywillig en ewekansig by die ondersoek betrek is. Die ‘egskeidings’-groep het uit 100 enkel jong volwassenes bestaan wat aan die egskeiding van hul ouers gedurende hul kinderjare blootgestel is, terwyl 100 jong volwassenes met getroude ouers die ‘getroude’-groep verteenwoordig het.

Die data is versamel deur middel van 'n biografiese vraelys en 5 self-terugvoer vraelyste. Die respondente wat aan die studie deelgeneem het, het die vraelyste voltooi wat bestaan het uit vroe

betreffende biografiese inligting, selfbeeld evaluering, algemene lewenstevredenheid, houding teenoor die huwelik, liefdesstyle en seksuele houdings en -gedrag. Die twee groepe is met mekaar vergelyk ten opsigte van bogenoemde aspekte. Die Hotelling T^2 toets vir onafhanklike groepe is vir hierdie doel gebruik en is met behulp van die BMDP P3D-programme (Dixon, 1985), voltooi.

Die resultate van hierdie studie het getoon dat daar betekenisvolle verskille by vier van die veranderlikes voorgekom het. Jong volwassenes met geskeide ouers het 'n beduidend meer negatiewe houding teenoor die huwelik as instelling getoon as die jong volwassenes uit intakte gesinne. Jong volwassenes van geskeide ouers was baie minder vertrouend in verhoudings en minder altruïsties (agapè liefde) in hul liefdesstyl in vergelyking met jong volwassenes met getroude ouers. Jong volwassenes van geskeide ouers was ook ten opsigte van hul seksuele houdings, meer liberaal en vrydenkend ten opsigte van liefkosing en seksuele gemeenskap as jong volwassenes van getroude ouers.

Verdere verskille het ook tussen die ander veranderlikes voorgekom, maar was nie statisties beduidend nie. Hierdie verskille het getoon dat jong volwassenes met geskeide ouers 'n effens laer selfbeeld het, minder lewenstevredenheid ervaar, verskillende liefdesstyle navolg en effens meer liberaal en vrydenkend is in hulle seksuele gedrag, in vergelyking met dié jong volwassenes met getroude ouers.

Die gevolgtrekking wat hieruit gemaak kan word, is dat jong volwassenes met geskeide ouers sekere uitdagings die hoof moet bied, veral in terme van hulle identiteitsverwerwing asook intimiteitsaspekte in verhoudings. Hierdie groep handhaaf verder 'n eie mening oor verwagtinge in intieme verhoudings.

Dit sou voordelig wees indien beraders en sielkundiges wat terapieë by jong volwassenes met geskeide ouers betrokke is, in staat sou wees om egskeidingsverwante prosesse, wat hierdie jong volwassenes se aanpassing en verdere ontwikkeling kan strem of kompliseer, te identifiseer. Verder word voorgestel dat beraders en sielkundiges 'n akkurate begrip sal hê van hoe die jong volwassene met geskeide ouers sy huidige verhoudings beleef. Gedetailleerde inligting rakende die emosionele omstandighede tydens die egskeiding sal ook vir die terapie belangrik wees. Verder sou dit tot voordeel van die adolessent wees, indien hy begrip sou hê van hoe gebeure uit die verlede huidige verhoudings kan beïnvloed. Dit is veral belangrik dat jong volwassenes wat 'n

intieme verhouding aangaan, bewus sal wees van hul eie aannames en verwagtinge omtrent die huwelik. Ten slotte word aanbeveel dat jong volwassenes sal leer hoe om self hierdie belangrike aspekte te evalueer en om terapeutiese intervensies, tot voordeel van hul eie intieme verhoudings te benut.

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Appendix A

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS

This questionnaire is anonymous. Please do not put your name on it.

The goal of this questionnaire is to investigate the impact of divorce on relationships.

Please answer all the questions carefully. The questions rate different characteristics, and do not all necessarily lead to the same conclusion.

Please read the questions attentively before answering them. Please answer all the questions in a sincere manner.

Answer the questions by making a cross in the square which best indicates your answer.

Please answer all the questions of all the sections, including the biographical section of the questionnaire. It ought to take about ?? minutes of your time.

Please be as honest as possible. The questionnaires are anonymous, so you do not have to be worried that anyone else will find out what you have answered here.

BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Gender 1 = Male 2 = Female

2. Age 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27

Other: _____

3. Home language 1 = Afrikaans 2 = English

Other: _____

4. Are your parents married or divorced? 1 = Divorced 2 = Married

Other: _____

5. If your parents are still married, please indicate what the conflict levels are between your parents:

1 = High conflict

2 = Medium conflict

3 = Low conflict

6. If your parents are divorced:

6.1. Indicate your age at the time of the divorce:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21

Other: _____

6.2. Is your mother remarried? 1 = Yes 2 = No

6.3. Is your father remarried? 1 = Yes 2 = No

6.4. With which parent did you live after the divorce? 1 = Mother 2 = Father

Other: _____

-
7. Are you currently involved in a relationship with someone? = Yes
 = No
 = I have **never** gone out with anyone
-

If yes, then:

7a. More or less how long have you been going out? _____ years and _____ months

Please complete the Love Styles Scale and the Sexual Attitudes Scale with this relationship in mind.

If no, then:

7b(i). More or less how many months ago did your last relationship end?

_____ years and _____ months

and

7b(ii). How long did that relationship last? _____ years and _____ months

and

7b(iii). please indicate who ended the relationship: = You = Your partner

If that relationship ended less than a year ago, please complete the Love Styles Scale and the Sexual Attitudes Scale with that relationship in mind.

If it ended more than a year ago, please complete the Love Styles Scale and the Sexual Attitudes Scale with your ideal relationship in mind.

If **never**, then please complete the Love Styles Scale and the Sexual Attitudes Scale with your ideal relationship in mind.

LIFE SATISFACTION SCALE

= Strongly Disagree ✗
 = Disagree ✗
 = Agree ✓
 = Strongly Agree ✓

		✗	✗	✓	✓
1	In most ways my life is close to my ideal.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	The conditions of my life are excellent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I am satisfied with my life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	So far I have gotten the important things in life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

= Strongly Disagree ✗
 = Disagree ✗
 = Agree ✓
 = Strongly Agree ✓

		✗	✗	✓	✓
1	I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I am able to do things as well as most other people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	I take a positive attitude toward myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	I wish I could have more respect for myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	I certainly feel useless at times.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	At times I think I am no good at all.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

LOVE STYLES SCALE

= Strongly Disagree ✗
 = Disagree ✗
 = Agree ✓
 = Strongly Agree ✓

		✗	✗	✓	✓
1	My loved one and I were attracted to each other immediately after we first met.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	My loved one and I have the right physical "chemistry" between us.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Our physical relationship is very intense and satisfying.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I feel that my loved one and I were meant for each other.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	My loved one and I became emotionally involved rather quickly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	My loved one and I really understand each other.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	My loved one fits my ideal standards of physical beauty/handsomeness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	I try to keep my loved one a little uncertain about my commitment to him/her.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	I believe that what my loved one doesn't know about me won't hurt him/her.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	I have sometimes had to keep two of my loved ones from finding out about each other.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	I can get over love affairs pretty quickly and easily.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	My loved one would get upset if he/she knew of some of the things I've done with other people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	When my loved one gets too dependent on me, I want to back off a little.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	I enjoy playing the "game of love" with a number of different partners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	It is hard to say exactly where friendship ends and love begins.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	Genuine love first requires <i>caring</i> for a while.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	I expect to always be friends with the one I love.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	The best kind of love grows out of a long friendship.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

= Strongly Disagree ✗
 = Disagree ✗
 = Agree ✓
 = Strongly Agree ✓

		✗	✗	✓	✓	
19	Our friendship merged gradually into love over time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	19
20	Love is really a deep friendship, not a mysterious, mystical emotion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	20
21	My most satisfying love relationships have developed from good friendships.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	21
22	I consider what a person is going to become in life before I commit myself to him/her.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	22
23	I try to plan my life carefully before choosing a loved one.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	23
24	It is best to love someone with a similar background.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	24
25	A main consideration in choosing a loved one is how he/she reflects on my family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	25
26	An important factor in choosing a partner is whether or not he/she will be a good parent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	26
27	One consideration in choosing a partner is how he/she will reflect on my career.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	27
28	Before getting very involved with anyone, I try to figure out how compatible his/her hereditary background is with mine, in case we ever have children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	28
29	When things aren't right with my loved one and me, my stomach gets upset.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	29
30	When my love affair breaks up, I get so depressed that I have even thought of suicide.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	30
31	Sometimes I get so excited about being in love that I can't sleep.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	31
32	When my loved one doesn't pay attention to me, I feel sick all over.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	32
33	When I am in love, I have trouble concentrating on anything else.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	33
34	I cannot relax if I suspect that my loved one is with someone else.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	34

1 = Strongly Disagree ✗
 2 = Disagree ✗
 3 = Agree ✓
 4 = Strongly Agree ✓

- | | | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | |
|----|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----|
| 35 | If my loved one ignores me for a while, I sometimes do stupid things to get his/her attention back. | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | 35 |
| 36 | I try to always help my loved one through difficult times. | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | 36 |
| 37 | I would rather suffer myself than let my loved one suffer. | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | 37 |
| 38 | I cannot be happy unless I place my loved one's happiness before my own. | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | 38 |
| 39 | I am usually willing to sacrifice my own wishes to let my loved one achieve his/hers. | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | 39 |
| 40 | Whatever I own is my loved one's to use as he/she chooses. | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | 40 |
| 41 | When my loved one gets angry with me, I still love him/her fully and unconditionally. | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | 41 |
| 42 | I would endure all things for the sake of my loved one. | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | 42 |

SEXUAL ATTITUDES SCALE

Love: means the emotional state which is more intense than strong affection, and which you would define as love.

Strong Affection: Means affection which is stronger than physical attraction, or average 'liking' – but less strong than love.

Petting: Means sexually stimulating behaviour more intimate than kissing and simple hugging, but not including full sexual relations.

Kissing: Means intimate kissing.

= Strongly Disagree ✗
 = Disagree ✗
 = Agree ✓
 = Strongly Agree ✓

		✗	✗	✓	✓	
1	I believe that kissing is acceptable before marriage, only if I am engaged to be married.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
2	I believe that kissing is acceptable before marriage, only if I am in love.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
3	I believe that kissing is acceptable before marriage, if I feel strong affection for my partner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
4	I believe that kissing is acceptable before marriage, even if I do not feel particularly affectionate toward my partner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
5	I believe that petting is acceptable before marriage, only if I am engaged to be married.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
6	I believe that petting is acceptable before marriage, only if I am in love.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
7	I believe that petting is acceptable before marriage, if I feel strong affection for my partner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7
8	I believe that petting is acceptable before marriage, even if I do not feel particularly affectionate toward my partner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8
9	I believe that full sexual relations are acceptable before marriage, only if I am engaged to be married.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	9
10	I believe that full sexual relations are acceptable before marriage, when I am in love.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	10
11	I believe that full sexual relations are acceptable before marriage, if I feel strong affection for my partner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	11
12	I believe that full sexual relations are acceptable before marriage, even if I do not feel particularly affectionate toward my partner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	12

In each instance, please mark the appropriate one of the two options given, and if necessary, answer the following questions.

Kissing:

I have kissed someone before	
I have never kissed anyone	

If yes: Please indicate at what age you first kissed another person: _____

Please indicate how many people you have kissed: _____

Petting:

I have engaged in petting with someone before	
I have never engaged in petting with anyone before	

If yes: Please indicate at what age you first petted with another person: _____

Please indicate how many people you have engaged in petting with: _____

Full sexual relations:

I have engaged in full sexual relations with someone before	
I have never engaged in full sexual relations with anyone before	

If yes: Please indicate at what age you first had sex with another person: _____

Please indicate how many people you have had sex with: _____

ATTITUDE TOWARDS MARRAIGE SCALE

= Strongly Disagree **X**
 = Disagree **x**
 = Agree **✓**
 = Strongly Agree **✓**

	X	x	✓	✓	
1	1	2	3	4	1
2	1	2	3	4	2
3	1	2	3	4	3
4	1	2	3	4	4
5	1	2	3	4	5
6	1	2	3	4	6
7	1	2	3	4	7
8	1	2	3	4	8
9	1	2	3	4	9
10	1	2	3	4	10
11	1	2	3	4	11
12	1	2	3	4	12
13	1	2	3	4	13
14	1	2	3	4	14
15	1	2	3	4	15
16	1	2	3	4	16
17	1	2	3	4	17
18	1	2	3	4	18
19	1	2	3	4	19
20	1	2	3	4	20
21	1	2	3	4	21

1 = Strongly Disagree ✗
 2 = Disagree ✗
 3 = Agree ✓
 4 = Strongly Agree ✓

		✗	✗	✓	✓	
22	Marriage is a farce.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	²²
23	It is a passport for extramarital sexuality.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	²³
24	People who do not marry remain unfulfilled.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	²⁴
25	Healthy marriages are the building blocks of a healthy community	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	²⁵
26	The modern-day marriage is in a crisis.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	²⁶
27	A healthy marriage provides unlimited space for self-actualisation.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	²⁷
28	Unhealthy marriages cause society to fall apart.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	²⁸
29	The confines of a marriage protect the individual against promiscuity.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	²⁹
30	Marriage can cause a lot of heartache for the innocent.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	³⁰

U.O.V.S. BIBLIOTEK