DISCLOSURE OF FEELINGS IN MARRIAGE
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DISCLOSURE OF FEELINGS IN MARRIAGE

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Communication is a basic requirement for the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships. It may be assumed that the most intimate relationships are those characterized by the greatest disclosure of information by self and other, and that this is particularly true with regard to the disclosure of feelings. One early investigator of this issue postulated that self-disclosure of personal information is "an index of 'closeness' of the relationship, and of the affection, love, or trust that prevails between two people" (Jourard, 1959, p. 428).

Marriage is a relationship in which disclosure is expected to be far higher than in most other relationships. The wedding ceremony formally instructs each spouse to love and to cherish his mate; clearly an instruction that requires high communication, not only of information but also of feelings. Nevertheless, marriages differ considerably, both in the degree to which partners communicate with one another and in the areas where communication takes place.

Polansky (1965) has suggested that the "verbal accessibility" of a person may reflect his "organizational unity." In other words, persons who have well-coordinated personalities may be more able to express themselves than persons who have reached a less mature level of development. Perhaps this metaphor is applicable also to dyadic units. One may speculate that pairs which show high interpersonal harmony and integration should be marked by greater disclosure of matters of mutual import than pairs which are less unified.

The present paper is concerned with the correlates of disclosure between marital partners, at both the individual and the dyadic levels of analysis. On the individual level, it is hypothesized that wives disclose their feelings more fully than do husbands, and that satisfied partners disclose their feelings more fully than dissatisfied spouses. At the dyadic level,

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it is hypothesized that husbands and wives within the same marriage will show a positive correlation between their proportions of disclosure. These ideas are elaborated below.

**Hypothesis 1. Wives tend to be higher than husbands in the proportion of feelings which they disclose to their spouses.** This hypothesis can be supported by a review of male-female differences in general, and by findings concerning marital relationships in particular.

Regarding differences between men and women in general, several studies have shown that men reveal less personal information about themselves than do women (Jourard, 1961; Jourard and Landsman, 1960; Jourard and Lasakow, 1958). Moreover, one study has reported that women receive more disclosures from friends or relatives than do men (Jourard and Richman, 1963).

For marital pairs, Komarovsky (1964) reported a greater proportion of wives than husbands with high self-disclosure output. The wives in her sample also indicated a greater desire to share their experiences with their mates than did the husbands in her sample. Even though disclosure varied positively with wives' marital satisfaction, *some* of the dissatisfied wives were "full" disclosers, while dissatisfied husbands tended to conceal their feelings. Katz, Goldston, Cohen, and Stucker (1963) found that wives revealed their anxieties much more frequently to their husbands than did the latter in return. Another study further substantiated this tendency: Wives, more often than husbands, indicated that they told about infringements on and violations of their personal expectations, in an attempt to maximize the marital adjustment process (Cutler and Dyer, 1965). Finally, a recent analysis of verbalized "complaints" by divorce applicants among 600 couples showed that wives' complaints exceeded those of husbands by a ratio of nearly 2:1 (Levinger, 1966). These studies would lead to the prediction that husband-wife differences will be greater in the communication of unpleasant than of pleasant feelings.

**Hypothesis 2. The more satisfied a spouse is, the greater is the disclosure of his feelings to his partner.** Disclosure of feelings should be associated both with a person's general favorability toward objects of communication in general, and with his attraction to his spouse in particular.

Concerning general favorability, it appears to be true that people tend to communicate more readily and more frequently about "positive" matters than about "negative" matters. For example, Robert Zajonc (personal communication), in examining Thorndike and Lorge's (1944) counts of word frequencies in written English prose, discovered that positive adjectives are used far more frequently than negative adjectives. Levinger (1963) found that marriage partners ranked the communication of positive feelings as far more important than the communication of negative feelings. It would follow, then, that those spouses who perceive themselves as relatively favorable toward objects in their environment would be more willing to com-
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communicate their feelings about them than those spouses who perceive themselves as relatively unfavorable.

Considering a spouse's favorability to his own partner, we may examine some findings from studies of general dyadic intimacy and of marital relationships. Jourard and his collaborators have consistently obtained significant differences in the amount of personal information disclosed, depending upon the discloser's closeness to the target-person of the communication. In fact, the amount of disclosure by members of married couples exceeded the amount that unmarried persons communicated to anyone, regardless of relationship (Jourard and Lasakow, 1958). Yet various areas of communication differed in the amount of disclosure a person was willing to make to the target-person. Information concerning one's work, tastes, hobbies, interests and attitudes was found to be more freely disclosed than information about one's sex life, financial status, and personality (Jourard and Lasakow, 1958). Other investigators (Altman and Haythorn, 1965; Frankfurt, 1966; Taylor, 1965) have proposed that superficial exchanges of information are far more common than intimate ones.

Considering marriage specifically, it has been found that partners of satisfied couples showed greater agreement between own and spouse's evaluations of self than did those in less satisfied couples (Luckey, 1960). If this were generally true, then it would also be likely that satisfied pairs would have less obstacles to communication than unsatisfied ones (Newcomb, 1953). Levinger (1963) actually did find that highly satisfied married couples exceeded less satisfied couples in their frequency of discussing most, but not all, topics of communication. Katz, et al., (1963) found the association between disclosure of personal information and marital satisfaction to hold mainly for wives, but not for husbands in their sample.

HYPOTHESIS 3. Within the same marriage, there is a positive correlation between the spouses' proportions of feeling disclosure. This hypothesis is derived from the general proposition that communication is a reciprocal matter (e.g., Mead, 1934; Newcomb, 1953), and from previous evidence concerning the mutuality of social-emotional processes in marital interaction (Levinger, 1964).

Surprisingly, there has been little research on the mutuality of dyadic communication processes. The one published study that is perhaps most relevant to the present problem is that of Jourard and Richman (1963). In their study of college students' reports of disclosure to and from parents and friends, Jourard and Richman found an average correlation of about .70 between a person's reports of his output to Other and his input from Other. However, ratings of both output and input were made by the same respondent; therefore, the correlations between them were probably inflated by individual response tendencies.

It would be desirable, therefore, to investigate independent ratings of disclosure by two different members of the same relationship. Further, it
would be interesting to know whether pleasant and unpleasant disclosures show a similar or a different degree of mutuality.

Method

Sample

A questionnaire measuring self-disclosure in marriage was administered to 32 couples in metropolitan Cleveland, Ohio. The sample was composed of 15 married couples who were clients of a family agency, and were undergoing counseling for marital or child difficulties (Agency couples). The other 17 couples, comparable in length of marriage, number of children, and socio-economic background, consisted of elementary school parents (School couples).2

During the construction of the questionnaire, the final version of the first two parts was administered to 17 couples in which either husband, wife, or both partners were students of social work at Western Reserve University. Results for these Social Work couples will be referred to only to supplement comparisons for the Agency and School spouses. These student couples were married for a shorter period of time and had a higher average education than couples of the first two samples. They provide a contrast with the more typical non-academic Agency and School samples.

Self-Disclosure Questionnaire

The questionnaire3 consisted of three parts. Part I requested each respondent to indicate how favorable he feels (on a scale from 0%-100%) about each of nine objects of communication: his residence, his own parents, his spouse’s parents, his work, his spouse’s work, the handling of money in his family, sex relations with spouse, his own personality, and his spouse’s personality. Following his rating of his own favorable feelings, he indicated the point on each scale where he thought his spouse would rate her own feelings.

Part II asked each respondent to indicate the proportion of his feelings that he discloses to his spouse. Again scales from 0%-100% were used. For each of the nine communication topics listed above, there were two separate scales. The first indicated the proportion of disclosure of pleasant feelings; the second measured the proportion of unpleasant feelings which the

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2 Disclosure was not significantly related to a variety of social background characteristics of the Agency and School couples. Socio-economic status was unrelated to disclosure (r's = -.04 to -.12); husband’s education was not related (r's = .05 to -.11); neither was wife’s education (r's = .07 to .22). Length of marriage was negatively correlated with disclosure (r's = -.13 to -.27), but none of these coefficients reached the .05 level of significance. Although Komarovsky (1964) did find significant disclosure differences with regard to social characteristics, our sample was more homogeneous in background.

3 The questionnaire used in the present study was quite different from any previous instrument employed by other investigators (e.g., Jourard and Lasakow, 1958; Katz, et al., 1963; Polansky, et al., 1961).
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respondent disclosed to his spouse. After making self-ratings of own disclosure—i.e., output—he then rated his spouse's disclosure to him—i.e., input. Thus, each respondent gave 18 ratings to describe his own disclosure, and 18 more to estimate his spouse's proportion of disclosure.

Part III requested each respondent to rate "how important you think it is for husbands and wives to talk with each other about each of the nine communication topics." This question asked for ratings on a 7-point scale from (1) not important, (3) somewhat important, (5) considerably important, to (7) extremely important.

From responses to this disclosure questionnaire, it was possible to construct various indices: e.g., mean favorability toward each of the nine communication objects; percentage of disclosure concerning pleasant, unpleasant, and total feelings; perceived similarity between own and spouse's disclosure.

Marital Satisfaction Index

Marital satisfaction was measured by an index composed of each respondent's factor score derived from 15 subsidiary indices of marital satisfaction. This general index was weighted more heavily with social-emotional than with task-oriented sources of satisfaction. Levinger (1964) has reported the principal factors and has discussed some determinants of marital satisfaction for couples in this sample.

Favorability Index

An index of "mean favorability" was a more specific measure than general marital satisfaction. It referred to the respondent's proportion of positive versus negative feelings toward the nine objects of communication listed above, i.e., his residence, his parents, etc.

Results

Husband-wife differences

Hypothesis 1 suggested that wives would be greater than husbands in the mean proportion of their disclosure. Table 1 reveals some support for this prediction, but only for comparative reports of input, and not for differences in reported output.

When each spouse indicated how much disclosure he received from his partner, input from wives was significantly higher than input from husbands (t = 2.67, p < .01, for total disclosure). Yet when spouses' reported outputs were compared, husbands' and wives' means did not differ significantly.

Did wives' disclosure exceed husbands' more in the unpleasant than pleasant area? The results shown in Table 1 give only a slightly affirmative answer to this question. Input from wives was reported as greater than in-
put from husbands for both unpleasant and pleasant feelings, but slightly more for the former than for the latter: for unpleasant feelings, \( t = 2.71 \) \( (p < .01) \); for pleasant feelings, \( t = 1.81 \) \( (p < .10) \).

### Table 1

**Mean Percentages of Disclosure for Agency and School Couples**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report of Feelings Disclosed</th>
<th>Agency ((N = 15))</th>
<th>School ((N = 17))</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>Wives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Total (Output)</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Pleasant</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Unpleasant</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse's Total (Input)</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse's Pleasant</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse's Unpleasant</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, Agency couples reported a lower proportion of disclosure than did School couples, but the above husband-wife differences were similar for both samples.4

**Disclosure and satisfaction**

Hypothesis 2 predicted a positive correlation between a spouse's satisfaction and the communication of his feelings to his partner. Satisfaction was conceived in two distinct ways: (1) a spouse's mean favorability toward nine representative objects of marital communication, and (2) his satisfaction with his marriage.

The first two columns of Table 2 indicate strong support for Hypothesis 2. There was a consistent tendency for *mean favorability* to be positively correlated with disclosure of one's feelings to his spouse. Two other trends are evident in Table 2. One is that favorability varied more directly with the disclosure of pleasant feelings than with that of unpleasant feelings. The second is a non-significant tendency for favorability to be more highly correlated with reports of the other's disclosure (input) than with reports of one's own disclosure of feelings (output): 8 out of 12 \( r \)'s were higher for input than for output.

The last two columns of Table 2 show that *marital satisfaction* was less strongly related to reports of disclosure. All but one of the \( r \)'s were positive; however, only one-fourth of the correlations were statistically significant \( (p < .05) \). Interestingly, the pattern of these correlations follows the

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4 In the Social Work sample, the husband-wife disclosure differences were in a direction similar to that of the Agency and School groups, but differed only by a few percentage points (i.e., not significantly so).
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Table 2

Correlations between Disclosure, Favorability, and Marital Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report of Feelings Disclosed</th>
<th>Mean Favorability toward Objects of Communication</th>
<th>Satisfaction with Own Marriage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>Wives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Husbands’ Reports:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Total (Output)</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Pleasant</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Unpleasant</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wives’ Total (Input)</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wives’ Pleasant</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wives’ Unpleasant</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wives’ Reports:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Total (Output)</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Pleasant</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Unpleasant</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husbands’ Total (Input)</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husbands’ Pleasant</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husbands’ Unpleasant</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note—Product-moment r’s for 32 couples: \( r = .34, p < .05 \).

same two trends noted above. Once again, satisfaction was more highly associated with proportion of pleasant than of unpleasant disclosure. Furthermore, it related more clearly to reported input than output: 10 out of 12 r’s were higher for input than for output.

Mutuality of disclosure

Hypothesis 3 was that the spouses’ proportions of disclosure would be positively correlated. This hypothesis may be examined by at least three different indices: (1) the correlation between the amount spouse A reports he transmits and the amount he reports he receives from B; (2) the correlation between A’s and B’s reported outputs, or between their two inputs; (3) the correlation between A’s reported output and B’s reported input from A.

The first index is provided by Rows 1 and 2 in Table 3. It indicates that both husbands and wives tended to perceive a close correspondence between output to and input from spouse. For total disclosure, the correlations were .91 for husbands and .79 for wives; the r’s did not differ significantly for pleasant as opposed to unpleasant disclosure. Yet, as was mentioned in the introduction, these correlations are derived from two suc-
cessive ratings made by the same respondent. They do not represent two independent measures, but are probably artificially high.

### Table 3

**Correlations between Spouses' Perceptions of Own and Other's Disclosure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables Correlated</th>
<th>Disclosure of Feelings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband Output—Husband Input</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife Output—Wife Input</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband Output—Wife Output</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband Input—Wife Input</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband Output—Wife Input</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife Output—Husband Input</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note—For 32 couples: $r = .34, p < .05$.

Perhaps our second index, which is free from this contamination, would still provide evidence of mutuality. The results indicate that this is so. Rows 3 and 4 show an average correlation of about .50 ($p < .01$) between the two spouses' amounts of disclosure. In other words, independent reports from the two marital partners still show that the higher the husband's proportion of disclosure, the higher will be his wife's proportion irrespective of its "pleasantness."

One interesting finding, to be discussed in the next section, is a consistent tendency for spouses' reports of input to be correlated more highly than their reports of output. In other words, the two partners' perceptions of spouse's disclosure were more positively related (.67) than their perceptions of own disclosure (.38).

To what extent did one spouse's perceived output correspond with the other's reported input from him? Correlations pertaining to this third index in Rows 5 and 6 of Table 3 indicate a significant, but certainly not a one-to-one correspondence between these reports—$r$'s that averaged about .50. If one partner reports that he transmits a high percentage of his feelings, it is likely that his spouse will agree with him; however, only about one-quarter of the variance is accounted for.

**Discussion**

The three hypotheses proposed in the introduction were largely supported. The hypothesis that wives would have a higher disclosure of feelings than husbands was least strongly confirmed; a difference was found only when input from the other spouse was the index of measurement. This finding differs from earlier research (e.g., Jourard, 1961; Katz, et al., 1963;
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Komarovsky, 1964). However, the discrepancy may derive from a methodological difference. Earlier studies measured the amount (or frequency) of disclosure, while this study asked about the proportion of disclosure. It may also be that there are smaller sex differences in reported output than in reported input of the other’s disclosure.

The second hypothesis, that a spouse’s reported disclosure would vary directly with his satisfaction, was confirmed. However, proportion of disclosure was more closely correlated with mean favorability than with marital satisfaction. How may this be interpreted?

One interpretation concerns a possible measurement artifact. “Favorability” to the nine objects of communication was measured on a page of the questionnaire previous to that which had the questions about feeling disclosure. On the other hand, “marital satisfaction” had been measured independently at another session a year before the disclosure questionnaire was administered. Therefore, the favorability-disclosure correlations may be somewhat too high, while the marital satisfaction-disclosure correlations may be somewhat too low. However, it seems unlikely that these variables would vary so markedly over time as to cause a substantial deviation from the obtained results.

Furthermore, one may consider a behavioral correlate of marital dissatisfaction; one may compare the Agency with the School couples (see Table 1). Would clients of a family service agency exhibit a lower proportion of disclosure than couples from nondisturbed families from a school population?

Two conflicting facts would influence one’s prediction. On the one hand, the Agency couples had a lower mean marital satisfaction than the School couples (Levinger and Breedlove, 1966), and therefore might have a lower need to communicate with each other. On the other hand, the Agency spouses either were or had been engaged in counseling interviews, where disclosure of feelings plays an essential role. Thus it does not seem surprising that the Agency-School differences in Table 1 are small. Although pleasant disclosure was somewhat lower in the Agency sample, variability was so great that this difference was not statistically significant.

One interesting issue concerns the part played by the revelation of unpleasant versus pleasant feelings. One would expect that the real test of the unity of a couple would be the degree to which the spouses can discuss unpleasant matters as well as pleasant ones. As Irwin Katz (personal communication) and Polansky (1965) have noted, issues in which there are

Note that both Agency and School samples reported a significantly lower degree of disclosure than the Social Work couples of the pre-test sample \( p < .01 \). Couples in the latter group appeared to have considerably higher norms for mutual communication. It was unclear, however, whether these norms were due to differences in education, marital satisfaction, or length of marriage. A combination of influences was most likely responsible for the obtained differences. Feldman (1964), for example, has found a generally lower amount of marital communication during a couple’s child-rearing years.
some restraints against communication should provide the clearest test of a couple’s ability to communicate feelings. Nevertheless, the present study found that marital satisfaction was less related to the proportion of unpleasant than to that of pleasant disclosure; also, frequency of unpleasant disclosure was far higher in the Agency than in the School sample (cf. Levinger, 1965).

A recent pilot study of a new sample of married couples has shed further light on this issue (Levinger, 1965). Again, it was revealed that the more satisfied spouses showed less tendency to discuss negative feelings—particularly when these feelings pertained to their mates. However, these same spouses were more likely than the less satisfied ones to discuss unpleasant feelings about external events, such as a bad day at work. Would there be analogous evidence about differences in selective disclosure in the present study?

An analysis was made to compare differences in disclosure between Agency and School couples. For both samples, proportions of pleasant and unpleasant disclosure were correlated with the mean importance ratings for each of the nine communication topics. It was found that School spouses had a consistently higher positive correlation between importance of a communication topic and their amount of pleasant disclosure, but a consistently lower correlation between importance and unpleasant disclosure than did the Agency spouses. (Mean rhos between ratings of importance and disclosure of pleasant and unpleasant feelings, respectively, were .51 and -.02 for School spouses and .22 and .24 for Agency spouses.) In other words, School couples tended to disclose more information about their pleasant feelings regarding important matters; in contrast, disclosure of unpleasant feelings was deemphasized for important topics. On the other hand, Agency couples differentiated very little between pleasant and unpleasant disclosure in “important” versus “unimportant” topic areas. Perhaps, then, “talking about one’s feelings” does not necessarily refer to spilling out everything. For the average couple, selective disclosure of feelings seems more beneficial to marital harmony than indiscriminate catharsis.

Let us turn to the third hypothesis concerning mutuality of communication. There was a high positive correlation between spouses’ proportions of feelings disclosed. The correlations of .79 (wives) and .91 (husbands) between each respondent’s perception of own output to and input from mate were higher than similar output-input correlations reported by Jourard and Richman (1963). Those investigators found a mean correlation of about .70 (range = .48 to .83) in their college students’ reports of disclosure to and from significant other persons.

It appears that a portion of Jourard and Richman’s (1963) high correlations was due to the effect of “response set.” Their correlations overstated the relationship between own and friend’s disclosure by as much as .40. However, even with this artifactual increment removed, there remains a
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significant positive correlation between the amounts of disclosure of pair members.

It was noted earlier that spouses' reports of input were more highly correlated than their reports of output. In other words, perceptions of own disclosure were less highly correlated than perceptions of spouse's disclosure. Correlations were consistently higher between inputs than between outputs.

How might this finding be interpreted? Essentially, it implies that a partner's description of the other's behavior or feelings reveals more about the joint perception of the relationship than does his description of his own behavior or feelings. If this were generally true, then it would mean that an investigator can learn more about a relationship by asking each partner about the alter's than about the ego's behavior or attitudes.

Two questions for further studies of dyadic interaction present themselves. Are partners' perceptions of own output freer to vary independently of each other, while reports of input reflect a greater commonality of dyadic perception? Or, conversely, could it be that reports of input are more easily distorted than reports of output?

We believe that the latter question can be answered in the affirmative—that input is more easily distortable than output. Knowledge of the processes of person perception suggests that the earliest exchanges of information between dyadic members tend to be highly idealized. Particularly, this is true of opposite-sex relationships. If later information violates this crystallizing judgment of the other, it may be misperceived. It has been shown, for example, that when persons receive contradictory information about an other, they often misperceive entire sets of facts in order to develop an internally consistent view of that person (Gollin, 1954; Zillig, 1928). In this manner, persons provide themselves with a "picture" of the other which remains relatively stable and consistent. In effect, they not only come to perceive but also to expect personal consistency on the part of the other in an interpersonal relationship (Gergen, in press).

If, during the early idealized stages of a relationship, a person assumes he will be confided in and that the other will disclose all important matters to him, he may continue in later stages to perceive a high degree of disclosure on the part of the other (i.e., input) even though the actual degree of disclosure may be relatively small (i.e., output). In other words, disclosure may not remain stable and consistent, but it may be perceived as remaining so. Future studies of dyadic interaction might do well to examine these issues experimentally.

Summary

It was hypothesized that disclosure of feelings between marital partners (1) would be greater for wives than for husbands; (2) would vary directly with spouses' satisfaction; and (3) would show significant degrees of mutuality.
A self-disclosure questionnaire was administered to 32 married couples as part of a larger research project. Each respondent indicated (a) his own and his partner's degree of favorability toward nine important topics of potential discussion, (b) the proportion of his own and his spouse's disclosure of pleasant and unpleasant feelings regarding these topics, and (c) the importance of discussing feelings about each topic.

The three hypotheses were largely confirmed. First, wives did tend to be higher than husbands as revealers of their feelings, but only when the other partner was the judge of the amount disclosed. Second, disclosure of feelings tended to be correlated positively with general marital satisfaction, but it was more highly correlated with feelings of favorability toward specific objects of communication. Third, there were strong indications of mutuality of communication; the spouses' independent reports of the amount of disclosure yielded significant positive correlations.

One interesting finding was that there were consistently higher correlations between the partners' descriptions of the other's than of their own behavior or feelings. This finding appears worthy of further study in future explorations of dyadic communication.

References


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