

# KANSAS MARITAL SATISFACTION SCALE (KMS)

## Reference:

Schumm, W. A., Nichols, C. W., Schectman, K. L., & Grigsby, C. C. (1983). Characteristics of responses to the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale by a sample of 84 married mothers. *Psychological Reports, 53*, 567–572.

## Description of Measure:

A 3-item measure designed to quickly assess marital satisfaction. Respondents answer each item on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (extremely dissatisfied) to 7 (extremely satisfied).

## Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:

Schumm, W. R., Paff-Bergen, L. A., Hatch, R. C., Obiorah, F. C., Copeland, J. M., Meens, L. D., & Bugaighis, M. A. (1986). Concurrent and discriminant validity of the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 48*, 381-387.

The Kansas Marital Satisfaction (KMS) Scale is found to correlate substantially with both Spanier's (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) and Norton's (1983) Quality Marriage Index (QMI), but not to correlate significantly more than those two scales with a variety of other satisfaction items designed to assess the discriminant validity of the KMS scale. Other characteristics of the KMS scale are similar to those reported in previous research and compare favorably with those of the DAS and the QMI, even though the latter scales contain more items than the KMS scale. It is concluded that the KMS scale may serve as a useful brief measure of marital satisfaction in future research with married couples.

Dehle, C., Larsen, D., & Landers, J. E. (2001). Social support in marriage. *The American Journal of Family Therapy, 29*, 307-324.

The current study examines the role of perceived adequacy of social support provided by spouses for both marital and individual functioning. Married individuals from a college sample (N = 177) recorded the adequacy of specific supportive behaviors provided by the spouse on a daily basis for 7 days. Perceived support adequacy was correlated in the expected direction with marital quality, depressive symptomatology, and perceived stress. Furthermore, hierarchical multiple regressions indicated that perceived support adequacy accounts for significant unique variance in marital quality, depressive symptomatology, and perceived stress, even after controlling for social desirability. Discussion focuses on limitations of the study and implications of the findings for clinical work with couples.

Crane, D. R. & Middleton, K. C. (2000). Establishing criterion scores for the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale and the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 28, 53-60.

This study demonstrates the usefulness of the KMSS and RDAS in distinguishing between the maritally distressed and nondistressed. For conceptual and statistical clarity, many marital interaction and marital therapy research measures, use a single cutoff score. It was determined that the cutoff score is 17 for the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMSS) and 48 for the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) for husbands, wives, and couples. An equivalency table of mathematical formulas is also presented, allowing the conversion of individual and couple scores from one measure of marital quality to another. It is now possible to convert a score from any one of a number of instruments (KMSS, RDAS, Dyadic Adjustment Scale, Marital Adjustment Test, Revised Marital Adjustment Test) to an equivalent score as measured by another instrument.

**Scale: Contact author for permission to use items.**

# MARITAL ADJUSTMENT TEST (MAT)

## Reference:

Locke, H. J., & Wallace, K. M. (1959). Short marital adjustment and prediction tests: Their reliability and validity. *Marriage and Family Living, 21*, 251–255.

## Description of Measure:

A 15-item scale that measures marital satisfaction. It was initially used to differentiate well-adjusted couples from distressed (unsatisfied) couples. The 15 items are answered on a variety of response scales.

## Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:

Funk, J. L. & Rogge, R. D. (2007). Testing the ruler with item response theory: Increasing precision of measurement for relationship satisfaction with the Couples Satisfaction Index. *Journal of Family Psychology, 21*, 572-583.

The present study took a critical look at a central construct in couples research: relationship satisfaction. Eight well-validated self-report measures of relationship satisfaction, including the Marital Adjustment Test (MAT; H. J. Locke & K. M. Wallace, 1959), the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; G. B. Spanier, 1976), and an additional 75 potential satisfaction items, were given to 5,315 online participants. Using item response theory, the authors demonstrated that the MAT and DAS provided relatively poor levels of precision in assessing satisfaction, particularly given the length of those scales. Principal-components analysis and item response theory applied to the larger item pool were used to develop the Couples Satisfaction Index (CSI) scales. Compared with the MAS and the DAS, the CSI scales were shown to have higher precision of measurement (less noise) and correspondingly greater power for detecting differences in levels of satisfaction. The CSI scales demonstrated strong convergent validity with other measures of satisfaction and excellent construct validity with anchor scales from the nomological net surrounding satisfaction, suggesting that they assess the same theoretical construct as do prior scales. Implications for research are discussed.

Kimmel, D. & Van Der Veen, F. (1974). Factors of marital adjustment in Locke's Marital Adjustment Test. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 36*, 57-62.

Principal axis factor analysis with varimax rotations of data for 149 wives and 157 husbands indicated that the instrument is an internally consistent measure of marital adjustment, and that this general aspect consists of two separate components--sexual congeniality and compatibility.

Kearns, J. N. & Leonard, K. E. (2004). Social networks, structural independence, and marital quality over the transition to marriage: A prospective analysis. *Journal of Family Psychology, 18*, 383-395.

This study examined the relationship between couples' network interdependence and marital quality in a sample of 347 couples that were recruited at the time of their first marriage. Husbands and wives completed separate, self-administered questionnaires at home. Analyses are based on data collected at the time of marriage, at the first anniversary, and at the second anniversary. Results indicated that after marriage, husbands' and wives' friend and family networks became increasingly interdependent. Moreover, the interdependence of the friend and family networks at marriage predicted wives' marital quality at the first anniversary, whereas wives' marital quality at the first anniversary predicted the interdependence of the friend network at the second anniversary. No significant longitudinal relations were observed for husbands.

**Scale** (also available at <http://www.familynow1.com/reviews/lockewallace.htm>):  
(note: points for scoring are here included in the scale)

1. Check the dot on the scale line below which best describes the degree of happiness, everything considered, of your present marriage. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness which most people get from marriage, and the scale gradually ranges on one side to those few who are very unhappy in marriage, and on the other, to those few who experience extreme joy or felicity in marriage.

0	2	7	15	20	25	35
.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Very Unhappy			Happy			Perfectly Happy

State the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your mate on the following items.

	Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Disagree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
2. Handling Family Finances	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. Matters of Recreation	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. Demonstration of Affection	8	6	4	2	1	0
5. Friends	5	4	3	2	1	0



**Scoring:**

The scoring rubric (points for each response) is included in the above scale, but should not be included when giving the scale to respondents. The scores for all 15 items should be added up together. Higher scores indicate greater satisfaction.

# QUALITY OF MARRIAGE INDEX (QMI)

## Reference:

Norton, R. (1983). Measuring marital quality: A critical look at the dependent variable. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 45, 141–151.

## Description of Measure:

A 6-item measure of marital satisfaction. Respondents answer the first five items on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The sixth item is answered on a 10 point scale ranging from 1 (extremely low) to 10 (extremely high).

## Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:

Johnson, D. R., White, L. K., & Booth, A. (1986). Dimensions of marital quality: Toward methodological and conceptual refinement. *Journal of Family Issues*, 7, 31-49.

The dimensionality of five conceptually distinct components of marital quality was evaluated in a representative national sample of 1845 married people. Confirmatory factor analysis found two dimensions, one consisting of scales of marital happiness and interaction; the other, of marital disagreements, problems, and instability. Further examination of the two dimensions showed that they operate in distinctly different ways over forms of marital structure including wife's employment, marital duration, sex, and presence of children. It was concluded that scales of marital quality that combine measures from these two dimensions are likely to yield ambiguous findings and contribute little to an understanding of marital processes.

Stets, J. E. (1993). The link between past and present intimate relationships. *Journal of Family Issues*, 14, 236-260.

This research addresses how past relationships influence the evaluative and interactive dimensions of current relationships. Data from the National Survey of Families and Households are used to examine cohabiting and married relationships. The results show that after controlling for other factors, prior cohabiting relationships negatively influence current married and cohabiting relationships. For marriage, it is cohabitation with someone other than one's current spouse that produces this negative effect. It is suggested that either those who cohabit with someone other than their intended spouse are predisposed to problems in relationships (and they carry these problems into subsequent relationships), or people who have broken off relationships carry the negative effects of failed relationships into later relationships.

**Bradbury, T. N. & Fincham, F. D. (1990). Attributions in marriage: Review and critique. *Psychology Bulletin*, 107, 3-33.**

The prevailing behavioral account of marriage must be expanded to include covert processes. This article therefore examines the attributions or explanations that spouses make for marital events. A review indicates that dissatisfied spouses, compared with satisfied spouses, make attributions for the partner's behavior that cast it in a negative light. Experimental, clinical outcome, and longitudinal data suggest further that attributions may influence marital satisfaction. Rival hypotheses for these findings are examined. Because continued empirical development in this domain depends on conceptual progress, a framework is presented that integrates attributions, behavior, and marital satisfaction. This framework points to several topics that require systematic study, and specific hypotheses are offered for research on these topics. It is concluded that the promising start made toward understanding marital attributions holds considerable potential for enriching behavioral conceptions of marriage.

**Scale: Contact author for permission to use items.**

# THE COUPLES SATISFACTION INDEX (CSI)

## Reference:

Funk, J. L. & Rogge, R. D. (2007). Testing the ruler with item response theory: Increasing precision of measurement for relationship satisfaction with the Couples Satisfaction Index. *Journal of Family Psychology, 21*, 572-583.

## Description of Measure:

A 32-item scale designed to measure one's satisfaction in a relationship. The scale has a variety of items with different response scales and formats. The authors have also specified that the scale safely be shrunk to either a 16-item format or even a 4-item format depending on a researcher's needs.

## Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:

Fincham, F. D., & Bradbury, T. N. (1987). The assessment of marital quality: A reevaluation. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 49*, 797-809.

This article examines a fundamental problem in research using self-report measures of marriage: attempts have been made to measure and explain variance in marital quality without adequate understanding and specification of the construct of "marital quality." A specific consequence of this shortcoming is that marital quality is not readily distinguished from other relevant constructs (e.g., communication). This, in turn, results in measures that have a great deal of overlap in item content, thus preventing clear interpretation of the empirical relationship between constructs. The inability to establish unambiguous empirical relationships among relevant constructs severely limits theory development in this research domain. One means of avoiding these problems is to treat marital quality solely as the global evaluation of one's marriage. The implications of this strategy are examined in regard to three issues that have received insufficient attention in marital research: (a) the association between empirical and conceptual dependence; (b) the interpretation of responses to self-report inventories; and (c) the consideration of the purpose for which marital quality is measured. The advantages of adopting this approach, and the conditions under which it is most appropriate to do so, are also outlined.

Cui, M., Fincham, F.D., & Pasley, B.K. (2008). Young adult romantic relationships: The role of parents' marital problems and relationship efficacy. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 34*, 1226-1235.

This study examined the link between parental divorce and marital conflict and young adult romantic relationships, and it tested whether offspring efficacy

beliefs and conflict mediate this association. Young adults (N = 358) provided data at three time points each separated by 7-week intervals. Results from structural equation modeling demonstrated that (a) parents' marital conflict, rather than parental divorce, was associated with offspring conflict behavior; (b) relationship efficacy mediated this association; and (c) conflict behavior, in turn, mediated the association between efficacy beliefs and the quality of offspring romantic relationships. These findings are discussed in terms of their implications for understanding the impact of parents' marital problems on romantic relationships in young adulthood. Their implications for preventive interventions and future research are also outlined.

Fincham, F.D., Cui, M., Braithwaite, S.R., & Pasley, K. (2008). Attitudes towards intimate partner violence in dating relationships. *Psychological Assessment, 20*, 260-269.

Prevention of intimate partner violence on college campuses includes programs designed to change attitudes, and hence, a scale that assesses such attitudes is needed. Study 1 (N = 859) cross validates the factor structure of the Intimate Partner Violence Attitude Scale—Revised using exploratory factor analysis and presents initial validity data on the scale. In Study 2 (N = 687), the obtained three-factor structure (Abuse, Control, Violence) is tested using confirmatory factor analysis, and it is shown to be concurrently related to assault in romantic relationships and to predict psychological aggression 14 weeks later. The findings are discussed in the context of how understanding and modifying attitudes assessed by the Intimate Partner Violence Attitude Scale—Revised may improve interventions aimed at reducing intimate partner violence.

**Scale:**

1. Please indicate the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

Extremely Unhappy	Fairly Unhappy	A Little Unhappy	Happy	Very Happy	Extremely Happy	Perfect
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Most people have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

	Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Disagree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
2. Amount of time spent together	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. Making major decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0

4. Demonstrations of affection	5	4	3	2	1	0
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	All the Time	Most of the Time	More often than Not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
5. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. How often do you wish you hadn't gotten into this relationship?	0	1	2	3	4	5

	Not at all True	A little True	Somewhat True	Mostly True	Almost Completely True	Completely True
7. I still feel a strong connection with my partner	0	1	2	3	4	5
8. If I had my life to live over, I would marry (or live with/date) the same person	0	1	2	3	4	5
9. Our relationship is strong	0	1	2	3	4	5
10. I sometimes wonder if there is someone else out there for me	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. My relationship with my partner makes me happy	0	1	2	3	4	5
12. I have a warm and comfortable relationship with my partner	0	1	2	3	4	5
13. I can't imagine ending my relationship with my partner	0	1	2	3	4	5
14. I feel that I can confide in my partner about virtually anything	0	1	2	3	4	5
15. I have had second thoughts about this relationship recently	5	4	3	2	1	0
16. For me, my partner is the perfect romantic partner	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. I really feel like part of a team with my partner	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. I cannot imagine another person making me as happy as my partner does	0	1	2	3	4	5

	Not at All	A little	Somewhat	Mostly	Almost completely	Completely
19. How rewarding is your relationship with your partner?	0	1	2	3	4	5

20. How well does your partner meet your needs?	0	1	2	3	4	5
21. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?	0	1	2	3	4	5
22. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?	0	1	2	3	4	5

	Worse than all others (extremely bad)					Better than all others (extremely good)
23. How good is your relationship compared to most?	0	1	2	3	4	5

	Never	Less than once a month	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Once a day	More Often
24. Do you enjoy your partner's company?	0	1	2	3	4	5
25. How often do you and your partner have fun together?	0	1	2	3	4	5

For each of the following items, select the answer that best describes *how you feel about your relationship*. Base your responses on your first impressions and immediate feelings about the item.

26.	INTERESTING	5	4	3	2	1	0	BORING
27.	BAD	5	4	3	2	1	0	GOOD
28.	FULL	5	4	3	2	1	0	EMPTY
29.	LONELY	5	4	3	2	1	0	FRIENDLY
30.	STURDY	5	4	3	2	1	0	FRAGILE
31.	DISCOURAGING	5	4	3	2	1	0	HOPEFUL
32.	ENJOYABLE	5	4	3	2	1	0	MISERABLE

**Scoring:**

For the 16-item version use 1, 5, 9, 11, 12, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32.  
 For the 4-item version use 1, 12, 19, 22.

Scoring is kept continuous.