Running Head: COUPLE SIMILARITY

**Couples' Similarity, Values, Communication Styles, and Marital Quality in Macau,**

**China**

XIAOYI FANG

*Institute of Developmental Psychology, Beijing Normal University, Beijing, Peoples Republic*

*of China*

LIQIONG DAI

*Education and Youth Affairs Bureau, Macau, Peoples Republic of China*

JOHN K MILLER

*Fulbright Senior Research Scholar, Beijing, Peoples Republic of China*

*Associate Professor, Nova Southeastern University*

LINYUAN DENG

*Faculty of Education, Beijing Normal University, Beijing, Peoples Republic of China*

Address correspondence to Xiaoyi Fang, Professor and Associate Director, Institute of Developmental Psychology, Beijing Normal University, Beijing, 100875 Peoples Republic of China. Email: fangxy@bnu.edu.cn.

ABSTRACT

*This study explored how relationship factors such as couple similarity, values, and communication styles influence marital quality in couples in Macau, China.  132 couples separately completed Schwartz's Value Survey, Communication Pattern Questionnaire, and Spanier's Dyadic Adjustment Scale. T-test, intra-class correlation and structure model analysis were used in the data analysis.  The results showed that couples were similar on total value, security, tradition, universalism, self-direction, and hedonism with a low degree; couples also showed differences on some other aspects that husbands valued more on power and achievement than wives ; the similarities of real couples were significantly higher than those of random matched couples on all values; husbands reported more negative communication patterns than their wives, especially on mutual withdraw communications; the marital quality reported by husbands was higher than the one reported by wives, especially on the sections of marital satisfaction and affectional expression. The study provided evidence for the theory that the more similar the couples were, the happier they were, and that this was only true when constructive communication was effectively implemented in the marital relationship. The study concludes that couple selection might be explained by both theories of similarity and mutual-supplement, and that communication is the foundation of marital relationship.*

*KEYWORDS couple similarity, value, communication pattern, marital quality*

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is one of the most intense and complex relationships in life. Although there is a plethora of research and literature about marriage, most studies are based on western models and theories (Miller & Fang, in press). Some studies have attempted to explore whether a common set of assumptions about the marriage relationship can be applied to the Chinese context (Sim & Hu, 2009), yet this area of study is still in its infancy. China's rapid economic and social development over the last decade is remarkable. One complexity of studying marriage in the Chinese context involves the rapid change and wide diversity of culture, traditions, languages, and gender roles throughout the country. While many in the west consider China to be one homogenous culture, it is in reality a land of great internal diversity. The Chinese civilization represents one of the oldest societies on the planet. Often understood in the West as being comprised of one cultural group, the Chinese culture is actually an intricate tapestry of ethnic and racial diversity. There are over 56 clearly identified different ethnic groups in China (Sim & Hu, 2009). China currently has 5 major language families and 129 different languages, excluding dialects or sub-dialects. As we attempt to understand contemporary Chinese family issues, the diversity within the culture must be recognized and acknowledged. This study explored key factors such as couple similarity, values, and communication styles, and the impact of these factors on marital satisfaction in Macau, China.

The Macau Context

Macau is comprised of a peninsula located due west of Hong Kong and two small islands (Taipa and Coloane), all connected by bridge. Now a city of nearly 450,000 people, Macau was once a small fishing village on the southeast coast of China until it was colonized by the

Portuguese in the 16th century, making it the first European settlement in the east. Macau's

strategic location and inland port quickly made it the center of commerce between China and

the western world (Porter, 1993). In 1999 Portugal officially returned control of Macau to

China. Macau has two official languages, Cantonese and Portuguese reflecting its roots in both

the east and west.

Most studies and theories support the idea that similar couples are happier than less

similar ones (Kenny & Acitelli, 1994; Acitelli, Kenny & Weiner, 2001; Gaunt, 2006).

Researchers have discussed the topic of couple similarity and the relationship to marital

satisfaction such as demographic variables (Pines, 1999), personality characteristics（Han,

Weed & Butcher, 2003), food preference (Ferreira & Winter, 1974) and political attitudes (Lou

& Klohnen, 2005).

Some researchers have considered couple similarity as the "bond" of marriage and the

most basic component of the marital relationship (Pasley, Ihinger-Tallman & Coleman, 1984;

Scanzoni & Scanzoni, 1976). Other researchers postulate that couple similarity enhances

family stability, and that if the couples' values did not become similar over time, their family

system could weaken (Larson, 1974; Tallman, 1976).

The couple similarity theory was challenged by both mutual-supplement theory (Winch,

1958) and self-expansion theory (Aron & Aron, 2000). Mutual-supplement theory states that

people with different characteristics attract each other. Couple selection is based on meeting

each other's needs, which are often different from their own needs. Whether the marriage is

happy or not is dependent on the extent the couple meets each other's needs. Self-expansion

theory states that individuals are seeking to expand and grow, and often accomplish this

through a process of building relationships with others who provide complementary resources.

While some researchers found that complementarity (or being different from each other)

enhanced marital satisfaction (Luo, 2009), other studies indicated no relationship between

couple similarity and marital satisfaction (Gaunt, 2006).

Another area of the marriage that has received attention in the research literature is the

relationship between martial satisfaction and communication.  Navran's (1967) study found

that the impact of verbal communication ($r=.91$) was more important than nonverbal

communication ($r=.66$) when correlated with marital quality.  When comparing non-hassled

couples, couples engaged in counseling , and divorcing couples with regard to their level of

constructive communication, Christensen and Shenk (1991) found that the two distressed

groups (couples engaged in counseling and divorcing couples) had less constructive

communications than the non-hassled couples.  Specifically, the two distressed groups also had

more mutual-withdraw and demand-withdrawal communication patterns.  Sanford's (2003)

research in this area indicated that couples who had low marital satisfaction almost always had

negative communication behaviors in all problem-solving discussions.

Prior studies have explored similarity of couples with regard to demographic and

personality variables and the relationship to marital satisfaction; however, few touch on the

relationship between the similarity of couple's *values* and marital satisfaction (Gaunt, 2006). In

contrast with the demographic variables, values are an essential variable that affects behaviors

of individuals.  Therefore, an in-depth study of couples' values will be very helpful to explore

the relationship between couple similarity and marital satisfaction.  The goal of our study is to

investigate the relationship between couple similarity, values and marital satisfaction in

couples in Macau, China.  Specific research question include:

This study used Schwartz's Value Survey (1992) to explore the similarity of couple's values, and the relationship with marital satisfaction. Luo and Klohnen's（2005) method to discuss the differences between the similarities of real and randomly matched couples was also used to address "yea saying" effects (Gutek, 1978).

## METHODS

Participants

After receiving Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, a convenience sampling method was used in the selection of participants.  All the participants were married heterosexual couples in Macau.  Questionnaires were distributed to members who were interested in the program through the Women's Association of Macau, and through peer network.  Out of the 520 questionnaires that were distributed, 294 were returned (57% return rate).  Both the husbands and wives received a questionnaire and were asked to fill them out independently.  Questionnaires which were not completely filled and/or only completed by one partner of the couple were excluded.  This study is based on the 264 completed questionnaires (N=132 couples).

Procedure

 The participants were recruited from members of the Women's Association of Macau, and peer networks.  Recruiters (those who distributed the questionnaires) were instructed on how to distribute the questionnaires and what to explain to potential participant couples. Participants were couples who willingly volunteered to complete the distributed questionnaires.  The

questionnaires were coded by the researchers before they were distributed.  One couple had the same code, "M" and "F" represented husband and wife respectively.  To ensure confidentiality, questionnaires for each couple were put into an envelope beforehand. Each member of the couple was instructed to complete the questionnaires independently, without comparing each other's answers.  After finishing the questionnaires, the couples were instructed to put the questionnaires into the envelope, seal it and then give it back to the recruiters.  The recruiters then returned the questionnaires to the researchers.

Measures

*Schwartz Value Survey*

Ten dimensions from the Schwartz Value Survey (Schwartz, 1992) were chosen for this study, which totaled to be 47 items.  The 10 dimensions were as follows: 1) power (including 4 items, indicating social status and prestige, preserving one's public image, control or dominance over people, and resources), 2) achievement (including 4 items, indicating personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards), 3) hedonism (including 3 items, representing pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself), 4) stimulation (including 3 items, indicating excitement, novelty, and challenge of life), 5) self-direction (including 5 items, indicating independent thought and action choosing, creating, and exploring), 6) universalism (including 8 items, indicating understanding, appreciating, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature), 7) benevolence (including 5 items, indicating preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact), 8) tradition (including 5 items, indicating respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion

impose on self), 9) conformity (including 4 items, indicating restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms), and 10) security (including 5 items, indicating safety, harmony and stability of society, of relationships, and of self).  The items were scored on a 9-point scale, ranging from -1 to 7 (-1=this item is opposite to my value, 0=unimportant, 3=important, 6=very important, 7=most important). Average score of items is calculated in each dimension.  The higher the score is, the more important the value is as rated by the respondent. Cronbach's α coefficients of wives and husbands in this study were .86 and .95, respectively.

*Communication Pattern Questionnaire*

Communication Pattern Questionnaire (revised by Christensen & Shenk in 1996) includes 35 items, but only 16 items were used in this study.  The 16 items were divided into three sub-scales: mutual constructive communication, demand/withdraw communication, and mutual withdraw communication.  The items were scored on a 9-point scale, ranging from "most impossible" (1) to "most possible" (9).  Participants were asked to answer questions according to their real lives and to choose the appropriate score that described their communication style of problem-solving with their partners.  The sum of the scores was calculated in each sub-scale.  The higher the score was, the more likely the couples had adopted this communication pattern.  Cronbach's α coefficients of wives' three sub-scales were .76, .66 and .69 respectively; husbands' were .79, .78 and .69 respectively.

*Dyadic Adjustment Scale*

 Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1982) includes 32 items with 4 sub-scales: dyadic satisfaction, dyadic consensus, dyadic cohesion and affectional expression.  Most items were

scored on a 6-point scale, and a few were scored on a 2-point or 5-point scale.  The average was

calculated in every sub-scale.  The higher the score was, the higher the dyadic satisfaction,

dyadic consensus, dyadic cohesion and affectional expression was.  Cronbach's α coefficients

of husbands and wives in this study were .89 and .92 respectively.

Data Analysis

Scores from each partner of the couple dyad were calculated in the dimensions of values,

communication patterns and marital quality, respectively.  A t-test for significant differences

between husbands and wives was also conducted.  Randomly matched couples were produced

by Luo and Klohnen's (2005) method.  Intra-class correlation (ICC) was used to calculate the

value similarity of real couples and random matched couples (Deal, Wampler & Halverson,

1992).  T-test was used again to find the difference of value similarity between real couples and

randomly matched couples.  The ICC ranged from -1 to 1: positive value represents that there is

a similarity between couples, whereas a negative value represents that there is a difference

between couples, and zero represents that there is no similarity or difference between couples.

<div align="center">RESULTS</div>

The age of wives ranged from 20 to 57 (M=36，$SD$=8.56); the age of husbands ranged from

22 to 59 (M=39，$SD$=9.40), with 98% of the couples reporting that this was their first marriage.

The average length of marriage was 10.74 years.  Couples had no children (33.6%), one child

(29.8%), two children (29%), or more than two children (7.6%).  The education level of wives

and husbands were: 13% wives and 8.5% husbands had elementary school or lower education;

10.6% wives and 18.2% husbands had junior high school education; 18.2% wives and

husbands had senior high school education; 12.9% wives and 9.1% husbands had college

education; 33.3% wives and 20.5% husbands had Bachelor Degree; and 9.8% wives and 13.7%

husbands had Master Degree and/or higher education. Most of the participants had professional

jobs, with 15.6% wives reporting they had no job outside the home, and 2.4% husbands had

retired or lost their jobs.

**[Insert table 1 here]**


Table 1 outlines the similarities and differences on the values between husbands and wives.

Husbands and wives got the same scores on the total value; the first three dimensions they

valued most were security, benevolence and conformity, and the least valued was excitement.

Husbands scored higher on the dimensions of power, achievement, stimulation, and

self-direction, while wives scored higher on the dimensions of hedonism, universalism,

benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security.  Paired sample t-test on real couples showed

that husbands scored significantly higher on the items of power and achievement as basic

values and there were no significant differences on the other eight dimensions.  The results

suggested that husbands and wives had similar value in many aspects, and that husbands tended

to value power and achievement more than wives.

In the aspect of communication, wives trended to agree that there were more positive

communications with their spouse, whereas husbands trended to believe that there were more

negative communications.  Paired sample t-test on real couples showed that husbands reported

more mutual withdraw communications than wives.  The results also indicate that husbands

had more negative opinions on communication with their spouse than wives.

In the aspect of marital quality, husbands had more positive opinions about their marital

quality than wives.  Husbands scored higher than wives on both general scale and the four sub-scales of marital satisfaction, consensus, cohesion, and affectional expression.  Paired sample t-test on real couples showed that husbands scored significantly higher than wives on the items of marital satisfaction and affectional expression.

**[Insert table 2 here]**

Table 2 showed that real couples had similarities in total value, security, tradition, universalism, self-direction, and hedonism.  There was no similarity in power and stimulation; however, there were differences in conformity, achievement, and benevolence. On the other hand, randomly matched couples had differences in all of the ten aspects.  The comparison indicated that the similarity of real couples was higher than the randomly matched couples. The t-test results showed that similarity of real couples in all values was significantly higher than similarity among randomly matched couples.

Table 2 showed that there were both similarities and differences on the values between husbands and wives. The similarities were: husbands and wives got same scores on the total value; the first three dimensions they valued most were security, benevolence and conformity, and the one valued least was excitement. The differences were: husbands scored higher on the dimensions of power, achievement, stimulation and self-direction, while wives scored higher on the dimensions of hedonism, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity and security. Paired sample t-test on real couples showed that husbands scored significantly higher on the items of power and achievement and there were no significant differences on the other eight dimensions. The results suggested that husbands and wives had similar value in a lot of aspects, but husbands trended to endorse power and achievement more than wives.

In the aspect of communication, wives trended to agree that there were more positive communications within couples, whereas husbands trended to believe that there were more negative communications. Paired sample t-test on real couples showed that husbands reported more mutual withdraw communications than wives. The results indicated that husbands had more negative opinions on communication within couples than wives.

In the aspect of marital quality, husbands had more positive opinions than wives. Husbands scored higher than wives on both general scale and four sub-scales. Paired sample t-test on real couples showed that husbands scored significantly higher than wives on the items of marital satisfaction and affectional expression.

3.2 The characteristics of the similarity of couple's value

**[Insert table 3 here]**

Table 3 showed that real couples had similarities in total value, security, tradition, universalism, self-direction and hedonism with a low degree (.18 and below) except that the degree of total value reached .32; there was no similarity in power and stimulation, and there were differences in conformity, achievement and benevolence. On the other hand, random matched couples had differences in all of the ten aspects. The comparison indicated that the similarity of real couples was higher than the random matched couples, while the degree of difference was lower than random matched couples. The t-test results showed that similarity of real couples in all values was significantly higher than the ones of random matched couples.

3.3 The relationship among couples' value similarity, communication pattern and marital quality

Structure equation model was used to analyze the relationship among the similarity of couple's value, couple's communication pattern and marital quality. First of all, we tested the relationship between similarity of couple's value and couple's marital quality. The results are in Figure 1 and 2.

**[Insert Figure 1 & 2 here]**

Figure 1 and 2 showed there was obvious direct relationship between similarity of couples' value and marital quality reported by both husbands and wives. The results indicated that the more similar couple's value was, the higher couple's marital quality. However, is the result also true if we introduce communication pattern as a variable? Therefore, we made a further SEM analysis and the results were showed in Figure 3 and 4.

**[Insert Figure 3 & 4 here]**

Figure 3 and 4 showed that after introducing the variable of communication pattern, couple similarity couldn't predict marital quality directly neither from husbands' side nor from wives' side, but it could affect marital quality indirectly through communication pattern as an intermediary variable. Table 4 showed the model fit indices of the SEM, which showed that the data fit the model well.

**[Insert Table 4 here]**

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions can be drawn from the results of our study.

(1) There were similarities on couple's value, but with a low degree, there were also differences on couple's value: husbands valued more on power and achievement than wives;

(2) The similarities of real couples were significantly higher than those of random matched couples;

(3) Husbands reported more mutual- withdraw conflicts than wives;

(4) The marital quality reported by husbands was better than the one reported by wives, especially on the aspects of dyadic satisfaction and affectional expression;

(5) The more similar couple's value is, the higher martial quality is, but this theory is only true when constructive communication is effectively implemented in the marital relationship.

DISCUSSION

The most important finding of this study is that even though the similarity of couples' values is an obvious predictor of marital quality, the predictive effect has to be mediated by communication. In this study, we not only confirmed  that the relationship between couple similarity and marital quality under Chinese culture background was the same as that in western culture（Dealetc, 1992; Gaunt, 2006）, but also further illustrated the mechanism of how couple similarity affected marital quality (Baxter & West, 2003), which was mediated by

communication. This result is a development on existing western researches which also explains the inconsistencies in their studies, suggesting that similar couples are not all happy ones（Gattisetc.，2004；Watsonetc.，2004）, and dissimilar couples are not all unhappy ones (Baxter & West, 2003). The value includes individual's opinions and attitudes, and it needs to be expressed or understood by others through communication (verbal and nonverbal ways). Indeed, similarity of value may cultivate couples' constructive communication, decrease the possibility of conflicts, and increase marital quality. However, less similar couples could still avoid problems by constructive communication. Therefore, communication is a stimulus to the healthy relationship between similarity of couple's value and marital quality as Olson's Circumplex Model of Marital and Family Systems believed（Olson et. al，1979）. Accordingly, we regard communication as the foundation of couple's relationship. This result could also be used in marital treatment practice, which is, training communication skills during family therapy to direct couples developing a better relationship.


Furthermore, this study also found out that there were similarities as well as differences within couples. The similarities were: both husbands and wives valued security, benevolence and conformity most, and stimulation least. And there were no significant differences on the other eight value dimensions within couples, except on power and achievement. Husbands valued more on power and achievement than wives. This result might reflect the influences of individual's basic needs, culture background and gender. Security and love are two of the basic individual needs in Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. High value on conformity might reflect the influence of Chinese culture on individual's value. Chinese culture emphasizes

conformity, even though the participants came from Macao, both husbands and wives regarded it as an important value. The results of the study also showed that the participants were still deeply affected by Chinese culture. Moreover, different value on power and achievement reflected the effect of gender. Males like to pursue power, social status and outstanding from the crowd more than females, so husbands value more on power and achievement than wives.

The result is also coincident with Baxter and West's (2003) study. They found out through interview that couples had both similarities and differences in five aspects (personality, hobby, attitude, belief, communication style, and demographic/family background). During a long time, there have been debates between similarity theory and mutual-supplement theory in the field of couple selection. However, according to our study as well as Baxter and West's（2003）, we can conclude that both similarity and mutual-supplement work in couple selection. During couple selection, an individual might look for partners like this: they have similarities on what he or she regards important and have differences on what he or she regards unimportant. This kind of selection, on one hand, is in favor of good communication and getting along in harmony, on the other hand, makes it possible for mutual attraction and self-expansion.

At last, our study found that in spite of the similarities of couple's values in some aspects, the degree of similarity was not high. Gaunt's study (2006) also discussed the similarity of couple's value. Since he used Pearson correlation to calculate similarity while we used intra-class correlation (ICC), it was hard to compare these two results directly. Still, we found that the value similarity in our study was lower than that in Gaunt's（2006）. This result might

reflect the differences in individual's independency and freedom on couple selection between Chinese and western culture. In Chinese culture, couple selection is not a business of one's own, an individual should respect his/her parents' opinion as well as relatives' and friends', so sometimes, he/she even has to obey parents' or family's will. Therefore, an individual might not select his/her lover independently and freely and this phenomenon might affect value similarity.

In spite of the results, there are still limitations in this study including: (1) the participants in this study were not randomly chosen, so they may not be representative; (2) the size of the sample was a little small: there were only 132 couples. Although, there are always sampling difficulties in couple researches, we couldn't divided the participants into sub-group because of the small sampling size and lost the opportunities to make further data analysis. These limitations should be overcome in future studies.

REFERENCES

Acitelli, L. K., Kenny, D. A., & Weiner, D. (2001). The importance of similarity and understanding of partners' marital ideals to relationship satisfaction. *Personal Relationships*, *8*, 165-187.

Aron, A. & Aron, E. (2000). Self-expansion motivation and including other in the self. In W. Ickes & S. Duck (eds.), *The social psychology of personal relationships* (pp. 109-128).New York: Wiley.

Baxter, L. A. & West, L. (2003). Couple perceptions of their similarities and differences: A dialectical perspective. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 20* (4), 491-514.

Christensen, A. & Shenk J. L. (1991). Communication conflict and psychological distance in nondistressed, clinic, and divorcing couples. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 59* 3), 458-463.

Deal, J. E., Wampler, K. S. & Halverson, C. F. (1992). The importance of similarity in the marital relationship. *Family Process, 31,* 369-382

Ferreira, A. J. & Winter, W. D. (1974). On the nature of marital relationships: Measurable differences in spontaneous agreement. *Family Process, 13*, 355-370.

Gaunt, R. (2006). Couple similarity and marital satisfaction: Are similar spouse happier? *Journal of Personality, 74*(5), 1401-1420.

Han, K., Weed, N. C., & Butcher, J. N. (2003). Dyadic agreement on the MMPI-2. *Personality and Individual Differences, 35*, 603-615.

Kenny, D. A. & Acitelli, L. K. (1994). Measuring similarity in couples. *Journal of Family Psychology, 8* (4), 417-431.

Larson, L. (1974). System and subsystem perception of family rules. *Journal of Marriage and Family Counseling, 36*, 123-138.

Luo, S. & Klohnen, E. C. (2005). Assortative mating and marital quality in newlyweds: A couple- centered approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 88* (2), 304-326.

Luo, S. (2009). Partner selection and relationship satisfaction in early dating couples: The role of couple similarity. *Personality and Individual Differences, 47*, 133-138.

Miller, J. K. & Fang, X. (in press).  Marriage and family therapy in the Peoples Republic of China: Current issues and challenges.  *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*.

Navran, L. (1967). Communication and adjustment in marriage. *Family Process, 6*, 173-184.

Pasley, K., Ihinger-Tallman, M., & Coleman, C. (1984). Consensus styles among happy and unhappy remarried couples. *Family Relations, 33*,451-457.

Pines, A. M. (1999). *Falling in love: Why we choose the lovers we choose*. New York: Routledge.

Porter, J. (1993).  Transformation of Macau.  *Pacific Affairs, 66*(1), 7-14.

Sanford, K. (2003). Problem-solving conversations in marriage: Does it matter what topics couples discuss? *Personal Relationships, 10*, 97-112.

Scanzoni, L. & Scanzoni, J. (1976). *Men, women and change: A sociology of marriage and family*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Schwartz, S. H. (1992). Universals in the content and structure of values: Theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. In M. Zanna (eds.), *Advances in Experimental*

*Social Psychology* (Vol. 25, pp.1-65). New York: Academic Press.

Sim, T., & Hu, Chi-Yi. (2009).  Family therapy in the Forbidden City: A review of Chinese

    journals from 1978 – 2006.  *Family Process, 48*(4), 559-583.

Tallman, I. (1976). *Passion, action and policies: A perspective on Social problem and social*

    *problem-solving*. San Francisco: W H Freeman & Co.

Winch, R. F. (1958). *Mate-selection: A study of complementary needs*. New York: Harper.

Table 1  The characteristics of couples' value, communication pattern and marital quality

| | Wives | Husbands | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | M(SD) | M(SD) | t | df | Sig. |
| **Value** | | | | | |
| Total | 4.20(.89) | 4.20(.88) | -.05 | 131 | .962 |
| Power | 3.43(1.11) | 3.74(1.16) | -2.52 | 131 | .013 |
| Achievement | 4.26(1.24) | 4.53(1.21) | -2.16 | 131 | .032 |
| Hedonism | 4.12(1.21) | 4.12(1.12) | .012 | 131 | .991 |
| Stimulation | 2.65(1.43) | 2.87(1.39) | -1.57 | 131 | .119 |
| Self-direction | 4.19(1.12) | 4.35(1.15) | -1.39 | 131 | .166 |
| Universalism | 4.53(1.09) | 4.37(1.18) | 1.54 | 131 | .125 |
| Benevolence | 4.86(1.15) | 4.67(1.15) | 1.76 | 131 | .081 |
| Tradition | 3.44(1.08) | 3.37(1.06) | .71 | 131 | .478 |
| Conformity | 4.78(1.16) | 4.63(1.17) | 1.33 | 131 | .187 |
| Security | 5.03(1.05) | 4.90(1.13) | 1.16 | 131 | .247 |
| **Communication** | | | | | |
| Constructive communication | 9.42 (8.94) | 8.65(9.14) | 1.09 | 131 | .279 |
| Demand/withdraw communication | 22.85(7.54) | 23.58(8.90) | -.98 | 131 | .331 |
| Mutual withdraw communication | 9.13(4.64) | 10.05(4.79) | -2.17 | 131 | .032 |
| **Marital quality** | | | | | |
| Total | 3.27(.60) | 3.33(.53) | -1.67 | 131 | .097 |
| Dyadic satisfaction | 3.63(.55) | 3.76(.53) | -3.21 | 131 | .002 |
| Dyadic consensus | 3.38(.74) | 3.41(.62) | -.67 | 131 | .502 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dyadic cohesion | 3.17(1.14) | 3.16(1.10) | .17 | 131 | .867 |
| Affectional expression | 2.09(.48) | 2.16(.49) | -1.98 | 131 | .050 |

Table2 - The similarity of couple's value and the difference test (ICC)

| | Real couples | Random matched couples | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *M(SD)* | *M(SD)* | *t* | *df* | *Sig.* |
| Total value | .32(.03) | .10(.26) | 7.27 | 131 | .000 |
| Security | .18(.53) | -.14(.44) | 4.68 | 131 | .000 |
| Tradition | .17(.51) | -.06(.42) | 5.12 | 131 | .000 |
| Universalism | .15(.49) | -.12(.38) | 6.33 | 131 | .000 |
| Self-direction | .11(.54) | -.08(.45) | 4.02 | 131 | .000 |
| Hedonism | .10(.59) | -.12(.54) | 3.44 | 131 | .001 |
| Power | .02(.54) | -.13(.44) | 3.26 | 131 | .001 |
| Stimulation | .01(.59) | -.22(.52) | 4.46 | 131 | .000 |
| Conformity | -.03(.59) | -.23(.47) | 3.81 | 131 | .000 |
| Achievement | -.05(.57) | -.22(.49) | 2.80 | 131 | .006 |
| Benevolence | -.09(.52) | -.33(.43) | 3.71 | 131 | .000 |

Table 3 - The similarity of couple's value and the difference test (ICC)

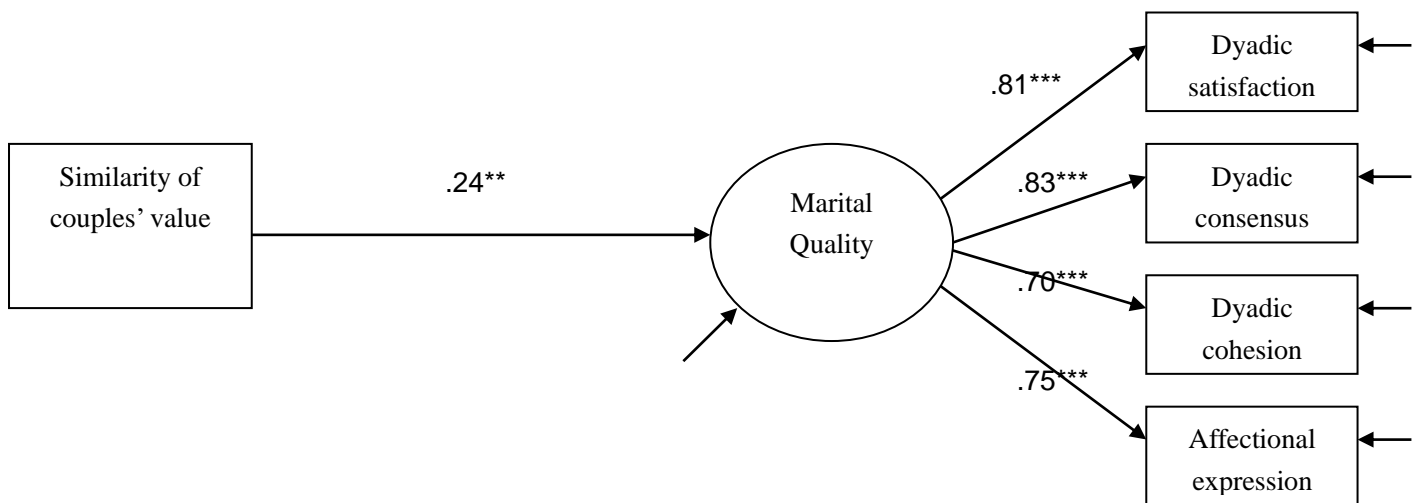| | *Real couples* | *Random matched couples* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *M(SD)* | *M(SD)* | *t* | *df* | *Sig.* |
| Total value | .32(.03) | .10(.26) | 7.27 | 131 | .000 |
| Security | .18(.53) | -.14(.44) | 4.68 | 131 | .000 |
| Tradition | .17(.51) | -.06(.42) | 5.12 | 131 | .000 |
| Universalism | .15(.49) | -.12(.38) | 6.33 | 131 | .000 |
| Self-direction | .11(.54) | -.08(.45) | 4.02 | 131 | .000 |
| Hedonism | .10(.59) | -.12(.54) | 3.44 | 131 | .001 |
| Power | .02(.54) | -.13(.44) | 3.26 | 131 | .001 |
| Stimulation | .01(.59) | -.22(.52) | 4.46 | 131 | .000 |
| Conformity | -.03(.59) | -.23(.47) | 3.81 | 131 | .000 |
| Achievement | -.05(.57) | -.22(.49) | 2.80 | 131 | .006 |
| Benevolence | -.09(.52) | -.33(.43) | 3.71 | 131 | .000 |



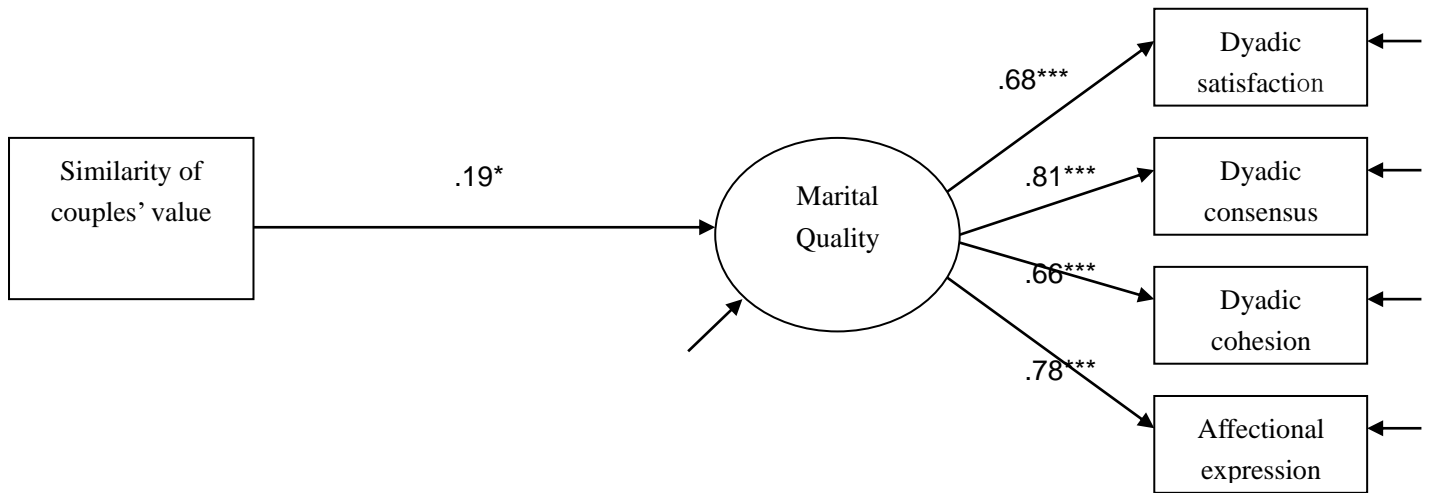Figure 1 The SEM of couples' value similarity and wives' marital quality

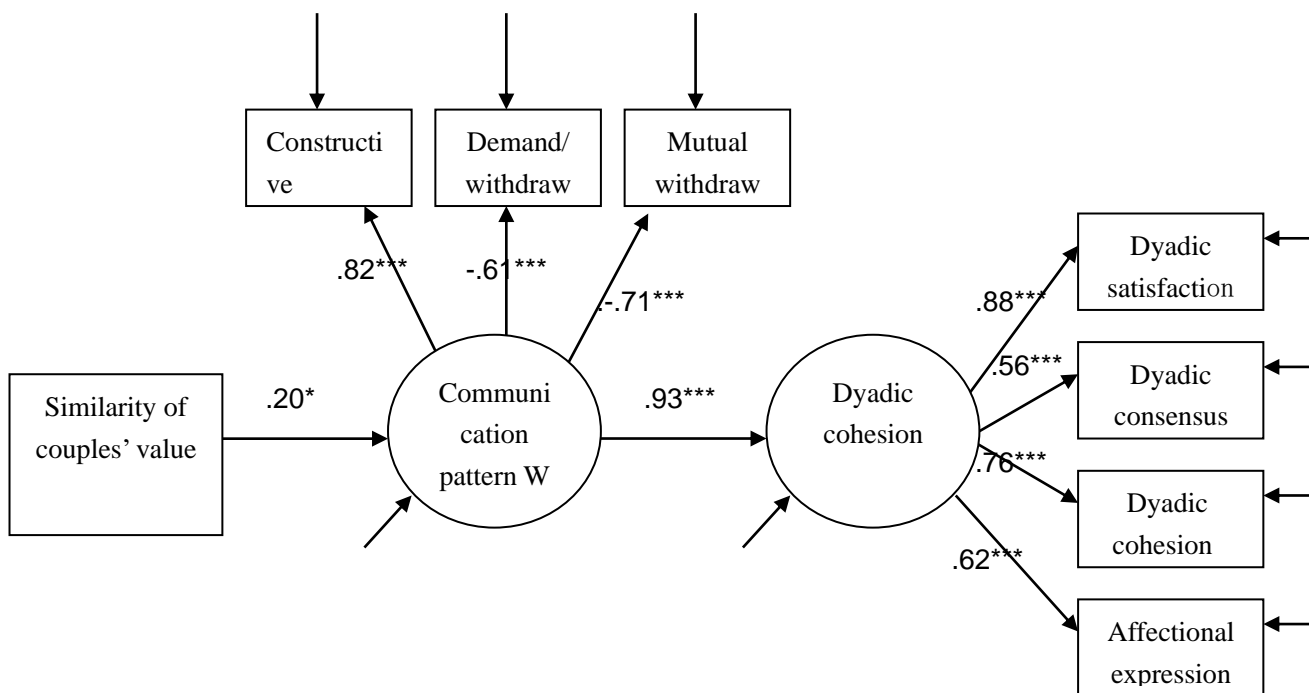Figure2 The SEM of couples' value similarity and husbands' marital quality
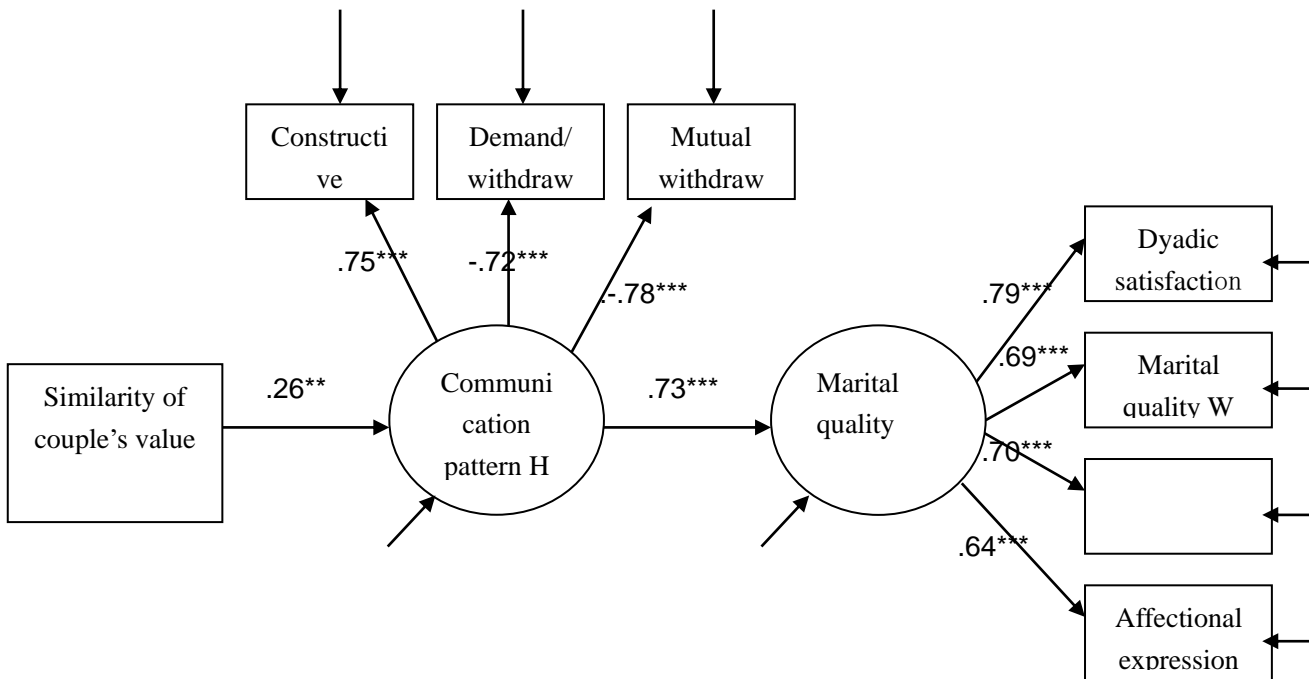
Figure 3 Wives' SEM

Figure 4 Husbands' SEM

Table 4 The goodness of fit indices of the SEM

| Model | $\chi^2$ | df | $\chi^2$/df | GFI | TLI | CFI | RMSEA |
|--------|--------|-----|--------|------|------|------|--------|
| Wives' model | 21.74 | 16 | 1.36 | 0.96 | 1.00 | 0.99 | 0.05 |
| Husbands' model | 24.70 | 17 | 1.45 | 0.96 | 0.95 | 0.98 | 0.06 |