

**THE EVALUATION OF A PREMARITAL ENRICHMENT
PROGRAMME FOR SECOND MARRIAGES**

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**THE EVALUATION OF A PREMARITAL ENRICHMENT
PROGRAMME FOR SECOND MARRIAGES**

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Hons. B. A.

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SUMMARY

THE EVALUATION OF A PREMARITAL ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME FOR SECOND MARRIAGES

Key words: Premarital, enrichment, programme, second marriages, remarriage.

The aim of the research was to evaluate the premarital enrichment programme designed by Pretorius (1997) for couples who wish to remarry. The study was motivated by literature, which shows a high likelihood of divorce among divorcees who remarry. Three interested couples responded to advertisements placed in a local Potchefstroom newspaper and announcements made in churches. A qualitative (case study method) research design was used. The programme consisted of six two-hour sessions. The programme was conducted over two weekends. The first three sessions were held with all three couples and the last three sessions with each couple separately due to conflicting schedules. The effect of the programme was assessed by five measuring instruments, participants' metaphoric drawings of their relationships, semi-structured interviews, and the researcher's observations of the interaction between the participants. The assessment took place a week before and four weeks after the programme presentation. The results obtained indicated that two of the couples experienced changes whilst the other couple experienced minimal change. The change that occurred in the two couples were with regards to their communication and conflict management, their implementation of boundaries, intimacy, security in their relationship, growth, and dyadic adjustment. It was concluded that the premarital enrichment programme prepared two couples for remarriage, specifically with regards to their adjustment in the relationship.

OPSOMMING

DIE EVALUERING VAN 'N VOORHUWELIKSE VERRYKINGSPROGRAM VIR TWEEDE HUWELIKE

Sleutelwoorde: Voorhuweliks, verryking, program, tweede huwelike, hertrou.

Die doel van die navorsing was die evaluering van 'n voorhuwelike verrykingsprogram, wat deur Pretorius (1997) ontwerp is, vir paartjies wat weer wil trou. Die studie is gemotiveer deur die literatuur wat die hoë waarskynlikheid van egskeiding toon by persone wat hertrou. Drie belangstellende paartjies het gereageer op advertensies wat in Potchefstroom se plaaslike koerant geplaas is, sowel as aankondigings in kerke. 'n Kwalitatiewe (gevallestudiemetode) navorsingsontwerp is gebruik. Die program het bestaan uit ses sessies van twee ure elk wat oor twee naweke aangebied is. Tydens die eerste drie sessies was al drie paartjies gelyk teenwoordig, terwyl die laaste drie sessies afsonderlik aan elke paartjie aangebied is as gevolg van botsende skedules. Die effek van die program is gemeet deur vyf meetinstrumente, metaforiese tekeninge van die deelnemers van hulle verhoudings, semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude en die navorser se observasie van die interaksie tussen deelnemers. Toetsing is onderskeidelik 'n week voor en vier weke na die programaanbieding gedoen. Die resultate het getoon dat twee van die deelnemende paartjies veranderinge ervaar het, terwyl minimale verandering deur die derde paartjie ervaar is. Die veranderinge wat by twee van die paartjies gevind is, was ten opsigte van hul kommunikasie en konflikhantering, die stel van grense, intimiteit, sekuriteit in die verhouding, groei en diadiese aanpassing. Die gevolgtrekking is gemaak dat die voorhuwelike verrykingsprogram twee paartjies voorberei het vir die huwelik, spesifiek rakende hul aanpassing in die verhouding.

CONSENT

I, the co-author, hereby give consent that Cynthia Laureano may submit the manuscript for purposes of a dissertation. It may also be submitted to the South African Journal of Psychology for publication.

Professor C.A. Venter

INTENDED JOURNAL AND GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

South African Journal of Psychology

The manuscript as well as the reference list has been styled according to the above journal's specifications.

(Guidelines for authors on next page)

SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY

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MANUSCRIPT TITLE, AUTHORS AND ADDRESSES

TITLE

THE EVALUATION OF A PREMARITAL ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME FOR
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ABSTRACT

The aim of the research was to evaluate the premarital enrichment programme designed by Pretorius (1997) for couples who wish to remarry. The study was motivated by literature, which shows a high likelihood of divorce among divorcees who remarry. Three interested couples responded to advertisements placed in a local Potchefstroom newspaper and announcements made in churches. A qualitative (case study method) research design was used. The programme consisted of six two-hour sessions. The programme was conducted over two weekends. The first three sessions were held with all three couples and the last three sessions with each couple separately due to conflicting schedules. The effect of the programme was assessed by five measuring instruments, participants' metaphoric drawings of their relationships, semi-structured interviews, and the researcher's observations of the interaction between the participants. The assessment took place a week before and four weeks after the programme presentation. The results obtained indicated that two of the couples experienced changes whilst the other couple experienced minimal change. It was concluded that the premarital enrichment programme prepared two couples for remarriage, specifically with regards to their adjustment in the relationship.

In the United States, 43% of all marriages end in divorce, two out of five marriages in Britain, Denmark and Sweden and 1 in 10 marriages in France (Benokraitis, 1999). The total numbers of official marriages recorded in South Africa in the year 2000 were 143 391 and 34 102 couples were divorced. In South Africa, the number of minors affected by divorce in the year 2000 was a staggering 38 833 (Lehohla, 2003). According to Bernardes (1997), one in five children in the United Kingdom will experience a parental divorce by the age of 16.

Divorce not only causes emotional pain amongst partners but also affects their mental well-being, psychological well-being and socio-economic well-being, as well as families' well-being, health and work productivity (Eshleman, 2000; Saxton, 1993; Stanley, 2001). Parental divorce often results in disruption in the lives of children. The extent of this disruption depends on how parents handle the divorce process, yet most divorces are not eloquently managed. This may have an impact on the children's emotional functioning, psychological and social well-being as reflected by lowered self-esteem, fear of abandonment, feelings of anger and resentment, behavioural problems, psychological distress caused by economic hardships, decrease in academic performance, truancy, lower quality of education and fear of forming romantic relationships (Allan, 1994; Benokraitis, 1999; Bernardes, 1997; Coltrane & Collins, 2001; Eshleman, 2000; Sasse, 1997; Saxton, 1993; Skolnick & Skolnick, 1992).

Almost half of the marriages in the United States are not first marriages for at least one partner in the couple (Benokraitis, 1999). In the United States, 75% of couples who divorce remarry and 60% of these remarriages fail (Stahmann & Hiebert, 1997; Marano, 2000). In South Africa in 1990 there were 1 820 white males and 1 437 white females who had been married twice and were divorced. In the same year there were 2 498 white women and 2 050 white males that had been married three

times and were divorced (du Plessis, 1993). No recent South African Statistics on remarriages were found as verified by a phone call to Statistics South Africa (25 – 02 – 2004).

When couples remarry, often a new stepfamily is formed with its own complications. In the United States, the number of stepfamilies increased from 16% in 1980 to 21% in 1990. One out of 3 Americans is a stepparent, a stepchild, a stepsibling or some other member of a stepfamily (Benokraitis, 1999). The increase in divorce, remarriage and stepfamilies has brought about countless new complexities.

Programmes have, therefore, been developed to help people cope with the effects of divorce and remarriage. Some of these programmes are “Focus On Kids Program” (Hans & Fine, 2001), “Educational Programs for remarried families” (Fitzpatrick & Smith, 1992), “Family Life Education Programs” (Schroeder & Hughes, 1998), “Personal Reflection Program” (Kaplan & Hennon, 1992), “Stepfamily Enrichment Program” (Michaels, 2000), “Preparing for a Creative Marriage: Premarital preparation with reconstituted families” (Kemp, 1982), “A Model for Stepfamily Development” (Mills, 1984), “A Model for Group work with Remarried Couples and their Children” (Mandell & Birenzweig, 1990), “A Family Education Group for Working with Stepparents” (Pill, 1991) and “RENEW - A program for building remarried family strengths” (Duncan & Brown, 1992). Most of these programmes focus primarily on strengthening the reconstituted family and not on the marital relationship itself.

The premarital enrichment programme for second marriages that was developed by Pretorius (1997) is based on developmental and systemic theory. Her programme aims to prepare the couple for remarriage, thereby placing more emphasis on strengthening the marital relationship. Her programme was based on a need

assessment conducted on South African participants, therefore making her programme more applicable to the South African population. Although Pretorius's (1997) programme was developed in 1997, it is apparent from recent literature that the themes she indicated as important for second marriages and reconstituted families are still valid (Eshleman, 2000; Coltrane & Collins, 2001; Benokraitis, 1999; Mauldin, 2001; Stahmann, 2000; Becvar & Becvar, 2003).

This present study attempts to evaluate Pretorius's programme scientifically, as this had not been done before. The research proposed to answer the following question: does the premarital enrichment programme of Pretorius (1997) prepare couples for their second marriage, specifically with regard to their adjustment in the relationship.

AIMS

The aim of this research was to evaluate the premarital enrichment programme designed by Pretorius (1997) for couples who wish to remarry, specifically with regards to their adjustment in the relationship.

HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis was that this programme would improve couples' adjustment within a second marriage.

METHOD

Design

A qualitative research design (case study method) was used (Searle, 1999).

Participants

The sample was drawn from couples where at least one partner has been divorced and has at least one child from the previous marriage. It was important that all couples would be willing to enter into a second marriage. The sample consisted of three couples. In Table 1, important information regarding each participant and each couple is indicated.

(Table 1 about here)

Procedure

Announcements of the enrichment programme were made at churches in Potchefstroom and advertisements placed in a popular Potchefstroom newspaper. Interested couples were invited to participate in the study. Three couples responded to the advertisement and were interested in participating in the enrichment programme. Thus, an availability sample was used. The programme format and necessary arrangements were discussed with each participant telephonically. Pre-testing occurred a week before the programme presentation and post-testing four weeks thereafter.

The premarital enrichment programme was conducted over two successive weekends. The programme consists of six two-hour sessions. Initially two sessions would have taken place on the Saturdays and one session on the Sundays. The first three sessions were conducted with all three couples together and the last three sessions were conducted with each couple alone due to clashing time schedules. The programme sessions would typically consist of the researcher presenting a short

lecture, which would be followed by an exercise that is to be completed by the couples or by each participant individually. The exercise would be followed by a group discussion on what each participant learnt. The following themes were dealt with during the different sessions: expectations of remarriage; communication and conflict management; management of previous losses and conflict; boundaries; roles and role expectation and identity formation in the second marriage and reconstituted family.

A feedback session was arranged telephonically about two months after post-testing. Feedback on the couples' quantitative and qualitative results was given to each couple separately. All three couples were invited to celebrate the completion of the research in a local coffee shop. Couple B, however, was unable to attend the social event due to other obligations.

Data Gathering

During the pre-testing and the post-testing, questionnaires were administered and each participant had to draw a metaphoric description of their relationship. At the post-testing, semi-structured interviews were also held with each couple. During the programme presentation the researcher recorded observations of each couple's interaction, the interaction between different couples as well as each couple's interaction with the researcher.

The following measuring instruments were administered:

- An adjusted version of the combined Dyadic Adjustment Scale and Problem Rating Scale (Spanier, 1976) by Sharlin, Kaslow and Hammerschmidt (2000);
- Couple Problem Solving Scale (Sharlin *et al.*, 2000);
- Couple Communication Scale (Sharlin *et al.*, 2000);

- Couple Relationship Scale (Sharlin *et al.*, 2000);
- The Relationship Change Scale of Schlein and Guerney (Guerney, 1977) and
- The Programme Evaluation Questionnaire that was constructed by the researcher, based on Sharlin *et al.* (2000) and Venter's (1988) programme evaluation questionnaires. The questions dealt with various aspects of the programme presentation such as the programme presenter, content, procedure and venue of presentation.

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale was found to be psychometrically valid and reliable in previous studies (Spanier, 1976; Sharlin *et al.*, 2000). Spanier (1976) found the reliability to be .96. The Couple Problem Solving Scale, Couple Communication Scale (exactly the same as the ENRICH questionnaire section on communication) and the Couple Relationship Scale formed part of the test battery of the Health Stress Profile, which was used by Sharlin, *et al.* (2000) in a multinational research study for its psychometric properties. The Health Stress Profile's reliability is reported to have a Cronbach alpha of .93 (Olson & Stewart, 1990). Guerney (1977) reported concurrent validity on the Relationship Change Scale, but previous studies on reliability were not available (Mattson, Christensen, & England, 1990).

During the semi-structured interviews, open-ended questions focusing on changes the participants perceived in themselves, in their partners and in their relationship were asked. Other questions were spontaneously formulated based on the responses of the individuals. Consent for recording these interviews was obtained from each participant; enabling the researcher to focus attention on the participant and not on note taking (Patton, 1987; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Smith 1995).

Data Analysis

The results obtained from the measuring instruments were used to determine the extent of change that occurred in each couple, between the pre and post-testing on the different dimensions measured. The results of the measuring instruments, the relationship metaphors and the semi-structured interviews for each couple, as well as the researcher's observations were read and re-read repeatedly, hereby, giving the researcher a holistic view of the data (Neuman, 1997; Smith, 1995). Relevant themes were identified from the metaphors, the semi-structured interviews and the researcher's observations. This data were then correlated with the results of the measuring instruments, theoretical perspectives and the literature concerning the adjustment of couples to second marriages (Janesick, 1998).

The trustworthiness of the study was ensured by verifying the data resources and the data collected through theoretical and literary sources (Leedy, 1997). The researcher used open-ended questions as far as possible and recorded her assumptions and predictions of the study so as not to influence the participants. The researcher was able to reflect on personal experiences and perceptions in field notes. The data collected is available to others to evaluate its trustworthiness, hereby, creating a chain of evidence (Leedy, 1997).

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

Participation in the research was voluntary and participants could withdraw at any time during the process. The participants were issued with certificates ensuring that no personal information that may identify the participants would be printed. As indicated previously, an information session was held after the completion of the research to inform participants of the outcomes of the study. Care was taken that

should participants experience emotional upheaval during the course of the programme, appropriate referral to psychologists was possible.

RESULTS

Quantitative Results

The results of the Combined Dyadic Adjustment Scale and Problem Rating List and its four sub-scales are indicated in Tables 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. As indicated in Table 2, there were positive changes for couples A and C, especially Mr C, on the combined Dyadic Adjustment Scale and Problem Rating List. The results indicate an improvement in couple A and C's adjustment within the relationship and a decrease in the amount of conflict in potential problem areas (Sharlin *et al.*, 2000).

(Table 2 about here)

The result of the Dyadic Consensus sub-scale (Table 3) indicates that Mr. A, Ms. C and especially Mr. C showed an improvement between their pre-test and post-test scores. The increase in Mr. A and couple C's scores suggests that their agreement on matters of importance to the relationship had improved (Spanier, 1976).

(Table 3 about here)

Table 4 illustrates that on the Dyadic Satisfaction sub-scale, there was a large improvement in the scores of couple A and Mr C. This indicates an enhancement in their commitment to the continuance of their relationships and their satisfaction within the relationship's present state (Spanier, 1976).

(Table 4 about here)

The results on the Dyadic Cohesion sub-scale (Table 5) indicate that Mr. C, Ms. A and Ms. B showed a large change in this dimension. These results indicate an

increase in the number of activities that they and their partners engage in, thereby enhancing their emotional bond (Spanier, 1976).

(Table 5 about here)

Table 6 indicates that Mr. C had a very large improvement on the Affectional Expression sub-scale whilst Mr. A and B and Ms. C also showed a large change between their pre-test and post-test scores. This increase in affectional expression suggests that their extent of agreement regarding affection and sexual relations has heightened (Spanier, 1976).

(Table 6 about here)

Table 7 indicates that for the Couple Problem Solving Scale, a large change occurred in Mr. A and Mr. C and a smaller change in Ms. C's results. These results indicate that these participants improved with regards to their ability to define issues, take positive steps towards goal setting and to remain empathic towards their partners (Sharlin *et al.*, 2000). Ms. A had a negative difference in her post-test score as it decreased by 7 points. This may be attributed to the fact that she was experiencing family difficulties at the time of post-testing as was mentioned by her at that time. It might also be that during the programme presentation she became more aware of the difficulties that she and Mr. A as a couple experience in handling problems.

(Table 7 about here)

Table 8 shows that Mr. C displayed a large improvement on the Couple Communication Scale, whilst Mr. A, Mr. B and Ms. C only revealed a small change. In other words, Mr. A, Mr. B and couple C's ability to convey their emotions, to be empathic, to listen and to provide supportive comments had improved (Sharlin, *et al.*, 2000).

(Table 8 about here)

Table 9 indicates that Mr. A had a large decline in the Couple Relationship Scale while his partner showed a slight decline. Mr. A attributed his distinctive negative score on the Couple Relationship Scale to the scale's use of complicated language which he did not understand. Ms. B's decline in score may be attributed to the external stressors that were referred to earlier during the time of post-testing. Mr. C and Ms. C respectively showed a large and a reasonable improvement on this scale. Mr. B also revealed a positive change yet Ms. B showed a decline in this scale. The increased test scores of Mr. B and couple C imply an improvement in the emotional bond they form with their partners and their partners' flexibility to change power structures, role relationships and relationship rules in response to situational and developmental stress (Sharlin *et al.*, 2000).

(Table 9 about here)

Table 10 indicates a positive change with regards to the Relationship Change Scale for couples A and C, particularly for Ms. A and Mr. C. Couple B showed a minimal improvement in their totals. This means that couples A and C showed an improvement in their satisfaction with their relationship with regards to communication, trust, intimacy, sensitivity, openness and understanding.

(Table 10 about here)

The results of the measuring instruments indicate that couples A and C experienced an improvement in their relationship between the pre and post-testing. This is especially noticeable with Mr. A and Mr. C. It can, therefore, be hypothesized that the programme presentation had a positive impact on their relationships. It appears that the programme was not as effective in the case of Couple B. This may be because the couple had not been courting for as long as the other couples and

therefore could still have been in the honeymoon phase of their relationship and/or Ms. B had not previously been in a long-term romantic relationship .

Qualitative Results

The themes that emerged from the metaphors, interviews and researcher's observations (as recorded by field notes) were: communication and conflict management, boundaries, intimacy, security and growth.

Communication and conflict management

Mr. C was the only participant who made mention of communication in his metaphor. He portrayed his relationship as a house for his pre-test drawing. He indicated how each element is symbolic of the various aspects within his relationship. He drew a closed door and stated that it was symbolic of their lack of communication. In his post-test metaphor, communication was not mentioned but in his and Ms. C's interviews they both confirmed that their communication had improved.

During the interviews, all the couples agreed that by openly communicating their emotions through I-messages their conflict management improved. Mr. C acknowledged this, "I feel I need to say something...then you break the ice and you gain a sense of relief and you discuss what bothers you...there are no longer arguments, morbidity and depressiveness". The improvement in couple C's problem solving is confirmed in Table 7. Couples A and B would avoid mentioning problem areas within their relationship for fear of an argument. Ms. A admitted "If there was conflict in the relationship, one would remain quiet, the other one would walk away or I became too emotional, now we have learned to sit and to talk it out peacefully".

Couple A and C were amazed that the implementation of the communication skills they learnt facilitated problem resolution and reduced temper outbursts. Ms. C

stated “You can sit with him and talk about a problem and him with me too” and Ms. A noticed that her partner’s temper outbursts reduced, “He is calmer than before, he has more self-control”. Ms. C had the same observation for Mr. C, “He no longer has those temper outbursts”. Mr. C observed that his partner was more in control, “She no longer attacks me (verbally), she is no longer rude or bombastic, she now speaks...”.

Participants felt more confident in affirming their feelings or opinions even though they differed from their partners. Their partners, likewise, were willing to listen and this increased their understanding for each other. Ms. B affirmed this “You understand how your other half feels or how he sees things differently from you”. Ms. A, however, felt that her partner’s listening skills needed more improvement since he tends to interrupt her, “We struggle a bit with that one, I start speaking and then he begins”. Couple C admitted that their listening skills improved as is evident in Mr. C’s statement, “I now listen to what she has to say and she listens to what I have to say”.

The researcher noted that Mr. A and Ms. C struggled to express their emotions, yet, towards the end of the programme they had mastered the skill and agreed that it enhanced conflict management. During one of the programme’s exercises, Ms. C became emotional and Mr. C walked out, this illustrating their difficulty in handling conflict and expressing their emotions. This did, however, improve as the programme progressed. Ms. C confirmed this, “We can communicate a lot better and we can talk if there is a problem”.

The above mentioned findings with regards to the metaphors, interviews and the researcher’s field notes correlate with the findings on the Combined Dyadic Adjustment Scale and Problem Rating list, Couple Problem Solving Scale, Couple Communication Scale and the Couple Relationship Scale (Tables 2, 7, 8, and 9). The

results on the Couple Communication Scale (Table 8) confirm that Mr. C's communication did improve to a great extent and that Mr. A, Mr. B and Ms. C also showed improvement in this area. Their ability to convey their emotions, to listen and to respond with empathy and support had increased. The results of couples' A and C on the Combined Dyadic Adjustment Scale showed clearly that their ability to adjust had increased and that their conflict regarding potential problem areas was lower. Mr. A and couple C improved in the Problem Solving Scale implying an improvement in conflict management. Couple C's and Mr. B's scores in the Couple Relationship Scale showed a large improvement, especially that of Mr. C, which refers to their ability to adjust to different situational stressors. Ms. A and Mr. C showed a large improvement in their post-test scores on the Relationship Change Scale while Mr. A, Mr. B, and Ms. C showed a smaller change. This may be indicative of positive change in their communication abilities (Guernsey, 1977).

Boundaries

Two members illustrated, by means of metaphors, the importance of boundaries. Mr. A's post-test drawing depicted his relationship as an island away from harmful influences as compared to his pre-test metaphor of a couple in a park. He emphasised the importance of establishing family boundaries, which safeguard his future reconstituted family from outside threats. Ms. C drew a house and a family in both pre and post-test drawings, but in her post-test drawing, however, the family was drawn closer together in a bigger house. She stressed the significance of establishing a new family identity with the use of familial boundaries.

In the semi-structured interviews the couples perceived that boundaries facilitated quality time spent as individuals, as a couple and as a family. Ms. A was

appreciative of her partner because he respected her personal boundaries, "I feel safe with Mr. A, he gives me the freedom to be with my friends and he is beautiful". Mr. C admitted that he is no longer fearful of establishing personal boundaries, "I am no longer afraid to do it. If I want to play golf or go out with my friends, then I go". Mr. C enjoyed that Ms. C could set her boundaries of personal space which prevented misunderstanding and unnecessary conflict, "If she is angry she won't disrupt the whole world, she will say, 'Listen I don't feel so well just let me be alone for a while' then I know that I should leave her alone".

Couple A's couple boundaries were important in strengthening their relationship. Ms. A confessed that by establishing couple boundaries, it reduced her and Mr. A's fears, "A lot of my fears were dealt with, um, like our privacy...like doing something together once a week. Mr. A felt guilty towards his son if we wanted to spend time together but then he understood that it is to his advantage if he sees us happy".

Couple A and C realised that family boundaries are important for developing an identity as a family and for the institution of household rules, thereby promoting discipline. Mr. C stated that family boundaries with regards to household rules are important to establish order, "My two children (who reside with their mother) are to be accommodated in different ways and they need to accept us as we need to accept that they come from a household with different discipline". Mr. A enjoyed that Ms. A gives him and his son the freedom to enjoy time together to strengthen their bond as father and son, "She did say that my son and I can go fishing for the day and she will read her book and she knows I'll come back".

In one of the discussions the researcher observed that the couples agreed on the importance of establishing semi-permeable couple boundaries for the well-being

of the marital relationship. They also confirmed that by having familial boundaries it established their identity as a reconstituted family. It also reinforced a sense of belonging for each family member.

The above information confirms the results of couple C on the Couple Relationship Change, but it differs from the results of couple A on this scale. Based on the qualitative data, it would appear that couple A developed good insights into boundaries, but it is not reflected in the Couple Relationship Scale which shows a decline at post-testing, especially Mr. A, as indicated in Table 9. Couple C's post-testing showed a reasonable to large improvement on this scale, indicating an increase in the couple's cohesion and their flexibility in changing their power structure, role relationships and relationship rules in response to environmental and situational stress (Sharlin *et al.*, 2000). Table 9 indicates that Mr. B also experienced growth in the mentioned areas. His results cannot be confirmed by qualitative data because he made no mention of boundaries in his metaphors or during the interview.

Intimacy

Couple A felt their emotional intimacy within the relationship had increased in the form of companionship and nurturance. This is clearly illustrated by comparing Ms. A's pre-test and post-test metaphors. In her pre-test drawing, she portrayed a couple in a park where the male partner feeds birds while the female partner looks on. In her post-test drawing she drew a butterfly and two hands holding each other. The two hands may represent an increase in intimacy and closeness, which was not depicted in her first metaphor. Mr. A's pre-test drawing is of a couple in a park sitting on a bench, yet in his post-test drawing, he drew a couple on the island away from the outside world, drawn closer together revealing a more unified family working together with

mutual feelings of closeness. Mr. C drew flowers, a moon, a sun, clouds, birds and a stone for his post-test metaphor. He explained that each element of his drawing was symbolic. The sun was the light that opened his eyes to be grateful for what he has in his relationship. The moon, he explained, symbolised romance and closeness in their relationship, which will guide them when the path becomes obscure. No themes of intimacy were apparent in couple B's pre or post-test drawings.

In their interview couple A stated that their level of intimacy had improved. Ms A reported, "We are friends, he is my soul mate, we have a profound relationship, he knows me and it is great to know that at times he knows something before I am aware of it". Mr. C felt more grateful for Ms. C being in his life, "I feel privileged, I am getting a second chance to make things right".

During the programme the couples were challenged to establish boundaries. They had to implement a weekly romantic evening and a weekly family event to encourage intimacy in the marital relationship and closeness in the family. Ms. A found this to be of great benefit, "...oh it helped a lot that we had learnt about doing things together once a week as a couple and as a family". Couples felt that an appropriate balance between the two is important: Ms. A said, "A lot of people make the mistake of becoming over involved with their children, resulting in the mother and the father growing apart". Ms. A felt that the closeness between her and Mr. A increased, "I have never in my life received so much love as I have received now". Mr. A agreed, "I still want to overload her with love, that's the number one thing, I think".

The researcher also documented an improvement in the emotional and physical intimacy of couples A and C towards the end of the programme. It manifested in the couples referring to each other by pet names and their willingness to

listen to their partner's opinion during discussions. Changes in body language were apparent, couples would sit closer, bodies would be turned towards their partners and couples show of physical affection increased.

The qualitative data, especially with regard to couples A and C, coincides with the quantitative data obtained on several of the measuring instruments that were used. The Dyadic Cohesion sub-scale (Table 5) shows that all the participants except Mr. B and Ms. C showed an improvement on this scale during post-testing. This indicates that most of the participants felt that there was an increase in the activities they did together as a couple, thereby enhancing their emotional connectedness. The results on the Affectional Expression sub-scale (Table 6) indicated that Mr. A and B and couple C showed an increase in their agreement with their partners in matters concerning physical intimacy. The Couple Relationship Scale also gives an indication of closeness, since it measures couple flexibility and couple cohesion. Mr. B and Couple C showed a reasonable to large change in this scale during post-testing (Table 9). Mr. B and Ms. B's post-test changes on the measuring instruments are not reflected in the qualitative data, most probably because of the previously mentioned reasons (see quantitative data). Ms. A and Mr. C showed a large improvement in their post-test scores on the Relationship Change Scale while Mr. A, Mr. B, and Ms. C showed a smaller change in their scores. This may indicate a positive change in their level of intimacy (Guerney, 1977).

Security

In his post-test drawing Mr. C drew a landscape with a sun, moon, clouds, flowers and a stone. The stone, he explained, signified security gained in his relationship. In his pre-test metaphor he drew a house and mentioned the problem areas in his

relationship, yet, in the post-test drawing only positive aspects of the relationship were revealed. No other participants referred to security in their metaphors.

During the interviews couples A and C, mentioned that their sense of security within the relationship had increased and their fear of remarriage decreased. Ms. A confirmed this by saying, "I feel more at peace, I have more security, I know he is still there and that he is not going away". Security could have been influenced by an increase in commitment after programme completion. Couple A became engaged, couple C, whom were already engaged, set a date for the wedding and couple B made a decision to get engaged in the near future. Ms C affirms this, "When he (Mr. C) mentioned a wedding date... I felt more secure...I felt more at peace, my life is coming to a point".

The researcher noted that in the beginning of the programme most participants volunteered problems that they were having in their relationships and would ask for solutions. Towards the conclusion of the programme, the couples would offer what they found meaningful, what they learnt, how their appreciation for their partners increased and their tendency to blame their partners for their problems had decreased. This may be because their fears about marriage had decreased and their feelings of security increased.

The Dyadic Satisfaction sub-scale informs on the degree of couple satisfaction within their relationship's present state, whether they feel secure enough to continue in the relationship (Sharlin *et al.*, 2000). Couple A and Mr. C showed a large improvement in this scale, confirming their feelings of satisfaction and security (Table 4). One of the various aspects that the Relationship Change Scale measures is relationship satisfaction (Guerney, 1977). Ms. A and Mr. C showed a large increase in their post-test scores on the Relationship Change Scale while Mr. A, Mr. B and Ms.

C showed a small change in their scores. This also indicates a possible improvement in their levels of satisfaction.

Growth

In most of the individual's metaphors of their relationship, growth was portrayed by the increased detail found in the post-testing drawings compared to those drawn during pre-testing. Some participants drew trees and plants that appear to symbolise the growing nature of their relationship. Ms. B's pre-test drawing was one of a tree that stood alone, whilst her post-test drawing illustrated a large tree that is being nourished by a river. She stated that the large tree signified her relationship and the smaller trees surrounding it were symbolic of her extended family that help support the relationship. The large tree itself, the other trees and the river contributed to the large tree's growth. Mr. B drew a tree with flowers and a river for his pre-test drawing. For his post-test drawing, he drew another tree, yet the drawing was more detailed with a picture of a sun, more flowers and fish in the river, possibly emphasising an element of growth.

During the interviews, each partner had the opportunity to mention any changes noticed within themselves, their partners and in their relationship. Ms. A assured that her self-confidence had improved, "I feel better about myself...I could not believe that Mr. A loved me...and now I believe him if he tells me that he loves me". Mr. A's progress was noted by the development of the realistic view that successful relationships require effort, "...if you work towards it (marital relationship), I tell you your second marriage will be better than your first". Mr. B noticed that Ms. B had changed, "She is more sure of herself and it is easier for her to make decisions". Ms. C also stated that her partner's temper had improved, "He no

longer has temper outbursts". Mr. C also noticed changes in Ms. C, "She no longer attacks (verbally) me, she is not angry from the beginning".

During the progression of the programme, the researcher noted that the male partners became more self-confident and participative in discussions, they became more willing to share examples of their own lives and what they had learnt from the mistakes they had made.

The above mentioned growth that the participants reported correlates with the previously discussed positive changes that occurred on many of the measuring instruments.

It would appear from the above discussion that the quantitative data confirms the qualitative data, namely that couple A and C benefited from the programme presentation. Most participants experienced change as a result of the programme whether it was slight or substantial and on different dimensions. Most individuals also revealed results which differed from their partners', possibly indicating their unique experience of the programme. Couple B showed minimal change and as previously postulated, this may be attributed to the short duration of courting or that the couple might still have been in the honeymoon phase of their relationship and/or that Ms. B had not previously been in a long-term relationship.

Programme Evaluation

The programme was evaluated through couples' responses on the programme evaluation questionnaire and their opinions stated in the interviews.

In general, most of the participants strongly agreed that the presenter was professional in the presentation of the programme, in her attire and in her ability to be

sensitive towards the participants. Most of the participants were neutral in their response to whether a male and female jointly should present the programme.

The participants unanimously agreed that they found the programme content meaningful, interesting and beneficial. Only two of the participants felt that the programme had revealed problems in their relationship that should have remained hidden. This may have been brought about by fear of facing certain problems for which they were not prepared. Mr. C mentioned in his interview that he felt the content of the programme increased his insight into his relationship. Two couples, A and C felt that the programme should have addressed issues of discipline for children and how to deal with ex-spouses, since many couples shared their difficulties in these areas and expressed a need for guidance.

Most of the participants preferred the programme to be presented as it was over two weekends. One participant, however, favoured the programme to be presented over six weeks (two hours a week). Couple B stated that they preferred that the first three sessions were conducted with the other couples and the last three sessions with each couple separately because it shortened the length of the sessions. Couple A and C stated that they would have preferred all six sessions to be conducted with all three couples present. Ms. A was impressed that the programme was presented in a practical manner as confirmed by her interview.

All couples agreed that the venue for the programme presentation was suitable, yet it was too cold in winter and appropriate air conditioning would have increased comfort.

Researcher's Experience

The researcher found the presentation the programme and observing the growth that occurred in the participants most stimulating. It was time consuming to have conducted the last 3 sessions of the programme with each couple separately, making it more difficult to meet certain deadlines. The researcher felt that she too, had learnt important skills, which can be applied to relationships not necessarily exclusive to second marriages. She benefited from the experience of presenting an enrichment programme and dealing with couples that wish to remarry which will be valuable experience for her to use as a therapist.

DISCUSSION

All couples acknowledged that their communication skills and their conflict management had improved, although some participants' results before and after intervention on the Couple Communication Scale, Couple Problem Solving Scale and Relationship Change Scale showed little change. This may be because this instrument did not measure the particular aspects of communication where the participants experienced change. The couples were trained in using I-messages, which focuses on the individual's emotion, rather than shifting blame to their partner. Lamanna and Riedmann (1994) confirmed that I-messages help to avoid statements being perceived as offensive and facilitate verbal expression of emotions, thereby increasing the individual's understanding of his/her partner. Anderson and Sabatelli (1999) state that the success of a marital relationship is dependent on communication and conflict management abilities. Lasswell and Lasswell (1991) further state that the more open partners are, the greater the relationship satisfaction. Couple A and couple C confirm

these findings as their relationship satisfaction increased (Table 4) and their relationships underwent a positive change (Table 10).

One of the ingredients for a successful marital relationship is determined by the quality of boundaries set (Crowe & Ridley, 2000). Authors agree that developing clear boundaries within a family contributes to a shared sense of belonging (Anderson & Sabatelli, 1999; Crowe & Ridley, 2000; Glick, Berman, Clarkin & Rait, 2000). Through their metaphors and interviews, couples A and C affirmed the importance of boundaries for themselves as individuals, as a couple and as a family. Couple C and Mr. B showed a positive change in the Couple Relationship Scale, confirming an improvement in their ability to establish boundaries.

Intimacy in a relationship is of great importance as a couple must develop a level of emotional interaction that meets their needs and fulfils their requirements for an emotionally satisfying relationship (Crowe & Ridley, 2000). The intimacy levels of Couples A, Mr. B and Mr. C showed an improvement (Table 5). Mr. A, B, and C felt that their agreement on physical expression of intimacy improved (Affectional Expression sub-scale Table 6). It appears that Ms. A felt that their closeness, physical intimacy (Table 6) and the number of couple activities (Table 5) had increased. Mr. A showed an improvement in his ability for intimacy specifically with regards to family closeness, couple togetherness and physical affection. Mr. C showed improvement in all levels of intimacy such as; family and couple closeness, increase in couple activities and physical affection.

Fear can paralyse a relationship, therefore it is important for a couple to face fears together to establish a sense of security within the relationship (Rosenzweig, 1992). Couple A showed an improvement in their level of security and the fears that they both had for remarriage reduced, with the assurance that through application of

their new skills and with effort during difficult times they had a fighting chance to succeed (Table 4). Couple C also showed some improvement, but more so for Mr. C, in that his level of relationship satisfaction had improved (Table 4). Couple B showed no improvement, although they did admit that they were not fearful of remarriage and were satisfied with the relationship before attending the programme, thereby explaining the lack of change in their results (Table 4).

In facing the fears of remarriage by participating in the programme, couples grew in their sense of security. Facing fears together can help create a stronger relationship bond, a sense of safety, security and heightened loving alliance that helps to withstand present and future dangers in life with less pain and with greater confidence (Rosenzweig, 1992).

A relationship needs to adjust to the growth that each partner undergoes in such a manner that the relationship itself experiences growth. Couples A and C showed growth both individually (see discussion of metaphors and interviews) and as a couple (Relationship Change Scale, Table 10). Couple B, however, only made mention of how they individually experienced growth in their interviews and according to the Relationship Change questionnaire, little or no relationship change was experienced. The growth and relationship change that was experienced could most likely be attributed to the reflection the partners did during the various exercises and discussions in the programme. (CF. Wood, 1995.)

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this research suggest that the pre-marital enrichment programme that was developed by Pretorius (1997) may be successful in helping some individuals

who are planning a second marriage to make positive adjustments in their relationships.

Various limitations were found in this research. The results cannot be generalised to all couples that wish to remarry because the sample consisted of only three couples, which does not represent the broad spectrum of people who wish to enter into second marriages. Control groups could also not be used due to the lack of interest in the programme presentation. The qualitative data, however, gave more in depth information into the sample's experience which quantitative research alone is not able to provide. The last three sessions of the programme were conducted with each couple separately due to conflicting schedules and limiting couple interaction. Although couple B preferred the programme to be presented as it was, the couple interaction may have enhanced the impact of the programme on the couples so that they could learn from each other.

A further limitation may be that all relevant issues within the relationships could not be addressed. The difficulty with developing a premarital enrichment programme for couples that wish to remarry is that so many aspects may play a part in relationship adjustment. This may be because each individual's experience and context is different.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted during post-testing. The couples were interviewed separately, which may have had an influence on the sincerity of each partner's response. It is recommended that future designs should create an opportunity for interviews to be conducted during pre and post-testing with each partner individually and then with the couple jointly, so as to cultivate a more objective view of the couple's progress in the enrichment programme.

It is also recommended that the programme should address issues of discipline for children and how to deal with ex-spouses, since many couples shared their difficulties in these areas and expressed a need for guidance. If the programme is evaluated in future it will be advisable to advertise it more vigorously so that a control group can be incorporated in the research.

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Table 1: Description of Couples' Characteristics

Participants	Cohabitation	Age	Children	Parent with whom children reside	Education	Duration of Courting	Religion	Duration between divorce and present relationship
Mr. A.	No	39	1	Mr. A	College	3 years	Protestant	3 years and 7 months
Ms. A.	No	44	2	1 child with the father the other child resides on her own	High school	3 years	Protestant	4 years
Mr. B.	No	37	1	Mother	College	5 months	Catholic	1 year
Ms. B.	No	27	0		High school	5 months	Protestant	-
Mr. C.	Yes	32	2	Mother	University	2 years	Atheist	2 years
Ms. C.	Yes	32	3	Ms. C	High school	2 years	Atheist	2years

Table 2: The combined Dyadic Adjustment Scale and Problem Rating List

	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference	% change in raw score
Mr. A.	154	168	14	9.1%
Ms. A.	132	151	19	14.4%
Mr. B.	149	151	2	1.3%
Ms. B.	155	156	1	0.6%
Mr. C.	95	161	66	69.5%
Ms. C.	118	138	20	16.9%
Range of Scores:	0 – 151			

Table 3: Dyadic Consensus Sub-scale

	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference	% change in raw score
Mr. A.	55	61	6	10.9%
Ms. A.	47	48	1	2.1%
Mr. B.	47	49	2	4.3%
Ms. B.	57	51	-6	-10.5%
Mr. C.	37	58	21	56.8%
Ms. C.	40	46	6	15%
Range of Scores:	0 – 65			

Table 4: Dyadic Satisfaction Sub-scale

	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference	% change in raw score
Mr. A.	33	41	8	24.2%
Ms. A.	31	41	10	32.2%
Mr. B.	43	42	-1	-2.3%
Ms. B.	43	45	2	4.7%
Mr. C.	24	41	17	70.8%
Ms. C.	33	36	3	9.1%
Range of Scores:	0 – 50			

Table 5: Dyadic Cohesion Sub-scale

	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference	% change in raw score
Mr. A.	18	21	3	16.7%
Ms. A.	15	20	5	33.3%
Mr. B.	14	15	1	7.1%
Ms. B.	13	18	5	38.5%
Mr. C.	13	21	8	61.5%
Ms. C.	21	20	-1	-4.8%
Range of Scores:	0 – 25			

Table 6: Affectional Expression Sub-scale

	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference	% change in raw score
Mr. A.	12	15	3	25%
Ms. A.	12	11	-1	-8.3%
Mr. B.	10	15	5	50%
Ms. B.	11	11	0	0
Mr. C.	4	18	14	350%
Ms. C.	8	11	3	37.5%
Range of Scores:	0 – 20			

Table 7: Couple Problem Solving Scale

	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference	% change in raw score
Mr. A.	29	38	9	31%
Ms. A.	30	23	-7	-23.3%
Mr. B.	44	44	0	0
Ms. B.	44	45	1	2.3%
Mr. C.	25	34	9	36%
Ms. C.	28	32	4	14.3%
Range of Scores:	10 – 50			

Table 8: Couple Communication Scale

	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference	% change in raw score
Mr. A.	41	44	3	7.3%
Ms. A.	35	34	-1	-2.9%
Mr. B.	44	49	5	11.4%
Ms. B.	49	49	0	0
Mr. C.	22	36	14	63.6%
Ms. C.	32	35	3	9.4%
Range of Scores:	10 – 50			

Table 9: Couple Relationship Scale

	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference	% change in raw score
Mr. A.	95	73	-22	-23.2%
Ms. A.	79	77	-2	-2.5%
Mr. B.	77	85	8	10.4%
Ms. B.	87	83	-4	-4.6%
Mr. C.	51	82	31	60.1%
Ms. C.	62	72	10	16.1%
Range of Scores:	20 – 100			

Table 10: Relationship Change Scale

	Pre-test	Post-test	Difference	% change in raw score
Mr. A.	101	107	6	5.9%
Ms. A.	61	94	33	54%
Mr. B.	89	93	4	4.5%
Ms. B.	102	103	1	0.9%
Mr. C.	72	117	45	62.5%
Ms. C.	104	112	8	7.7%
Range of Scores:	26 – 130			