

*Family Science Review (2018)***Five Personality Types Based on Five: A Latent Class Analysis**

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Brief Summary

In a sample of 4,522 individuals (2,261 couples; both husbands and wives), five personality types emerged through the use of latent class analysis with data collected on the SCOPE personality inventory (a Big Five assessment used by PREPARE-ENRICH couples assessment). The five personality types identified were: *Well-Rounded, Stable, Flexible, Unstable Organized, Unstable Distant*. Comparative analysis was done comparing males versus females across the five types, clinical couples versus non-clinical couples, and the husbands versus wives as a couple for both non-clinical and clinical couples. The results revealed that males and females tended to have different types of personalities, however there was no significant difference in personality types when comparing non-clinical and clinical couples. About a fifth of the couples married someone with a similar personality type, and no significant difference existed between the non-clinical couples and clinical couples in terms of the spouse personality similarity.

Keywords: Big Five, personality type, SCOPE personality inventory

Five Personality Types Based on Big Five: A Latent Class Analysis

Each person has a unique constellation of personality traits that contribute to various intrapersonal characteristics and interpersonal relationships. In the past, the vast majority of personality research has focused on differences among individuals on a particular trait, which is referred to as dimensional or variable-centered approach. However, studies adopting this approach often focused on a single dimension at the expense of other personality traits. This approach fails to consider the configuration of the characteristics within a person and does not focus on the person as a whole.

Another method of studying personality, the typological or person-centered approach, views the person as a system of interacting components. More recently, this method has experienced a renaissance (Asendorpf, 2002), and research regarding personality typologies has adopted this second approach. Personality typologies are defined categories of individuals who have similar configurations of characteristics and share the same personality structures (Robins, John, Caspi, Moffitt, & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1996).

Most of existing personality typologies are conceptual, one of the most noted examples is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers & McCaulley, 1985) which classifies people into 16 personality types. A few personality typologies were derived through empirical studies. Over the last twenty years, some scholars have developed and used empirical personality typologies (Avdeyeva & Church, 2005; Boehm, Asendorpf, & Avia, 2002; Robins et al., 1996; Roth & von Collani, 2007; Sava & Popa, 2011). The majority of the empirical studies have measured personalities by utilizing the Big Five Model (McCrae & Costa, 2008) which consists of five factors: neuroticism (N), extraversion (E), openness (O), agreeableness (A), and conscientiousness (C).

Three personality types (i.e., resilient, undercontrollers, and overcontrollers) are the most frequently proposed personality types in previous research (i.e., Avdeyeva & Church, 2005; Robins et al., 1996). In a study conducted by Herzberg and Roth (2006), *resilient* showed a generally well-adjusted profile with below average neuroticism and above average or intermediate scores on the remaining four dimensions; *overcontrollers* scored high in neuroticism and low in extraversion. *Undercontrollers* had low scores in conscientiousness and agreeableness.

These previously mentioned studies indicate that, no matter who the informants were, these three personality types were consistent throughout different samples even with different instruments and various statistic methods to derive the typologies. There is some inconsistency in the literature however, with some studies identifying five (Herzberg & Roth, 2006; Roth & von Collani, 2007; Sava & Popa, 2011) or seven cluster solutions (Pulkkinen, 1996) adding additional questions to the replicability and utility of the three personality types (i.e., Costa, Herbst, McCrae, Samuels, & Ozer, 2002).

Most studies utilized samples in European countries (i.e. Germany, Spain, Italy, Finland and Romania), and very few studies on personality typologies were conducted with North American samples. It is important to note this geography, given that the sample from the current study is from the United States. Another major limitation of is that the majority of studies utilized a small sample size, raising questions of external validity of the previously developed typologies. Most of the studies adopted cluster analyses (K-means) to derive the types, while current statistical practice in psychology and other related social science fields is to use the mixture modeling approach to classify data into typologies.

Latent class analysis is a technique identifying unobserved (latent) groups of individuals with similar profiles (clusters or classes) based on observed responses. Magidson and Vermunt (2002) compared the two clustering methods and concluded that latent class analysis was preferred to the K-means technique. They argued that latent class analysis is more robust than the K-means technique because: (a) clusters are less arbitrary and developed through a rigorous statistical procedure; (b) eliminates the need to make decisions about scaling the observed variables; and (c) utilizes formalized criteria to make decisions about number of clusters and work with mixed-level measurements (Magidson & Vermunt, 2002). Still, very few studies (i.e., Merz & Roesch, 2011) considered the latent class analysis to derive the personality types and none of the studies focused on couples.

There are a variety of instruments that measure the Big Five constructs (e.g., NEO-PI-R and the Big Five Inventory), but none of them are considered the gold standard (John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008). OCEAN (openness, conscientiousness, extroversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism) is a personality assessment developed for professionals working with couples (John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008). The current study uses the SCOPE (Social, Change, Organized, Pleasing, and Emotionally Steady; see detailed description in the measures section) personality inventory, which is an assessment based on the Big Five and is a simpler version of the OCEAN assessment.

In current study, the first aim was to develop a personality typology based on the SCOPE (Olson, 2009), which is derived from the Big Five personality scales (McCrae & Costa, 2008). The second aim of the current study was to utilize the created typology to compare males versus females, clinical marital couples versus persons in non-clinical marital couples. The third aim of the study was to explore if individuals select marital partners with similar or different personality types.

METHOD

Sample

The sample of the study consisted of a total of 2,261 married couples (4,522 individuals) living across the United States who completed the online PREPARE-ENRICH couple inventory (Olson, 2009). Of the 4,522 married people, 3,998 were individuals that were not in therapy (non-clinical group) but took the inventory to enrich their relationships from 2008-2012, and 524 were individuals in marital therapy (clinical group) during these years. At the time of assessment, the clinical couples were seeing a marriage and family therapist for relationship concerns identified by the PREPARE-ENRICH couple inventory.

The PREPARE-ENRICH couple inventory is a self-report questionnaire completed independently by both partners. The PREPARE-ENRICH couple inventory was designed to identify relationship strengths and growth areas, and couple and family cohesion and adaptability. As part of PREPARE-ENRICH, participants also filled out items that make up the SCOPE assessment. The SCOPE items are utilized to measure personality traits. The current study focuses on the SCOPE items to develop the personality typologies. Individual and couple scores were obtained from data provided through PREPARE-ENRICH, Inc., a company that offers and scores this couple assessment (see www.prepare-enrich.com for more information).

All the sample respondents were currently married. The majority of men (89.6%) and wives (87.8%) in the sample were between 26 to 60 years old. About three-quarters of the participants were Caucasian, and the remainder were African-American or multiple ethnicities. The most common level of education was two to four years of college for both husbands and wives. The majority of husbands worked full-time (84.1%), and 47.4% wives worked full-time. Most of the participants were either Catholic or Protestant (74.1%).

Measures: SCOPE Scales

The five SCOPE Scales are part of the comprehensive couple assessment called PREPARE-ENRICH that contains over twenty scales (Olson, 2009). Twelve of the scales assess relationship areas like communication and conflict resolution and four scales assess couple and family cohesion (togetherness) and adaptability (change) based on the Circumplex Model of Family Systems (Olson, Russell and Sprenkle, 1989).

Developed by David Olson and colleagues, PREPARE-ENRICH was created in 1996 and has been used by over 100,000 counselors and clergy to help premarital couples prepare for marriage (PREPARE) and enrich the relationship of married couples (ENRICH). Over 4 million couples from across the United States have taken this inventory as part of their counseling. The scales have high alpha reliability (.70-.85) and predictive validity of over 80 percent (Olson, 2009).

SCOPE consists of five subscales of personality, Social, Change, Organized, Pleasing, and Emotionally Steady; each subscale had seven items. For the current study, the Cronbach's alphas for the five scales ranged from .77 to .84 (with a mean of .82). SCOPE has good validity with a factor analysis resulting in five factors with each item loading over .30 for the seven items within each of the five scales with no overlapping items across factors over .30 (Olson, 2009). A brief description of the five SCOPE scales is provided.

Social. This scale assesses a person's interest in other people and social activities (e.g., "I make friends easily"), and related to the Big Five's extraversion. High scores reflect an individual who is extroverted and enjoys people, activities, and groups. Medium scores reflect an individual who may find social settings enjoyable, but also values privacy. Low scores reflect an individual who is reserved or introverted and less interested in social activities (scores range from 10 to 99, $M = 45.04$, $SD = 24.72$, $\alpha = .84$).

Change. This subscale measures an openness to change, personal flexibility, and interest in new experiences (e.g., "I like to solve new problems"), which relates to openness in the Big Five. High scores reflect an individual who is very flexible, unconventional, and open to new experiences. Medium scores reflect an individual who balances new and creative ideas with more traditional approaches to life. Low scores reflect an individual who is more down to earth, practical, and less interested in new ideas or change (scores range from 10 to 99, $M = 49.52$, $SD = 29.07$, $\alpha = .80$).

Organized. This subscale assesses how organized and persistent a person was in his or her daily life, work, and pursuit of goals (e.g., “I am always prepared”). In the Big Five, it relates to conscientiousness. High scores reflect an individual who is methodical, well organized, goal oriented and very reliable. Medium scores reflect an individual who may be generally organized but can also be flexible about their agenda. Low scores reflect an individual who is more spontaneous, less organized, and prefers not to make rigid plans (scores range from 10 to 99, $M = 51.47$, $SD = 28.77$, $\alpha = .83$).

Pleasing. This subscale reflects how considerate and cooperative a person is in his or her interactions with others (e.g., “I accept people as they are”). In the Big Five, it relates to agreeableness. High scores reflect an individual who is very friendly, cooperative, and values getting along with others. Medium scores reflect an individual who can be warm and cooperative but is occasionally more competitive, stubborn, or assertive. Low scores reflect an individual who tends to be more assertive, less cooperative and more competitive (scores range from 10 to 99, $M = 51.08$, $SD = 28.50$, $\alpha = .77$).

Emotionally Steady. This subscale measures the ability to stay relaxed and calm even when faced with stressful situations (“I rarely complain”). In the Big Five, it relates to neuroticism (N). High scores reflect an individual who tends to be more relaxed, calm, and less prone to distress. Medium scores reflect an individual who will generally be calm and able to cope with stress, but may sometimes experience feelings of anxiety, anger, or depression. Low scores reflect an individual who is more emotionally reactive, moody, and may be prone to feelings of anxiety, depression, or anger in times of stress (scores range from 10 to 99, $M = 46.49$, $SD = 28.61$, $\alpha = .84$).

Analyses

The current study utilized latent class analysis to derive personality types based on the SCOPE (Olson, 2009). By using latent class analysis, the number of latent clusters (personality types) and the probabilities of class membership among the sample respondents could be derived. Pearson’s Chi-square tests were used to compare the prevalence of personality types between husbands and wives and between clinical and non-clinical couples.

Exploratory analysis phase. Mclust, a contributed R package for model-based clustering, classification, and density estimation based on finite normal mixture modelling (Fraley & Raftery, 1998, 2007), was used to identify personality

types based on the five SCOPE scale scores of the entire sample (4,522 individuals). The model of latent class cluster is based on the equation:

$$P(y_n) = \sum_1^S \pi_j f_j(y_n|\theta_j)$$

(1)

Where y_n is the n^{th} observation, S is the number of clusters, π_j is the probability of y_n classified into cluster j ($\sum_1^S \pi_j = 1$) and θ_j are the corresponding parameters including μ_j and Σ_j (μ_j and Σ_j are mean and variance-covariance matrix of cluster). $f_j(y_n|\theta_j)$, also expressed as $f_j(y|\mu_j, \Sigma_j)$ is the density function of the manifest variables.

$$f_j(y|\mu_j, \Sigma_j) = (2\pi)^{-\frac{p}{2}} |\Sigma_j|^{-\frac{1}{2}} \exp\left\{-\frac{1}{2} (y_n - \mu_j)^T \Sigma_j^{-1} (y_n - \mu_j)\right\}$$

(2)

Using latent class analysis, the probability of class membership was estimated by the maximum likelihood estimate method. Mclust automatically estimated the best model through the different covariance structures and different number of clusters. The best model, which had best parameters estimation and optimal cluster number, was selected by the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC); across models of varying numbers of clusters, the model with the smaller BIC value is preferred.

Optimal solution phase. The models of five, six, seven, and eight clusters had very similar BIC values. We decided to compare the models with the lowest number of clusters (five and six; $BIC_{(5)} = -210,128$ and $BIC_{(6)} = -209,645$) because they had more clearly distinguished patterns of class membership. We found that the profiles generated by five-cluster model contained more distinctive classes compared to the profiles generated by six-cluster model. In addition, the five-cluster model had a more balanced distribution of probabilities of class membership across the types.

Figure 1 about here.

Table 1 about here.

Results

Description of the Five Types of Personality

By integrating the definitions of the five dimensions of SCOPE personality scales, the following labels were assigned to the five clusters: *Well-Rounded*, *Stable*, *Flexible*, *Unstable Organized*, and *Unstable Distant*. Table 1 provides a brief description of personality characteristics and the estimated means of the five dimensions in each type.

Type 1: Well-Rounded. People in Well-Rounded personality type tended to have the highest scores on all five dimensions of the SCOPE within the sample. They were somewhat extroverted indicating they may enjoy social settings. Well-Rounded people were very flexible, open to novel experiences, and valued organization and goals. They were also characterized by being cooperative and getting along well with others. Also, they were likely to be emotionally calm, relaxed, and able to cope well with stress.

Type 2: Stable. People in stable personality type had high score on emotional stability and low score on change. They were likely to be somewhat extroverted but also value their privacy. They might prefer more practical ideas and be less interested in novel ideas. They tended to be organized, goal-oriented, Cooperative, and valued getting along with others. They were relatively calm and able to cope with stress.

Type 3: Flexible. People in the flexible personality type tended to have low scores on all sub-dimensions except Change. They were likely to find social settings enjoyable while valuing privacy. They tended to be very open to change and new experiences. Unlike people in Well- Rounded and Stable personality types, people in flexible personality type were likely to be disorganized. They tended to be cooperative and value getting along with others. They were likely to experience emotional reactivity, moodiness, depression, or anxiety.

Type 4: Unstable Organized. People in Unstable Organized personality type tended to have a moderate score on organization but low scores on the other sub-dimensions. They were more likely to be introverted and less interested in socializing; they tended to be more practical and uninterested in new ideas. They were somewhat organized and mostly cooperative and values getting along with others. They were more likely to be emotionally reactive, moody, and more prone to have anxiety, depression, and anger in stressful times.

Type 5: Unstable Distant. People in Unstable Distant personality type had the lowest scores on all five dimensions among the sample. They were more likely to be introverted and show little interest in social settings. They tended to prefer stability. They were more likely to be disorganized. People in the Unstable Distant personality type were seldom cooperative and were rather competitive. They tended to be very emotionally reactive and moody and more prone to have anxiety, depression, and anger in stressful times.

Comparisons of Prevalence of Personality Types

The prevalence of personality types were compared between husbands and wives and between clinical and non-clinical using Pearson's Chi-square test (see Tables 2 and 3 respectively). We also explored whether there was a pattern of personality combinations between spouses (see Table 4 and 5).

First, there was a significant relationship between personality types and gender ($\chi^2(4) = 121.00, p < 0.001$). The results showed that there were more males than females in the Well Round - Type 1 (27.1% vs. 17.6%) and Stable - Type 2 (21% vs.16.3%). There were more females than males in the Unstable Organized - Type 4 (36.5% vs. 23.6%). There was no significant difference between the males and females in the Flexible - Type 3 and Unstable Distant - Type 5.

(Insert Table 2 and Table 3 about here)

In comparing the personality types for non-clinical versus clinical married individuals (Table 3), the Pearson's Chi-squared test indicated there was not a statistically significant difference between the clinical and non-clinical groups ($\chi^2(4) = 8.975, p < .1$). The largest difference was that there were more Well-Rounded - Type 1 people were in the non-clinical than clinical group (22.9% vs. 18.5%), and there were more Flexible - Type 3 people in the clinical group than the non-clinical group (27.9% vs. 24.3%).

To see the distributions of personality type in married couples (Table 4 and 5), a cross tabulation was created of the five personality types for each couple (husband and wife). The results show that for both the non-clinical and clinical samples, the largest group of couples among all 25 kinds of personality combinations are those couples where the wife belongs to Well-Rounded type and the husband belongs to Unstable Organized type, and about one third of the husbands in both samples were belong to Unstable Organized type no matter what type their wives belong to. The results also show that 22.9% of non-clinical couples were the same personality type (i.e., both members of the couple were Well-Rounded, Stable, Flexible, Unstable Organized, or Unstable Distant), and 17.1% of clinical couples were also the same personality type. The vast majority of both the non-clinical (87.1%) and clinical (82.9%) couples married someone with a different personality type.

(Insert Table 4 & 5 about here)

Discussion

This study analyzed 2,261 married couples (4,522 individuals) who took the PREPARE-ENRICH couple assessment that contained the SCOPE Personality Inventory. By using latent class analysis, five personality types were identified: Well-Rounded, Stable, Flexible, Unstable Organized, and Unstable Distant. The current paper also compared the distributions of personality types in males versus females, clinical couples versus non-clinical couples, and the husbands versus wives as a couple for both non-clinical and clinical couples.

The results show that males and females tend to have different types of personalities, while no significant difference in personality types prevalence exist among non-clinical and clinical couples. Only about 20 percent of the couples married someone with a similar personality type, and little difference exists between the non-clinical couples and clinical couples in terms of the spouse personality similarity.

Gender Differences in Personality Type Prevalence

Based on the results from this study, more males than females were in the Well-Rounded personality type and Stable personality type, while more females than males were in the Unstable Organized personality type. The results are congruent with the previous literature in gender differences in personality, that have indicated that females are more neurotic, more introverted and less self-confident than males (Heidbreder, 1927; Iveniuk, Waite, Laumann, McClintock, & Tiedt, 2014; Tyler, 1947).

Are Certain Personality Types Associated with Relationship Difficulties?

In the current study, we found that there were no significant differences in terms of personality type distributions between the non-clinical and the clinical couples. This finding contradicts what some previous studies have shown. For example, Claxton and colleagues (2012) found that each of the Big Five personality traits was significantly associated with marital satisfaction. Bloch and colleagues (2014) found that emotion regulation ability was positively associated with marital satisfaction. Our different findings could be due to the disproportionate sub-samples: our clinical sample is smaller in size than the non-clinical sample.

Do People Choose Partners with Similar Personalities?

Based on the statistics of the current study, only about one fifth of couples married someone with the same personality type. The vast majority of both the non-clinical and clinical couples married someone with a completely different or slightly different personality type.

Does Personality Similarity Matter in Couple Relationship?

We often hear people saying that difficult marital relationships are the results of unmatched personality styles. Based on the results of this study, there is no significant difference in distribution of personality types between non-clinical and clinical couples, and there is little difference between the distributions of non-clinical and clinical married couples in terms of spouse similarity.

Conclusions and Implications

The vast majority of personality research has focused on differences among individuals on a particular trait, which is referred to as dimensional or variable-centered approaches. However, studies adopting this approach often focus on a single dimension at the expense of other personality traits.

The typology developed by this study integrated all five dimensions of personality traits, and it reflects the configuration of the characteristics within a person and views the person as a whole. The limitations of the study include the fact that any typological analysis has some non-quantitative interpretations and descriptive labels for the types. The number of types also has varied across studies and the range is from three to six types.

Some of the strengths of this study are that it uses a well-validated personality assessment, SCOPE, which is based on the Big Five. It overcomes the limitations in previous personality typology studies. The data is based on a large national database of married couples ($n = 2,261$) where both the husband and wife completed the online PREPARE-ENRICH couples inventory. The study has one of the largest samples of individuals and couples done in the United States, and the analysis was done at both the individual and couple levels.

The study increased our understanding of the personality type among people living in the United States. The sample contains both clinical (couples in therapy) and non-clinical (couples who took the assessment as part of a couple enrichment

program) couples. The typological analysis was done using latent class analysis which is a rigorous approach to data analysis.

The personality typology developed from this study facilitates the development of personality theories and enriches the understandings on personality profiles among U.S. population. It also provides guidance for clinicians working with clients who are facing issues oriented from personality matters. For future studies, we suggest to incorporate the dependent variables (such as marital satisfaction and marital quality) into the analyses to verify the identified personality types. Using a developmental approach to detect the personality type change and the corresponding marital relationships will be explanatory as well.

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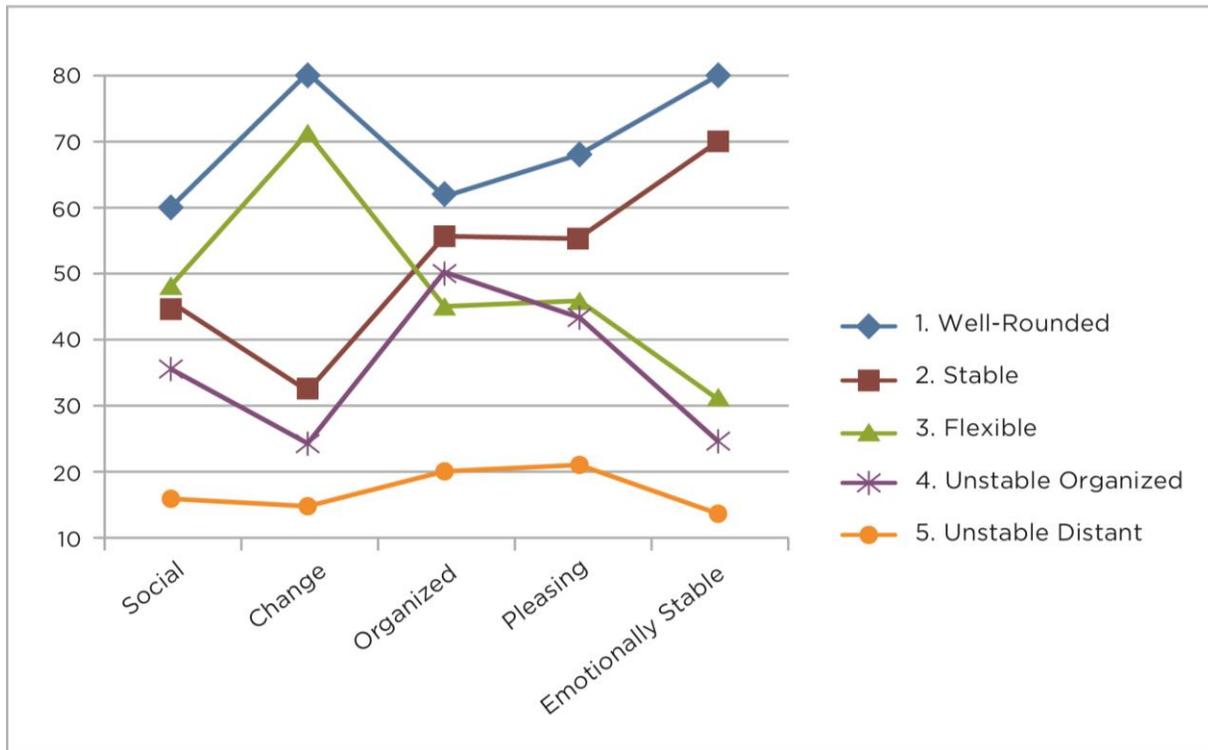
Figure 1: Five Personality Types based on SCOPE Personality Scales

Table 1: Scores and Brief Descriptions of Five Personality Types based on SCOPE**Personality Scales**

Social	Change	Organized	Pleasing	Emotionally Stable
Type 1. Well-Rounded				
60	80	62	67	80
Somewhat extraverted	Very open to change	Generally organized	Generally pleasing	Very emotionally stable
Type 2. Stable				
44	32	56	55	70
Balanced intro/extra	Prefers stability	Somewhat organized	Somewhat pleasing	Emotionally stable
Type 3. Flexible				
47	71	44	46	31
Balanced intro/extra	Open to change	Somewhat disorganized	Somewhat pleasing	Emotionally unstable
Type 4. Unstable Organized				
36	23	50	44	24
Introverted	Prefers stability	Somewhat organized	Somewhat pleasing	Emotionally unstable
Type 5. Unstable Distant				
16	14	20	21	12
Extremely introverted	Requires stability	Disorganized	Seldom pleasing	Very emotionally unstable

Table 2: Distribution of Personality Types by Gender ($n = 4522$)

		Well-			Unstable	Unstable	
		Rounded	Stable	Flexible	Organized	Distant	Total
Females	n	399	369	567	825	101	2,261
	%	17.6	16.3	25.1	36.5	4.5	100.0
Males	n	613	475	551	534	88	2,261
	%	27.1	21.0	24.4	23.6	3.9	100.0
Total	n	1,012	844	1,118	1,359	189	4,522
	%	22.4	18.7	24.7	30.1	4.2	100.0

Table 3: Distribution of Personality Types among Clinical and Non-clinical Samples
(*n* = 4522)

		Well-			Unstable	Unstable	
		Rounded	Stable	Flexible	Organized	Distant	Total
Clinical	n	97	110	146	153	18	524
	%	18.5	21.0	27.9	29.2	3.4	100.0
Non-Clinical	n	915	734	972	1,206	171	3,998
	%	22.9	18.4	24.3	30.2	4.3	100.0
Total	n	1,021	884	1,118	1,359	189	4,522
	%	22.9	18.4	24.3	30.2	4.3	100.0

Table 4: Distribution of Personality Types for Non-clinical Couples (*n* = 1999 couples)

		Wives											
		Well-Rounded		Stable		Flexible		Unstable Organized		Unstable Distant		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Husbands	Well-Rounded	119	6	69	3.5	86	4.3	81	4.1	10	0.5	365	18.3
	Stable	97	4.9	61	3.1	70	3.5	79	4	8	0.4	315	15.8
	Flexible	122	6.1	107	5.4	112	5.6	129	6.5	26	1.3	496	24.8
	Unstable Organized	191	9.6	164	8.2	186	9.3	159	8	35	1.8	735	36.8
	Unstable Distant	21	1.1	18	0.9	22	1.1	23	1.2	4	0.2	88	4.4
	Total	550	27.5	419	21	476	21	471	23.6	83	4.2	1999	100

Table 5: Distribution of Personality Types for Clinical Couples ($n = 262$ couples)

		Wives											
		Well-Rounded		Stable		Flexible		Unstable Organized		Unstable Distant		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Husbands	Well-Rounded	3	1.1	7	2.7	13	5	11	4.2	0	0	34	13
	Stable	16	6.1	7	2.7	23	8.8	7	2.7	1	0.4	54	20.6
	Flexible	18	6.9	17	6.5	14	5.3	20	7.6	2	0.8	71	27.1
	Unstable Organized	24	9.2	22	8.4	21	8	21	8	2	0.8	90	34.4
	Unstable Distant	2	0.8	3	1.1	4	1.5	4	1.5	0	0	13	5
	Total	63	24	56	21.4	75	28.6	70	26.7	5	1.9	262	100