

## Analysis of the Internal Structure of the Social Relationship Expectations Assessment Test

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### ABSTRACT

*This work analyzes the internal structure of the Inventory of interpersonal expectations. For this, the Social Relationship Expectations Assessment Test was applied to 163 couples, divided into two groups by time of marriage. The results presented demonstrate that the factorial analysis of the data made it possible to group the items into three factors that reveal distinct patterns of response that are produced in social interactions and in marital expectations.*

### Keywords

Interpersonal relationship, Expectations, Marital experience.

### Introduction

Interpersonal behavior aims at fulfilling individual needs that are often shaped by historical and social processes [1], in which models of marriages and even experiences and tolerances towards others have been molded, establishing new forms of interpersonal relationships and thus new subjectivities [2].

Interpersonal interactions give rise to expectations, which in individuals hold values and interests that will influence their direction [3]. When entering a relationship, couples seek answers to their expectations of happiness, pleasure, companionship and understanding. They are not inclined to remain in relationships that do not foster such fulfillment [4].

### Theoretical Foundation

Family models have been socially structured throughout history, shaping ideals of families, marriages, and even experiences and tolerances towards others. From the mid-20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, contexts of tolerance between spouses and the maintenance of relationships, as well as society's acceptance of the division of these relationships, differ from those adopted in previous centuries [4].

Starting from the second half of the 20th century, the concreteness of conjugal life began to be questioned, leading to a psychosocial and institutional crisis of conjugality. This crisis is perceived, for example, through the decrease in the number of marriages, the increase in divorces, and the emergence of new forms of marriages (open, informal, etc.). These changes reflect new social factors that have come into play, such as the expansion of democracy, feminist movements that have given women greater autonomy and freedom, among others. While we have a break from psychosocial norms on one hand, on the other hand, we have new forms of interpersonal relationships and thus new subjectivities [2].

Interpersonal relationships are interactions between the self and the people who are part of the social circle to which the individual belongs. Such interactions are marked by affective and moral components. Affect can be understood as the energy effort directed towards people in that environment, while morality is observed when social relationships establish situations in which individual choices can affect the lives of others [5].

Morality develops as an individual grows and has contact with different people at different ages, and emotions are closely linked to it. Its development can be observed through the expression of four emotional components of moral behavior: empathy, characterized by the ability to understand what is happening with others, is

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an ability to put oneself in another's place and feel, from their perspective, what they feel. Sympathy, characterized by feelings of concern, pity, or sorrow for someone based on an understanding of the situation. Guilt, characterized by negative feelings for having performed some action, and finally, shame, characterized by negative feelings accompanying the development of carrying out an action. Thus, the nature of social relationships has far-reaching implications for emotion, cognition, and well-being [5].

The emotional components of morality and affection directed towards others are important for understanding interpersonal positions. The causality of psychological processes can be understood only when we focus on the mutual influence between individuals. This perspective has made it possible to understand behaviors in terms of satisfying the needs of people in interaction [1]. Couples seek answers to their expectations of happiness, pleasure, companionship, and understanding when entering a relationship, and they are not willing to stay in relationships that do not promote such fulfillment [4].

In a qualitative study conducted by Fonseca and Duarte [6], where five heterosexual couples were interviewed, following these characteristics: a minimum of two years of marriage, no previous cohabitation before marriage, first marital experience, and no children. The dating period ranged from two and a half years to nine years, and the maximum marriage duration was five years. It was observed that an important factor in the formation of marriage expectations is linked to past experiences, such as family experiences, the reality witnessed in the marriages of their parents, siblings, and close friends, as in agreement with the literature [6], as well as experiences with peers and established romantic relationships [6].

During the dating period, the expectation regarding marriage was to find a lifelong partner, someone to share the same values and life philosophy, and who would meet their needs for security and support, both emotionally and instrumentally. The expectation of happiness emerged as a fundamental element, positioning marriage as the formula for happiness. However, a comprehensive reading of the meanings and expectations attributed to marriage during the dating phase revealed that they did not maintain an idealized view that disregarded the possibility of experiencing moments of conflict, expecting perfection [6].

Individuals possess values and interests that will influence the direction of their expectations. Humans have a need to associate with others, form groups where they can interact, and achieve common goals. Every group formation is based on this premise; in this way, social groups are characterized by cooperation to achieve shared purposes [3]. In this sense, marriage is characterized as a social group, involving the union of different individuals who interact and adapt to achieve specific goals and navigate marital situations.

The way expectations function in marital relationships is not different from how they occur in other contexts of interpersonal

interaction. Taking the example of groups, Correll and Ridgeway [7] state that if group members, for any reason, believe that one member has more to offer to the group, they are likely to provide that member with greater participation opportunities. This phenomenon often takes the form of an implicit expectation and is referred to by the authors as states of performance expectations.

These states shape behavior in a self-fulfilling manner. In other words, when a person's performance expectation is higher compared to another's, the former is more likely to take action in the group, offer more suggestions about what should be done, and have their suggestions positively evaluated. Moreover, they are less likely to be influenced when disagreements arise. Individuals with lower performance expectations receive fewer opportunities to undertake tasks, speak less and more hesitantly, often have their contributions ignored or poorly evaluated, and are more influenced when conflicts occur [7].

The function of interpersonal behaviors is to elicit reactions in others that correspond to the individual needs of the person exhibiting the behavior. This process is reciprocal, meaning that the behavior of one individual serves to obtain reactions from another individual that fulfill their needs, and similarly, the behavior of the second individual has the function of eliciting reactions from the first that meet their needs. If a pair of individuals interact repeatedly, this reciprocity leads to the formation of patterns that exhibit certain regularities. An analogy can be drawn with the Tango, in which the movement of each partner determines the movements of the other. The effects that each dancer's reactions have on the other shape the behavior of the first [1]. Thus, in interactions, expectations about the other person's reactions are formed. When we engage in interaction with another person, we expect our needs to be met. Returning to the analogy with the Tango, the partner who initiates the movement expects the other to respond with another movement, to allow the dance to continue (of course, one does not expect the dance partner to run away or perform steps that are not part of the Tango repertoire; such a response would prevent the dance from continuing).

The same dynamic applies in marital interactions. Norgren et al. [8] state that marital satisfaction is related to subjective aspects of individuals, in which they would desire to have their needs and desires fulfilled, as well as to meet the partner's expectations, in a reciprocal exchange.

According to Gottman [9], there are three common emotional needs for all people: the desire to feel part of something, to have a sense of control over one's life, and to be loved. The way people generally seek to satisfy these needs is by presenting emotional cues.

Emotional cues can be a question, a gesture, a look, a touch—anything that expresses an individual's desire to maintain a connection with another. The response to a cue is simply another cue (another gesture, touch, look), a positive or negative response to someone's request for emotional connection. Often, these cues

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happen so routinely that they are not seen as significant. However, it's observed that individuals who present and respond positively to cues are more likely to succeed in their relationships [9].

When presenting an emotional cue, there's an expectation of receiving a positive response to the request for emotional connection. When this happens, individuals experience a sense of well-being and purpose in life. In the context of marital relationships, over time, this can lead to the development of a more stable relationship with positive mutual feelings [9].

According to the Expectancy Violations Theory by Burgoon [10], in interpersonal communications, expectations can be confirmed when the response matches what was expected, or they can be positively or negatively violated when the response differs from what was anticipated. To make the concepts easier to understand, the author provides an example of a neighbor who used to park his car and trailer in front of the house where she and her family spent their vacations, blocking the view of the lake. This continued for several years, even though another neighbor had alerted him about how this behavior bothered the family. However, in a particular year, he started parking elsewhere. This is a clear example of a positive violation, as even though the neighbor's behavior pleased the family, it was not what they expected. This kind of scenario can also occur in marital relationships, where one spouse responds in an unexpected manner, either adding something positive to the relationship or disrupting the interaction.

Norgren et al. [8], stated that in order to have a long and satisfactory marriage, investment in the relationship is necessary, seeking to balance individuality and togetherness while avoiding boredom and repetition. Féres-Carneiro [4] explains that couples are confronted by these two paradoxical forces: individuality, ensuring the autonomy of spouses, and the need to experience togetherness, shared desires, and couple's projects. The couple needs to be both a unit (togetherness) while still being two individuals (individuality). The challenge in achieving this lies in the fact that often-marital spaces are weakened by emphasizing individuality, in order to strengthen togetherness, individual spaces can be compromised.

In a study conducted by Norgren et al. [8] regarding the variables influencing marital satisfaction, 38 couples from the metropolitan region of São Paulo, married for over twenty years, were interviewed. Data collection employed an instrument developed by Kaslow and Hammerschmidt [11] comprising six questionnaires. Among them, four were developed by the authors themselves: the General Information Questionnaire, the Problem Ranking List, the List of Reasons for Staying Together as a Couple, and the List of Components of Marital Satisfaction. The other two questionnaires were the Marital Adjustment Scale [12] and the Conflict Resolution and Communication Strategy Assessment Questionnaire [13]. This allowed the visualization of social, individual, and couple resources, all three of which are important for studying long-term marriages. The results indicated that marital satisfaction increases with closeness, appropriate problem-solving strategies, cohesion, good communication skills, satisfaction with economic status, and

shared religious participation. This study highlights that marital success is more related to teamwork and joint effort than solely to the right choice of a partner.

Despite the mentioned research, studies in Brazil focusing on marital satisfaction, especially concerning interpersonal expectations, remain scarce. Some efforts in this direction were initiated by Santos, Vandenberghe, and Tavares [14], and these authors emphasize the literature gap, indicating the need for new research, particularly regarding expectations. This is due to the impact that this aspect has on the quality of romantic relationships, as well as on interventions aimed at improving this quality. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the internal structure of a measure of interpersonal expectations using data from individuals who are dating, engaged, and married.

## Method

This research was conducted using a quantitative approach and was developed based on a cross-sectional study.

## Participants

Responses from 163 couples were analyzed, divided into two groups. The first group consisted of 67% of couples who are currently married and have been in a relationship for a minimum of ten years (considering dating, engagement, and marriage). The remaining participants were couples who are not living together but are planning to establish a conjugal life (with a minimum of one year of dating experience). Participants' ages ranged from 16 to 78 years, with a mean of 40 years (SD=12). The duration of the relationships varied from 2 to 40 years, with a mean of 17 years (SD=10).

## Instrument

The Social Relationship Expectations Assessment Test comprises 160 statements designed to assess individuals' beliefs and expectations when engaging in interpersonal relationships. The scale includes items that are considered highly representative of the core beliefs associated with patterns of interpersonal relationships. The Likert scale employed consists of three points, indicating the level to which the participant identifies with each statement: 1 - a little, 2 - moderately, and 3 - very much. At the end of the assessment, participants are asked to indicate the three main expectations that best characterize them and the three that least characterize them.

## Data Collection Procedure

The data collection process was carried out within courses or groups for engaged couples and during couples' meetings organized by churches of various religious affiliations. Additionally, data was collected at an institution of higher education located in the interior of the state of São Paulo, Brazil. Initial pairs of engaged or married couples were contacted and invited to participate in the research. Moreover, participants were invited to recommend other willing couples to join the study through their social network, using the Snowball Sampling procedure [8]. Upon contact, participants were informed about the procedures and were free to decline

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participation or withdraw from the study at any point without any penalties or negative consequences, ensuring their voluntary participation. Those who agreed to participate signed an informed consent form (ICF) and were then introduced to the data collection protocol.

Data collection took place within the religious institutions and the higher education institution, in a suitable environment featuring tables, chairs, proper lighting, good ventilation, and quietness. This environment was spacious enough to comfortably accommodate couples and one of the researchers. Participants responded to the data collection instruments under the supervision of the researchers. Couples who lacked the availability to attend the data collection together with their respective partners, those undergoing separation, or experiencing marital crisis were excluded from the study. The research project was submitted to and approved by the Ethics Committee.

### Data Analysis Procedure

The participants' responses were compiled and organized using the R software. Total scores, subscale scores, and descriptive statistics concerning the scores across all utilized instruments were computed. The data analysis procedure was modified from the original proposal; a preliminary item selection was performed using the 15/85 criteria. Additionally, an analysis of internal structure was conducted using factor analysis and item response theory methods based on the data distribution frequency. To facilitate this, item frequency analysis was carried out [15].

### Results

Initially, a frequency analysis was conducted, revealing differences in responses provided by engaged and married participants in the Social Relationship Expectations Assessment Test. Among the engaged participants, 71% responded that they expect to be accepted by their partners, while only 50% of the married participants answered positively to this acceptance expectation. This difference was also evident in the item "I expect the other person to accept my point of view," where married individuals exhibited lower expectations compared to engaged individuals.

Among the married participants, 37.2% indicated that they expect the other person to offer suggestions on what to do, while only 15.8% of engaged participants reported expecting such suggestions from their partner. These findings align with the results of the Submission (I) scale from the Check List of Interpersonal Transactions – Revised (CLOIT-R) instrument, which showed higher averages for both married men and women. This suggests that married individuals more frequently seek support from their interaction partner, comply with directions given, and agree with opinions [16].

Expectations related to feeling pleased by the other person and expressions of affection were found to be higher among engaged participants and lower among married participants. This trend was evident in items such as "I expect expressions of affection," "I expect intimate contact," "I expect to be complimented," "I expect

displays of love," "I expect displays of affection," and "I expect the other person to take care of me." This pattern of expectations is related to the Affective Coldness (D) scale of the CLOIT-R. According to the results by Barbosa [16], married individuals perceive themselves as more emotionally distant in interactions with their spouse and are also perceived as such by their interaction partner [16].

The number of married individuals who reported not expecting recognition in the relationship was higher compared to engaged individuals. Only 50% of married participants stated they expected to be valued by their partner, while among engaged participants, this figure was 78.9%. Expectations related to being committed to the relationship, having partnership, and the commitment of the spouse in the relationship were also higher among engaged individuals when compared to married participants.

Both engaged and married participants do not expect their spouse to lie. However, the expectation that their spouse would share their secrets is higher among engaged individuals than among married individuals. The same applies to the expectation of feeling comfortable in the relationship. The percentage of married participants who answered that they expect to be forgiven by their partner is lower than the percentage of married participants who answered that they expect to forgive. However, among engaged participants, the results show the opposite: the percentage of those who expect to be forgiven is higher than the percentage who expect to forgive.

The desire for privacy is higher among engaged individuals. This result is consistent with Barbosa's work [16], where the results of the CLOIT-R indicated that engaged individuals seek to maintain their privacy, aiming for opportunities to be alone and engage in activities without their partner's presence. This interpretation aligns with the notion that dating/engagement is a phase of the relationship that facilitates moments without the partner [16].

Following the frequency analysis, a factor analysis was also conducted to evaluate the internal structure of the instrument used to assess marital relationship expectations. The graph below (Figure 1) represents the factor analyses conducted using the R software, with minimum residual extraction and oblique rotation.

The results of the parallel analysis to determine how many factors should be extracted from the data revealed the relevance of 110 items in the measure, which can be grouped into three main factors. The first factor includes items expressing positive expectations, the second factor includes items expressing negative expectations, and the third factor includes items expressing egocentric expectations. Expectations within marital relationships are formed based on the responses generated during interactions. Gottman [9] reveals that there are three ways people use to respond to emotional cues: first, "turning toward each other"; second, "turning against each other"; and third, "turning away emotionally". The factor analysis indicated that the three factors explained 32% of the variance with an explained proportion of 70%. Confirmatory fit indices were also satisfactory (RMSEA=0.07; TLI=0.8; X<sup>2</sup>= 70663.27).

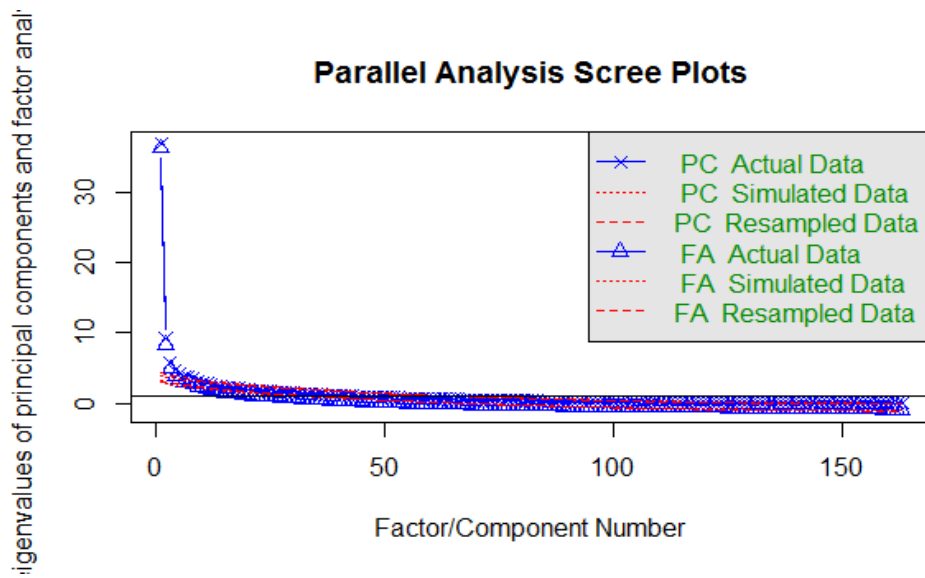


Figure 1: Results of the Parallel Analysis.

Table 1: Factor Loadings of Interpersonal Expectation Items and Communalities.

	MR1	MR2	MR3	h2
expec1	0.12	0.27	0.11	0.116
expec2	0.50	0.24	-0.13	0.345
expec3	0.54	0.22	-0.08	0.371
expec4	0.28	0.21	-0.03	0.139
expec5	0.40	0.16	-0.04	0.199
expec6	0.34	0.10	0.02	0.138
expec7	0.23	0.35	-0.22	0.228
expec8	0.30	0.26	-0.17	0.195
expec9	0.42	0.38	-0.15	0.376
expec10	0.30	0.18	0.10	0.155
expec11	0.22	0.25	0.06	0.134
expec12	0.28	0.05	0.15	0.117
expec13	0.07	0.32	-0.01	0.111
expec14	0.46	0.02	0.00	0.211
expec15	0.35	0.22	0.07	0.202
expec16	-0.03	0.52	0.05	0.278
expec17	0.38	0.14	0.10	0.195
expec18	0.08	0.51	-0.12	0.281
expec19	0.49	0.08	0.04	0.263
expec20	0.21	-0.31	0.50	0.363
expec21	0.23	0.10	0.42	0.260
expec22	0.22	-0.06	0.60	0.420
expec23	0.11	-0.14	0.72	0.546
expec24	0.48	0.09	0.12	0.276
expec25	0.43	0.06	0.14	0.220
expec26	0.13	0.36	-0.03	0.155
expec27	0.45	-0.12	-0.01	0.203
expec28	0.44	0.01	-0.16	0.213
expec29	0.31	0.06	0.16	0.139
expec30	0.31	-0.03	0.58	0.457
expec31	0.16	-0.02	0.60	0.400
expec32	-0.05	0.21	0.20	0.087
expec33	0.45	0.22	-0.12	0.280
expec34	0.37	0.20	-0.07	0.195
expec35	0.52	-0.01	0.06	0.279
expec36	0.01	0.57	0.05	0.328

expec37	0.25	0.29	0.01	0.172
expec38	0.12	0.58	0.06	0.376
expec39	0.15	0.32	0.29	0.241
expec40	-0.08	0.48	0.08	0.241
expec41	0.06	0.22	0.20	0.104
expec42	-0.15	0.61	-0.02	0.364
expec43	0.06	0.31	0.12	0.125
expec44	0.35	0.06	0.14	0.161
expec45	0.33	0.33	0.01	0.255
expec46	0.53	-0.01	0.16	0.320
expec47	0.65	-0.09	0.17	0.455
expec48	0.63	-0.08	0.11	0.405
expec49	0.49	0.20	-0.04	0.303
expec50	0.71	-0.09	0.07	0.509
expec51	0.55	0.09	0.14	0.359
expec52	0.64	0.01	-0.06	0.409
expec53	0.58	-0.12	-0.09	0.335
expec54	-0.06	0.21	-0.03	0.044
expec55	-0.31	0.17	0.06	0.113
expec56	-0.17	0.50	0.16	0.288
expec57	0.54	0.08	0.09	0.320
expec58	0.58	0.06	0.05	0.359
expec59	0.70	-0.06	0.08	0.491
expec60	0.28	0.01	0.30	0.185
expec61	-0.09	0.14	0.43	0.207
expec62	0.40	0.17	0.21	0.261
expec63	0.38	0.16	0.19	0.235
expec64	-0.09	0.39	0.04	0.151
expec65	0.56	0.02	0.05	0.320
expec66	-0.05	0.56	-0.08	0.316
expec67	0.40	0.23	0.00	0.236
expec68	0.46	0.21	-0.05	0.282
expec69	0.46	0.08	0.03	0.230
expec70	0.56	0.08	0.03	0.339
expec71	0.62	0.07	0.00	0.404
expec72	0.03	0.13	0.44	0.226
expec73	-0.12	0.24	0.15	0.088
expec74	0.64	-0.18	0.00	0.410
expec75	-0.22	0.39	0.50	0.431
expec76	-0.19	0.24	0.31	0.173
expec77	-0.10	0.40	0.25	0.228
expec78	-0.22	0.35	0.47	0.374
expec79	-0.06	0.23	0.48	0.290
expec80	-0.21	0.43	0.26	0.272
expec81	0.27	0.21	-0.04	0.136
expec82	0.62	0.13	-0.02	0.420
expec83	0.37	0.24	0.10	0.242
expec84	0.14	0.29	0.13	0.141
expec85	0.13	0.34	0.17	0.181
expec86	0.34	0.35	0.10	0.292
expec87	0.08	0.12	0.48	0.264
expec88	0.60	0.11	0.07	0.400
expec89	0.44	0.04	-0.04	0.202
expec90	0.40	0.26	-0.06	0.256
expec91	0.55	0.18	0.01	0.357
expec92	0.21	0.11	0.15	0.093
expec93	-0.05	0.16	0.52	0.298
expec94	0.56	0.05	0.12	0.351
expec95	0.38	0.42	-0.03	0.369

expec96	0.67	0.03	-0.05	0.460
expec97	0.68	-0.01	-0.03	0.455
expec98	0.54	-0.05	0.07	0.294
expec99	0.45	0.23	-0.10	0.288
expec10	0 0.61	0.11	-0.06	0.394
expec10	1 0.51	0.14	0.10	0.319
expec10	2 -0.12	0.39	0.28	0.241
expec10	3 0.57	0.04	0.08	0.343
expec10	4 0.60	-0.07	0.01	0.360
expec10	5 0.76	0.05	0.02	0.588
expec10	6 0.43	0.12	0.15	0.246
expec10	7 0.10	0.12	0.27	0.106
expec10	8 0.61	0.01	-0.01	0.370
expec10	9 0.52	0.04	0.08	0.295
expec11	0 0.52	0.07	-0.05	0.284
expec11	1 0.52	0.14	-0.01	0.313
expec11	2 0.65	-0.10	0.12	0.445
expec11	3 0.73	-0.19	0.04	0.538
expec11	4 0.68	-0.09	0.05	0.460
expec11	5 0.68	0.10	0.06	0.509
expec11	6 0.44	0.32	-0.21	0.356
expec11	7 0.53	0.08	-0.13	0.308
expec11	8 0.19	0.47	0.03	0.283
expec11	9 0.42	0.22	-0.21	0.282
expec12	0 0.49	0.29	-0.25	0.400
expec12	1 0.46	0.26	-0.20	0.328
expec12	2 0.55	0.09	-0.05	0.325
expec12	3 0.69	-0.03	-0.03	0.475
expec12	4 0.50	0.30	-0.04	0.374
expec12	5 0.59	0.28	-0.02	0.473
expec12	6 0.65	0.08	0.06	0.458
expec12	7 0.56	0.03	0.05	0.326
expec12	8 0.32	0.20	-0.12	0.166
expec12	9 -0.04	0.45	0.21	0.254
expec13	0 0.53	-0.10	0.04	0.279
expec13	1 0.67	-0.15	0.09	0.463
expec13	2 0.38	0.25	0.12	0.259
expec13	3 0.57	-0.26	0.03	0.353
expec13	4 0.70	-0.10	-0.01	0.479
expec13	5 0.77	-0.17	-0.01	0.587
expec13	6 0.73	-0.15	0.03	0.532
expec13	7 0.48	0.21	0.01	0.308
expec13	8 0.54	0.23	-0.02	0.377
expec13	9 0.09	0.33	-0.08	0.129
expec14	0 0.22	0.32	-0.19	0.195
expec14	1 0.50	0.03	-0.01	0.253
expec14	2 0.59	-0.27	-0.06	0.375
expec14	3 0.57	-0.02	0.03	0.322
expec14	4 0.75	-0.12	0.00	0.551
expec14	5 0.60	-0.05	-0.09	0.356
expec14	6 0.53	-0.08	-0.10	0.282
expec14	7 0.66	-0.07	-0.11	0.432
expec14	8 0.69	0.00	-0.09	0.472
expec14	9 0.67	-0.18	-0.05	0.451
expec15	0 0.71	-0.20	0.03	0.504
expec15	1 0.58	0.09	0.01	0.355
expec15	2 0.64	0.20	-0.12	0.485
expec15	3 0.68	-0.10	0.07	0.460
expec15	4 0.63	-0.05	0.01	0.394

expec15	5 0.53	0.22	-0.19	0.380
expec15	6 0.51	0.23	0.12	0.378
expec15	7 0.07	0.37	0.01	0.147
expec15	8 0.61	-0.12	0.01	0.371
expec15	9 0.68	-0.15	0.08	0.466
expec16	0 0.56	-0.08	0.06	0.320
expec16	1 0.60	0.12	0.01	0.398
expec16	2 0.45	0.26	-0.04	0.303
expec16	3 -0.23	0.22	0.36	0.216

Turning toward each other means responding positively to emotional cues, which is important for forming positive expectations. This relates to the first factor found in the analysis of results, which refers to expectations involving acceptance, affection, care, and consideration from the spouse. This same factor includes items suggesting that what the spouse expects for themselves in the relationship, they also expect for the other, as expressed, for example, in the following items: "I expect to be happy in this relationship," "I expect the other to be happy in this relationship," "I expect to be respected," and "I expect to respect the other." According to Gottman [9], relationships where people consistently respond positively to each other's emotional cues become more stable and enduring over time. Generating positive expectations about the relationship contributes to its healthy maintenance and continuity (Table 1).

The second factor found groups items expressing negative expectations, which can relate to the situation described by Gottman [9] when people turn against each other's emotional cues, which does not favor the continuity of the relationship. The items in this factor express expectations with a high degree of hostility, such as "I expect to get hurt," "I expect to be judged," and "I expect disapproval." This pattern of interaction is extremely detrimental to the relationship. However, according to the studies conducted by the author, the third way of responding to emotional cues, by emotionally turning away, is what most commonly and rapidly results in relationship dissolution.

It's observed that the first factor demonstrates the existence of interaction that supports the continuation of the relationship. In the second factor, even though the expectations are negative and act negatively on the relationship, interaction still occurs. However, the third factor presents items expressing egocentric expectations, meaning the spouses avoid interactions. This pattern of relationship, according to Gottman [9], involves not paying attention to the other's emotional cues, resulting in emotional distance and damaging the marital bond.

Marital bond, as discussed earlier, is one of the opposing forces that couples face. According to Féres-Carneiro [4], finding a balance between individuality and marital bond is a challenging task. Marital spaces can be compromised when individuality is overemphasized. This issue is evident in the results with the relevance of items such as "I expect to benefit myself," "I expect to be better than the other," and "I expect my interests to come first." According to Gottman's studies [9], couples exhibiting this

interaction pattern became more hostile and started to defend themselves against each other.

### Final Considerations

The presented results demonstrate that the course of expectations changes from the dating/engagement relationship to the marital relationship. Engaged couples have higher expectations of being accepted and pleased by their partner, while more experienced couples have expectations related to a pattern of interaction that expresses greater Emotional Detachment, suggesting that marriage allows spouses to express their emotions, even the more negative ones. The factorial analysis of the data enabled the grouping of items into three factors that reveal distinct response patterns produced in social interactions and marital expectations, which either facilitate or hinder the maintenance and continuity of relationships. With the results obtained and further research advancements, new data could be produced, enabling the development of interventions aimed at assisting in solving interaction problems, thus preventing future marital issues, especially for inexperienced couples. It can also suggest possibilities for continuing interactions among experienced couples.

To date, the Test for Evaluating Social Relationship Expectations is the only one in Brazil that assesses this construct, and initial studies indicate good evidence for the test. The results from this work are expected to open possibilities for further investigations, considering the breadth of the topic that has been relatively underexplored in Brazil. Further studies are necessary with larger samples (the limit of this study) and involving other social groups.

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