
PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES OF THE PERSONAL ASSESSMENT OF INTIMACY IN RELATIONSHIPS (PAIR) INVENTORY AMONG NORTH-BORNEO MALAYSIAN COUPLES

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Abstract: This study aimed to examine the psychometric properties of the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) Inventory among Malaysian couples. The research specifically focused on evaluating the inventory's reliability, validity, and conducting an item analysis. Data were collected from a convenience sample of 549 respondents. These respondents were either married, engaged, or in committed relationships, living together. The duration of most relationships ranged from one to ten years, and participants were located across Malaysia. The survey was administered through Google Forms and disseminated via WhatsApp using the snowballing method. The study utilized the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) Inventory, which comprises 36 items divided into six subscales. These subscales measure emotional, social, sexual, intellectual, recreational intimacy, and conventionality. Item analysis revealed issues with some items, especially within the Social Intimacy scale. As for reliability, the entire PAIR instrument displayed good consistency with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.77. Nevertheless, there were variations in the reliability of subscales. Emotional Intimacy achieved an alpha value of 0.74, and Intellectual Intimacy reached 0.71, meeting the reliability criterion. However, some other subscales did not meet the threshold. Furthermore, problematic items were identified through item analysis. In terms of validity, both convergent and concurrent validity were assessed. All PAIR subscales demonstrated positive and significant intercorrelations, with the exception of the Social Intimacy scale. Concurrent validity was evident through positive associations between PAIR subscales and well-being measures. Once again, the only exception was the Social Intimacy scale. In conclusion, this study offers valuable insights into the psychometric properties of the PAIR Inventory among Malaysian couples. It highlights the need for improvements, especially within the Social Intimacy scale.

Keywords: Psychometric Properties, Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships, Malaysian Couples

INTRODUCTION

Intimacy issues impact individuals and relationships both in Malaysia and globally. According to data from the Department of Statistics Malaysia (2022), 43,934 couples ended their marriages in 2021. Several intimacy concerns specific to the Malaysian context include religious influences and societal stigmas. Nurul Huda (2020) noted that the majority of Malaysia's Malay-Muslim population practices heteronormative sexuality, seeing marriage as the exclusive avenue for legal sexual intimacy. Nawratek and Mehan (2020) found that public displays of affection, like hugging or kissing, are uncommon among married couples. Conversations surrounding intimacy or sexual concerns are often stigmatized in Malaysia. This showcases the role of sociocultural factors in shaping societal attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs. Consequently, individuals might find it challenging to cultivate intimate relationships in Malaysia, a country that leans heavily towards conservative values and societal conformities, especially when compared to Western cultures.

Intimacy is a fundamental component of relationships, forming the bedrock for connection and communication between individuals. Park et al. (2021) posited that intimacy is crucial for sustaining

relationships among couples, allowing individuals to feel understood, authentically express themselves, and receive the necessary care and comfort. Intimacy isn't merely physical; it also encompasses emotional facets. Intimacy positively influences various life aspects, including health, relationship satisfaction, sexual desire, and mental well-being (Loggins, 2022). A deficiency in intimacy might contribute to divorce rates among married partners. While intimacy is pivotal for relationship maintenance, Kouneski and Olson (2004, as cited in Constant et al., 2016) argued that it's challenging to quantify due to its interpersonal and multidimensional characteristics.

The Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) Inventory is a widely-accepted tool for gauging intimacy within partnerships. Predominantly utilized in psychology and research, this inventory assesses numerous intimacy dimensions in romantic relationships. It is a 36-item self-report tool crafted to ascertain the anticipated and actualized intimacy levels in various areas, such as emotional, social, sexual, intellectual, and recreational intimacy (Schaefer & Olson, 1981). The PAIR Inventory is invaluable for both individuals and couples seeking profound insights into their relationships. Schaefer and Olson (1981) emphasized that administering the PAIR provides couples with actionable feedback and insights regarding unmet expectations and perceptions, offering a direct reflection of their relationships.

Literature Review

Numerous studies seek to measure intimacy through the application of the PAIR Inventory. Schaefer and Olson (1981) developed this inventory to measure intimacy at various levels of relationships, including friendship, dating, and marriage. It was reported that pre-test data was used to analyze the reliability and validity of the PAIR inventory. The reliability analysis results indicated that this inventory had achieved high Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients among the subscales, and most of the subscales obtained a satisfactory level of normal distribution. Aside from that, the PAIR item scores represent variances in couples' perceived and predicted levels of intimacy and disparities between them (Schaefer & Olson, 1981). Findings portrayed that the PAIR scale positively correlated with the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale and had low correlations with the Truax and Carkhuff Empathy Scale. According to Schaefer and Olson (1981), positive and negative correlations between the PAIR scale and the Moos Family Environment Scale can be observed.

Intimacy is often associated with one's partner in a committed relationship. The study by Moore et al. (1998) aims to confirm the factor structure of the PAIR and to evaluate differences in summated factor scores between participants who have been in a relationship for more than a year and undergo sexual dysfunction treatment. The sample consisted of 302 volunteers from the Australian community, with an allocation of 157 participants for the first study and 145 participants for the second study. For the first study, Principal Components Analyses (PCA) were conducted to analyze the data due to the unsuccessful attempt to use Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to recreate the primary six-factor model of the PAIR. The findings showed that just three factors explain more than 5% of the variance. Moreover, a three-factor solution representing up to 58% of the variance was used to construct a simple and consistent structure. For the second study, no significant difference was indicated in summated factor scores among dysfunctional participants based on their sex. In short, only three variables and one component can validly represent the field of intimacy for a general population group and a sexually dysfunctional group, respectively.

Intimacy is at the core of every relationship, and the idea of it has been extensively researched in scientific literature, leading to a wide range of definitions and interpretations. Men and women were found to define and express intimacy differently. The purpose of the study by Constant et al. (2016) was to validate the three-factor structure of Moore et al.'s (1998) Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) among the general population and to explore the scale's measurement equivalence across gender. In the

French population, data was collected from 313 women and 251 men who fulfilled the criteria of committing to a romantic relationship for at least one year. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to evaluate the factor structure of the PAIR, and a multigroup confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to evaluate invariance across gender. The reliability was also tested for each PAIR subscale. Post-hoc analysis was conducted to develop a revised structure for PAIR. The PAIR inventory exhibited a lack of metric and scalar invariance across genders. Nonetheless, it is good to consider associating intimacy with other variables among couples.

The study by Lafontaine et al. (2017) investigated the psychometric properties of the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships among individuals committed to same-sex couple relationships. Data were collected from 224 females and 126 males who fulfilled the required criteria. A confirmatory factor analysis was performed. The results from the confirmatory factor analyses indicated that Moore et al.'s (1998) three-factor model was a better fit for this study's data than Schaefer and Olson's (1981) original five-factor model. The modified and revised version of the PAIR inventory indicated that there was a significant difference with certain subscales, based on the results generated from the independent t-test. The findings by Lafontaine et al. (2017) were consistent with Schaefer and Olson's (1981) findings, which found that the five initial dimensions of intimacy were positively related to marital satisfaction. Although the revised three-factor model represents a valid measure of intimacy, it is necessary to conduct further research among different samples of same-sex couples.

Although the PAIR is a widely used measure of relational intimacy, it has yet to be validated in an oncology sample. Walker et al. (2014) aimed to determine the PAIR's validity in prostate cancer (PCa) patients and their partners in this study. 140 partnered patients and 97 of their partners, mostly from the Caucasian population, completed the PAIR assessment. A total of three confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) and an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) were performed. After running the three confirmatory factor analyses to test the PAIR inventory's already known factor structures, the results showed that none of the models fit the data well enough. According to the results from the exploratory factor analysis, it was reported that the 23-item PAIR accounted for 58.46% of the variance, indicating it to be a three-factor solution for PAIR assessment. The revised version, PAIR-23, was suggested as an alternative three-factor structure to measure relationship intimacy. However, further research regarding this revised version should be done to evaluate its suitability within the PCa content. Although the PAIR inventory is commonly used in empirical research, the factor structure on which findings about intimacy are based does not appear to have been validated (Moore et al., 1998). To add, even though the PAIR inventory is used in several research studies to assess intimacy, there is still a lack of validation in measuring intimacy in the Malaysian setting.

Research Objective

The current study aimed to test the reliability, validity, and item analysis of the psychometric properties of the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) among Malaysian couples.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The current study was to test the PAIR inventory psychometric properties (i.e., reliability, validity, and item analysis). A survey method was used to collect the data from respondents. A convenience sample of 549 respondents was a couple/one of two married/engaged/ in a committed relationship (living together) across Malaysia who had voluntarily answered the Google Form survey sent through WhatsApp using the snowballing method.

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Respondents

A total of 549 respondents were categorized as 29% males and 71% females between 19 and 65 years old (with an average age of 32.41 years old, SD = 10.41). In the racial background context, 26.6% were Malay, 20.8% were Kadazandusun, and 18% were categorized as 'Others'. 13.3% were Chinese, 10.2% were Bajau, 5.8% were Melayu Brunei, 3.1% were Indian, and 2.2% were Murut. Regarding relationship status, 87.6% were married, 7.1% were in a committed relationship while living together, and 5.3% were engaged. Most (67.90%) participants had engaged in a relationship between one and 10 years. Refer to Table 1 for a summary of the participant's demographic characteristics.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants

Characteristics	N	%
Age		
19 years – 28 years	260	47.40
29 years – 38 years	160	29.10
39 years – 48 years	67	12.20
49 years – 58 years	55	10.00
59 years – 68 years	7	1.30
Gender		
Male	159	29.00
Female	390	71.00
Race		
Malay	146	26.60
Chinese	73	13.30
Indian	17	3.10
Kadazandusun	114	20.80
Bajau	56	10.20
Murut	12	2.20
Melayu Brunei	32	5.80
Other	99	18.00
Religion		
Islam	331	60.30
Buddhism	54	9.80
Hinduism	9	1.60
Christianity	149	27.10
Other	6	1.10
Household Income		
B40 (RM4,849 and below)	359	65.40
M40 (RM 4,850 – RM10,959)	155	28.20
T40 (RM10,960 and above)	35	6.40
Education Level		
University	221	40.30
Diploma / College	145	26.40
Secondary school	167	30.40
Primary School	14	2.60
No formal education	2	0.40
Relationship Status		
Married	481	87.60
Engaged -living together	29	5.30
Committed relationship - living together	39	7.10

Relationship Duration		
< 1 year	28	5.10
1 year – 10 years	373	67.90
11 years – 20 years	62	11.30
21 years – 30 years	73	13.30
31 years – 40 years	13	2.20

Instruments

The Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationship (PAIR) Inventory was developed by Schaefer & Olson in 1981 (Moore et al., 1998). The PAIR inventory is a 36-item instrument that evaluates relationship intimacy. Each item scales from 1 (does not describe me/my relationship at all) to 5 (describes me/my relationship very well). This inventory consists of five subscales, with each subscale containing six items. The subscales are categorized as ‘*Emotional Intimacy*’ (respondent’s closeness, ability to share feelings and be supported without defensiveness), ‘*Social Intimacy*’ (measuring respondent’s having common friends and social network with their partner), ‘*Sexual Intimacy*’ (measuring respondent’s affection and physical and sexual intimacy with their partner), ‘*Intellectual Intimacy*’ (measuring ideas and experiences of the respondent with their partner), ‘*Recreational Intimacy*’ (measuring respondent’s involvement with their partner’s experiences and common pastimes), and ‘*Conventionality Scale*’. A total of seventeen negative items—Items 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 21, 22, 25, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, and 36—were re-coded for further analysis.

The Flourishing Scale was also used in this study for the purpose of testing the construct validity of the PAIR inventory. The Flourishing Scale was developed by Diener et al. (2009). It is an 8-item scale that measures respondents’ self-perceived success in relationships, self-esteem, purpose, and optimism. The items were rated from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), with a possible score ranging from 8 as the lowest possible to 56 as the highest possible. A respondent with more psychological strengths and resources tends to score highly.

Data Analysis

Data from the current study was analyzed using the IBM SPSS Statistics Version 28 program. The reliability of the scale was assessed by using internal consistency Cronbach Alpha’s method with a criterion of 0.70, which indicates good reliability (Ursachi et al., 2015). Convergent validity was applied amongst PAIR subscales to determine its validity, where, according to Krabbe (2017), the scale correlates to other variables and measures the same construct while also not correlating with unrelated scales. Other than convergent validity, the current study also tested the concurrent validity of the PAIR inventory by correlating the PAIR inventory score to the Flourishing Scale score. The validity of convergent/concurrent validity was reported as good when the correlation coefficient value ranged between 0.40 and 0.70 (Chua et al., 2015).

RESULTS

Reliability of the Personal Assessment and Intimacy in Relationship (PAIR) Inventory

The reliability of the Personal Assessment and Intimacy Relationship (PAIR) inventory was tested using the internal consistency Cronbach’s Alpha method with a criterion of .70 indicating good reliability (Abamara et al., 2018). The result shown in Table 2 indicated that the entire PAIR instrument obtained a Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient of .77. The total scale of the PAIR has good reliability. The Cronbach’s Alpha for all the subscales ranged from .40 to .74. Our findings found that two subscales met the criterion, namely Emotional Intimacy ($\alpha = .74$) and Intellectual Intimacy ($\alpha = .71$). However, Social Intimacy ($\alpha = .41$), Sexual Intimacy ($\alpha = .67$), Recreational Intimacy ($\alpha = .67$) and Conventionality Scale ($\alpha = .62$) did not meet

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the criterion which indicated that these scales need further analysis. We conducted an item analysis to increase our understanding and identify the problematic items.

Table 2: Internal Consistency Cronbach's Alphas of the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationship Inventory and Its Subscale

Subscale	No of Items	Items	Internal Cronbach's Alpha
A total Scale of PAIR	36	1 - 36	.77
Emotional Intimacy	6	1, 7, 13, 19, 25, 31	.74
Social Intimacy	6	2, 8, 14, 20, 26, 32	.40
Sexual Intimacy	6	3, 9, 15, 21, 27, 33	.67
Intellectual Intimacy	6	4, 10, 16, 22, 28, 34	.71
Recreational Intimacy	6	5, 11, 17, 23, 29, 35	.67
Conventionality Scale	6	6, 12, 18, 24, 30, 36	.62

Item Analysis of the Personal Assessment and Intimacy in Relationship (PAIR) Inventory

The 36 items of the PAIR inventory were analyzed using the item-total correlation technique, with an acceptable level of correlation of above .30 (Gharaibeh et al., 2017). The item-total correlation analysis in Table 4 indicated that six items did not meet the item-total correlation criterion of .30, resulting in low reliability in the four subscales of PAIR. The items were: PAIR 2 ($\alpha = .18$), PAIR 8 ($\alpha = .03$), PAIR 20 ($\alpha = .19$) and PAIR 32 ($\alpha = .09$) in Social Intimacy scale, PAIR 9 ($\alpha = .21$) in Sexual Intimacy scale, PAIR 11 ($\alpha = .27$) in Recreational Intimacy scale and PAIR 30 ($\alpha = .11$) in Conventionality Scale. Nevertheless, the reliability of these subscales remained below the criterion, although the items stated were omitted. The result also suggested that removing the Social Intimacy scale should be considered.

Table 3: Item Analysis for The Personal Assessment and Intimacy in Relationship (PAIR)

Scale and Item	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Emotional Intimacy		
<i>My partner listens to me when I need someone to talk to.</i>	.45	.72
<i>I can state my feelings without him/her getting defensive.</i>	.34	.75
<i>I often feel distant from my partner.</i>	.59	.67
<i>My partner can really understand my hurts and joys.</i>	.42	.72
<i>I feel neglected at times by my partner.</i>	.56	.68
<i>I sometimes feel lonely when we're together.</i>	.55	.69
Social Intimacy		
<i>We enjoy spending time with other couples.</i>	.18	.37
<i>We usually "keep to ourselves."</i>	.03	.45
<i>We have very few friends in common.</i>	.31	.28
<i>Having time together with friends is an important part of our shared activities.</i>	.19	.36
<i>Many of my partner's closest friends are also my closest friends.</i>	.35	.24
<i>My partner disapproves of some of my friends.</i>	.09	.41

Sexual Intimacy		
<i>I am satisfied with our sex life.</i>	.44	.62
<i>I feel our sexual activity is just routine.</i>	.21	.71
<i>I am able to tell my partner when I want sexual intercourse.</i>	.50	.59
<i>I “hold back” my sexual interest because my partner makes me feel uncomfortable.</i>	.41	.63
<i>Sexual expression is an essential part of our relationship.</i>	.45	.61
<i>My partner seems disinterested in sex.</i>	.48	.60
Intellectual Intimacy		
<i>My partner helps me clarify my thoughts.</i>	.37	.70
<i>When it comes to having a serious discussion, it seems that we have little in common.</i>	.41	.70
<i>I feel “put-down” in a serious conversation with my partner.</i>	.52	.65
<i>I feel it is useless to discuss some things with my partner.</i>	.49	.66
<i>My partner frequently tries to change my ideas.</i>	.47	.67
<i>We have an endless number of things to talk about.</i>	.44	.68
Recreational Intimacy		
<i>We enjoy the same recreational activities.</i>	.32	.65
<i>I share very few of my partners’ interests.</i>	.27	.68
<i>We like playing together.</i>	.50	.59
<i>We enjoy the out-of-doors together.</i>	.41	.62
<i>We seldom find time to do fun things together.</i>	.50	.59
<i>I think that we share some of the same interests.</i>	.44	.61
Conventionality Scale		
<i>My partner has all the qualities I’ve ever wanted in a mate.</i>	.50	.53
<i>There are times when I do not feel a great deal of love and affection for my partner.</i>	.40	.56
<i>Every new thing that I have learned about my partner has pleased me.</i>	.48	.54
<i>My partner and I understand each other completely.</i>	.44	.55
<i>I don’t think anyone could possibly be happier than my partner and I when we are with one another.</i>	.11	.71

*PAIR = Personal Assessment and Intimacy Relationship.

Validity of the Personal Assessment and Intimacy in Relationship (PAIR) Inventory

In this study, we tested the convergent and concurrent validity of PAIR using correlational analysis. We hypothesized that there would be a positive intercorrelation among the PAIR subscales to provide convergent evidence. The results shown in Table 4 revealed that all the subscales correlated positively and significantly among them. The correlation coefficient ranged from $r = .19$ to 1.0 . However, the Social Intimacy scale showed a low relationship with other subscales. This finding once again indicated that Social Intimacy was a problematic scale.

The concurrent validity of PAIR was assessed by examining the relationship between the score of the subscales of PAIR and the score of the Flourishing Scale. We expected a significant and positive association between the PAIR construct and well-being. As shown in Table 4, the score of the subscale of PAIR was significantly correlated with the Flourishing Scale score. The correlation coefficient ranged from $r = .24$ to $.35$. The result provided concurrent validity for the scales. However, the lowest correlation was found between the Social Intimacy score and the Flourishing score ($\alpha = .24$), again indicating that this subscale needed to be improved.

Table 4: Intercorrelations Among Subscales of the PAIR Score with Flourishing Scale Score

Subscales	1	2	3	4	5	6
Emotional Intimacy	1	.31**	.60**	.71**	.67**	.69**
Social Intimacy		1	.19**	.30**	.31**	.29**
Sexual Intimacy			1	.57**	.64**	.55**
Intellectual Intimacy				1	.65**	.64**
Recreational Intimacy					1	.65**
Conventionality Scale						1
Flourishing Scale	.34**	.24**	.27**	.31**	.31**	.35**

DISCUSSION

Reliability of the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationship (Pair) Inventory

The current study aimed to test the psychometric properties of Schaefer and Olson's (1981) personal assessment of intimacy in a relationship (pair) inventory, which involves five types of intimacy: emotional, social, sexual, intellectual, and recreational. Internal Consistency Cronbach's Alpha was run to test the reliability of the five-dimensional pair. Cronbach's alpha value for the overall pair inventory was generally acceptable. Findings portrayed an excellent level of reliability for two subscales: emotional intimacy and intellectual intimacy, congruent with the previous study by Moore et al. (1998), which also obtained good reliability levels on the emotional and intellectual subscales. However, the subscales of social intimacy, sexual intimacy, recreational intimacy, and conventionality scale failed to meet the reliability criterion ($\alpha = .70$), with social intimacy recorded with the lowest reliability of all subscales.

This finding was consistent with the results of studies that demonstrated that the social intimacy subscale's reliability was not accepted (Schaefer and Olson's, 1981; Moore et al., 1998). The result indicated that social intimacy, which measured the experience of having common friends and social networks, does not yield consistent results in accessing the intimacy of a relationship. Similarly, a lower association between the social intimacy subscale and relationship happiness obtained in the study of Lafontaine et al. (2017) also explained the above statement. However, our study was inconsistent with Schaefer and Olson's (1981) report as it obtained strong internal consistency for all six subscales in the split-half reliability test. Although internal consistency was obtained for all subscales, concerns were raised as no further information was reported on instrument test-retest reliability (Hook et al. 2003).

Item Analysis of the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationship (Pair) Inventory

The findings of item analysis demonstrated that only all items in two subscales of pair: emotional intimacy and intellectual intimacy, met the criterion of the item total correlation coefficient of $\alpha > .30$. Contrary, most of the items in the social intimacy subscales did not meet the reliability criterion, and the overall reliability of the social intimacy subscale did not improve even with the removal of weak items. This indicated that the subscale has some problems and should be considered for removal from the inventory. According to a previous study, the removal of item 32 "My partner disapproves of some of my friends", showed an

improvement after the adjustment (Constant et al., 2016). Item 32 was one of the items with the lowest item-total correlation coefficient in the social intimacy subscale in our study. Moreover, several previous studies revised Schaefer and Olson's (1981) pair inventory and improvised the questionnaires by restructuring the items (Moore et al., 1998). Both revised pairs were developed by reducing the number of items and minimizing the subscale into three subscales.

Validity of Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationship (PAIR) Inventory

The validity of the instrument was tested by using the correlational method to investigate the psychometric properties of the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationship (PAIR) instrument to ensure the findings were referable, as selecting measures that were not validated for specific populations can lead to unreliable findings (Walker et al., 2014). The correlation method was used to examine the relationship of one variable to another and a measure of mutual association between two variables (Sadeghi, 2013). The intercorrelation strength between the subscales will be considered strong when the figure obtained is nearer to 1.0. The correlation method justified the hypothesis that there was a positive inter-correlation between all the subscales of the PAIR instrument. With the analysis result, it has been proven that the hypothesis made was generally acceptable, whereby there was a positive intercorrelation between the subscales of PAIR, which provided the convergent evidence of this inventory.

The strongest intercorrelation between the emotional intimacy and intellectual intimacy subscales has been recorded. In other words, it can be said that couples who can share their emotional side will also have a higher tendency to understand and communicate their intellectual side with each other. Our current findings further complement the findings of Lafontaine et al. (2017), who suggested that couples' intimacy needs tend to be satisfied if they achieve mutual understanding with one another. In fact, intellectual, emotional, and physical intimacies were the foundation of meaningful and real experiences (Heather, 1996). On the other hand, the weakest intercorrelation was found between the social intimacy and sexual intimacy subscales. It can be inferred that the experiences of the couples having common friends and a similar social network were less related to the way they showed general affection and/or their sexual activity. The Malaysian community, deeply rooted in collectivism, values unity in social settings (Sumari et al., 2020), which will cause their ways of showing affection to differ from those in Western. For instance, they would prefer staying together with their parents as a way of showing affection, while individuals from western countries may encourage staying separately with their parents to show they value their parents by living independently. Not only that, the study by Baptist (2012) underscored that Malaysian adults, in contrast to Americans, are not encouraged to spend private time with their partners or cohabit. Hence, the cultural difference possibly explains why Malaysian couples might not prioritize sexual intimacy (physical affection or sexual intimacy) in their relationship and view social and sexual intimacy as two distinct aspects due to the cultural differences in relationship intimacy.

Occasionally, the findings obtained from the current study further support the statement of the previous study that items had to correlate higher with their own priori scale than with other scales (Moore et al., 1998). However, there is a lack of studies regarding the association between social intimacy and sexual intimacy. Therefore, we highly suggest that further research be conducted to fill this existing research gap. Besides that, a concurrent validity analysis was conducted between the PAIR inventory and the Flourishing Scale. We expected that there would be positive correlations between the PAIR inventory score and the Flourishing Scale score. The hypothesis was based on the premise that the Flourishing Scale represented a brief eight-item measure of the respondent's self-perceived success in crucial areas such as relationships, self-esteem, purpose, and optimism (Diener et al., 2009). The results indicated that all the subscales of PAIR were positively correlated with the Flourishing Scale score. The findings also showed the weakest correlation between the social intimacy subscale and the Flourishing Scale. However, we would agree that both instruments had an inevitable and interconnected relationship whereby both could measure the

relationship between couples. Hence, we highly recommend that more studies be conducted to uncover more techniques to define and measure the relationship between couples.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study suggested that the PAIR inventory was able to measure intimate relationships among couples. However, data needs to be collected from a broader and more consistent relationship duration, as the data collected for the relationship duration does not provide a general exposure for each duration. That said, the dominant relationship duration for our respondents is between one year and ten years (373 respondents), and we do not have many respondents from the other relationship duration categories. It can be considered a limitation of our research because, when finding a sample to make validity and reliability tests, we considered it essential to have a relatively representative population of married individuals who had experienced their relationship over an extended period of time and who also represented couples across a wide range of ages; however, the usual college dating relationship was, of course, not sufficient for meeting the criteria (Mark & David, 1981). Therefore, conducting a further detailed study on determining the satisfactory level of individuals in a relationship by filling the research gap can help us unearth more hidden issues and help individuals have a relatively healthy and stable relationship.

Informed Consent Statement

None.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Ethics Statement

None.

Author Contributions

All the authors were involved in data collection, analysis, and paper writing.

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Data Availability Statement

None.

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