

Factors Affecting Marital Satisfaction and Marital Communication among Marital Women: Literature of Review

Zahra Khezri, Siti Aishah Hassan, Mohd Hamdan Mohamed Nordin

Institute for Social Science Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia, Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology, Faculty of Educational Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia
Email: Zahrakhezri54@yahoo.com, siti_aishahh@upm.edu.my, mohdhamdan.mpic@gmail.com

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v10-i16/8306>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v10-i16/8306

Published Date: 30 November 2020

Abstract

This paper provides a comprehensive methodological review of the literature assessing the factors affecting marital satisfaction and marital communication among marital women. This systematic review surveys published articles from 1981 to 2017. First, scientific databases such as Pubmed/Medline, Scopus, Elsevier, and Cochran library, Springer, Scientific Information Database (SID), IranMedex, Magiran and Medlib were searched using relevant key words and phrases. All published peer reviewed articles studied exploring associations between marital satisfaction and effective factors were considered for inclusion. The findings indicated that the income and economic status can exert a positive effect on the couple's satisfaction which can be one of the important factors affecting marital satisfaction. According to the results of these articles, the influential effect of some factors such as occupation, length of marriage, age, Number of children, economic factor and income had been emphasized. In mate selection, it is necessary to note various criteria, including religious matters, moral, mental health, communication skills and sexual factor and action through education, counseling and treatment if there is problem.

Keywords: Impact, Marriage, Marital Women, Marital Satisfaction, Marital Communication

Introduction

Mindfulness affects internal processes and it makes great impact on the quality of relationships with others (Kabat-Zinn, 2011). The present research suggests there is a positive association between mindfulness and satisfaction with married life. Yet, few studies have been performed to address the mechanisms behind this relationship and how mindfulness may work on the effective marital satisfaction. According to a lot of studies, there is a

relationship between the promising processes which consist of dropped stress response, higher empathy and boosted emotional skillfulness, and enhanced general sense of intrapersonal wellbeing is likely (Wachs & Cordova, 2007; Kozlowski, 2013).

Mindfulness includes natural capacity of human for observing, participating, and accepting each moment in life due to stability or loving kindness (Albrecht, Albrecht, & Cohen, 2012). Through mindfulness you can focus on one's daily chores such as eating, gardening, walking, listening, and school related activities such as classwork (Albrecht et al., 2012).

As many studies indicated, an association has been found between the efficacy of mindfulness and its effect on the relationship between couples through which marital satisfaction increases, conflicts and stress decrease and parenting experiences enhance. Fulfilling relationships results in boosting the way brain automatically processes, enhances structural and functional changes in neural circuits mediating attention, regulates physiology and emotion, and enhances or prevents the potential for empathy, raises stress boosting confidence and also increases self-compassion. The non-judgmental inner experience facet of mindfulness has been able to meaningfully predict sexual satisfaction. None judging of inner experience is the single dimension able to remarkably foretell both relationship and sexual satisfaction. The above findings suggest that when individuals are equipped with a non-evaluating stance towards their sensations, cognitions, and emotions, they are more likely to be fulfilled (Jones, 2011; Forster, 2017; Felton, 2013; Nicole, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

The most significant factor behind family members' quality and quantity of relationships is family conflict. Till now no study has assessed conflicts, especially among normal or seemingly satisfied families. Several factors in combination affect marriage institutions, which consequently leads to many problems due to which both young and old married couples must face off with different views, behaviours and notions in marriage life (Asadi, 2016). "Conflict arises when family members assume that what they demand is mismatched with what is required by one or more other families" (Cox F, 2013). Some studies in Iran and other countries have suggested that conflicts are so prevalent among couples, i.e., in Iran, 92% of the respondents reported marriage induced friction (Asadi, 2013). Studies from other nation's world also have revealed conflicts and minor abuse among 65% of the women (Mahapatra, 2012). Conflicts are considered essential and beneficial for a marriage to go on (Ostenson, 2014; Oladiran, 2014). It has been reported by Fincham FD (2010) that couple conflicts bring about depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and besides, they can come up with diverse personal, family, physical, and psychological outcomes, poorer health conditions (Holt-Lunstad, 2008).

Moreover, marriages induced conflicts can exert effects on family life in various ways, e.g., it may lower the parents' agreement and the children's compatibility and raise the conflicts among all family members, parents and children as well as between siblings (Koerner, 2005). A study by D'Souza et al., (2013) on Indian women showed that low interaction with their husbands, gender preferences, and alcohol abuse are in change of their low-quality communication with their husbands. Fear, anxiety, depression, and nervousness about being mothered have been reported by the study on women because of 2 reasons. One reason is that men exert intense pressure on women to give birth to son and families are not keen on having daughters. Another reason is because of, alcohol abuse as the major factors behind low-quality communication with their husbands. The researchers also have determined numerous major sources of conflict, i.e., husbands' violent behaviours, lack of

cooperation in the family, inability to spend enough time together, issues related to children and other families, lack of effective communication, and financial problems (Dildar et al., 2013).

As defined, marital conflicts can refer to the state of tension or stress between marital partners as a couple striving to perform their marital roles. Diverse expectations and hopes are required for two persons agreeing or planning to live together as husband and wife, which might be fulfilled while others remain unmet. Since couples are merely humans and not superhuman, differences in opinions, values, needs, desires and habits as the stuff of everyday life seem natural and expected. The works of Elsevier (2014), have indicated that there were no significant differences in the causes of marital conflicts among couples based on level of education and length of marriage. In conclusion, the inevitability of conflicts in any form of marriage was established. To avoid or manage crisis therefore will depend essentially on the mutual understanding of couples involved. Also, with the lack of support, there could be damages to the individual's psychological well-being. This psychological damage, in turn, leads to an increase in the importance for social workers, since part of a social worker's goal is to assist their clients in developing and maintaining a higher quality of life and the maintenance of a healthy state of mind. Therefore, due to the significance of the balanced function of the family and preventing it from breaking up, it is necessary to know the effective factors in marital satisfaction which is the strengthening basis for married life. In this regard, the present study was aimed at investigating the crucial factors in marital satisfaction from marital women's perspective.

Material and Methods

The present systematic review study was carried out in order to investigate the determining factors in satisfaction with married life, in articles published during 2005-2015. First, the researcher used keywords like marital satisfaction, factors involved with marital satisfaction, and marital relationship, to search relevant research studies, study summary, and reviews in reputable scientific databases including Cochran library, Springer, Scopus, Elsevier, Pubmed/Medline, IranMedex, Magiran.

Finally, all Population-based cross-sectional studies in specific groups of society (randomized and non-randomized) had focused on marital satisfaction among women over the last ten years. In so doing, ninety-eight articles that had focused on factors related to marital satisfaction were chosen in this study.

Marital Satisfaction

Individuals usually get married for some particular reasons like the fear of loneliness, experiencing independency, finding meaning in life and loving. Its worth to state that keeping matrimony may depend on some factors like the reality of meaning in life, marital satisfaction and decent communication. There is no doubt that marital communication has influence on couple relationship (Blanchard, Hawkins, Baldwin, & Fawcett, 2009). For instance, humble communication leads to some problems being formed in the lives of the spouses, then divorce would be selected as the last resort if there is no understanding between the couple.

As revealed by the studies done already, meaning of life plays a vital role in human's life. As assumed, meaning of life is a critical issue in matrimony. Besides, according to the results a meaningful association has been discovered between marital communications and meaning of life (Mohammad, 2010). Several research cases denoted the existence of a positive relationship between marital satisfaction and religion and spirituality (Ellison,

Burdette, Wilcox, & 2010; Mahoney, 2010). As suggested by the previous study, a close personal connection with God has a positive relationship to one's marital satisfaction (David & Stafford, 2013). As Mahoney (2010) proposed, a relational framework links the relationships with God in marriage life perspective. According to the above framework, it seems that being religious serves as the platform to improve forgiveness, commitment, and sacrifice in interactions between wives and husbands and it would strengthen marital well-being by the end of the day.

The study by Ellison et al., (2010) showed that the quality of marriage relationship might be fostered by virtues such as sacrifice, compromise, and forgiveness stressed in religious and spiritual teachings. And also a positive relationship has been discovered between one's own forgiveness and forgiveness by the spouse and the quality of marriage (David & Stafford, 2013). According to Braithwaite, Selby, and Fincham (2011), the positive aspect of forgiveness enhanced in spiritual teachings is related with marital satisfaction which is in contrast with the negative dimension of forgiveness as associated with marital dissatisfaction.

Mindfulness and Marital Satisfaction

The advantages of mindfulness interventions for the individuals are the relationship with higher life satisfaction, and positive affect. As reports show, mindfulness has effectively treated borderline personality disorder, anxiety, depression, chronic pain, and addiction. The newly done studies indicate the positive mindfulness effects on relationship satisfaction, skilful communication and empathy development (Gambrel & Keeling, 2010). The above model depicts a process of learning different ways to cope with stress, like employing the breathing space to switch off as autopilot and letting off worries. This finding apparently matches with 'de-centralizing' as a mechanism of change in mindfulness (Sauer & Baer, 2010). It has been demonstrated employing mindfulness techniques potentially influence marital success and satisfaction.

The research by Burpee and Langer (2005) investigated the relationships between mindfulness, marital satisfaction, and supervised partner similarity. They obtained some evidence that confirm this notion that mindfulness techniques bring about a positive effect on overall marital success and satisfaction. To measure this quality, they required 95 individuals to fill in a questionnaire, which in addition to collecting the demographic data, asked the subjects 14 questions about their overall life satisfaction, five of which were related to marital satisfaction, and one question was about the perceived similarity between the subject and their spouse.

Factors Affecting on Marital Satisfaction

According to the statistics, divorce rate in America has been reported as alarming in the 50 years. Divorce Source (2015) signifies a divorce rate of 40 % among the ones marrying for the first time. For the second and third marriages, divorce is even more common –to be exact 60 and 70 %, respectively. The question posed is, "what causes this problem?". Based on the studies, divorce induced impact has appalling implications for both the couples and the society. Thus, this matter especially involves social workers whose task is to boost the wellbeing of the individuals, groups and communities (National Association of Social Workers [NASW], 2015). By reminding this fact that it's very important to figure out that an individual's psychological well-being might be negatively affected by dissolutions of happy marriages, it seems critical to delve into the diverse factors that might potentially influence marital success

and satisfaction. A research was performed by Billingsley, Lim, Caron, Harris, and Canada (2005) on the key factors of marital success and satisfaction. Billingsley et al., studied the factors which play roles in building strong relationships, and also did a literature review on 15 previous studies conducted on long-term marriages between the years 1953 and 2004; by carrying out the analyses, nine themes were spotted as common in this case as “love, sex, relationship permanence, compatibility in personality, common interests, decision-making, intimacy, communication, and religion” (Billingsley et al., 2005, p.7). We get to know here what factors stated in the prior studies as those influencing marital success. But as seen in any research, one limitation in this study is that it mainly investigated the ones in their twenties so there is limited information on whether the factors are still currently true about marriages or there are any new involving factors.

Several divorce related risk factors have been discovered. As the research by Hawkins, Willoughby, and Doherty (2012) requiring 886 divorcing individuals to let them know the causes behind divorce and finding out if there was any relationship between the reasons and their views about the possibility of reconciliation. The survey revealed top six divorced related reasons each reported by at least 30% of the respondents, the reasons are growing apart (55%), not being able to have words with each other (53%), their spouse’s manner of handling money (40%), disloyalty (37%), not getting enough attention (34%) and their spouse’s personal problems (37%). According to the study, not getting enough attention was the only reason behind divorce with positive correlation with the desire to make up.

A negative relationship has been found between growing apart and different tastes and the desire for reconciliation. The research by Lu (2006) addressed the factors raising the risk that individuals in stable, happy marriages would end up divorce. Lu (2006) suggested that since a higher rate of divorce was found in the second marriages than first marriages, discovering if there are any different factors affecting marital success and satisfaction within the first and second marriages would be practical. Mirecki, Chou, Elliot, and Schneider (2013) performed research on the probable differences about the factors influencing marital satisfaction between the 1st and 2nd marriages, coming up with the information that the individuals in their first marriages are likely to be more satisfied in terms of marriage than those in their second marriages but also that education levels are under the effects of marital satisfaction levels in second marriages.

Age at Marriage and Marital Success

Regarding this topic, four studies carried out research into the types of effects of age at marriage on marital success, a common theme was the presence of a relationship between the age at marriage and the success rates of those marriages up to a certain point. Some positive effects out of waiting to get married up until the mid-to-late twenties were consistently reported by studies, at which point the impacts seemed to level off. One of the first studies was carried out by Glenn, Uecker, and Love (2010) which investigated five different American data sets, with a combined sample size of 20,535, and compared marital success based on marital survival and marital quality between the couples who married later compared to those marrying earlier.

As stated in this research, later marriage led to increased marital survival but only statistically significant until the mid-twenties. Glenn, Uecker, and Love (2010) reported the data sets showing the American General Social Surveys, the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative Baseline Survey, the Texas Healthy Marriage Initiative Baseline Survey, the National Fatherhood Initiative National Marriage Survey, and the National Fatherhood Initiative 25-

State Marriage Survey. The research by Lampard (2013) surveyed the relationship between the age at marriage and the risk of divorce for the couples in England and Wales, in which the data were collected from 5,422,453 marriages and Lampard spotted the effect from the age at marriage on divorce rate, though it was mostly from the relative age; Lampard utilized the direct standardization and logistic regression analyses and applied them for the published marriage and divorce data for England and Wales as of 1974-1994.

By relative age at marriage, Lampard meant "being defined with reference to the proportion of ages at marriage lower than a specified age" (2013). As noted by Lampard, there are effects out of increased age at marriage on later marriages, interpreted this way that the marriages happening after the individuals are over 30, are outweighed by the negative effects that absolute age at marriage of a later time has on the marriage. If the effects of age at marriage on the marriage success drop as one gets older was examined by Lehrer (2008) who analysed the data from the cycles five and six out of the National Surveys of Family Growth in order to pick the required information for her study.

Partner Support

Turning back to the introduction part, the loss of a key source of support is one of the divorce outcomes. So, we would like to know what sort of effects the presence of that partner support brings about on marital success and satisfaction. To compare the extent to which two sets of factors influenced marital satisfaction a study was done by Lawrence, Bunde, Barry, Brock, Sullivan, Pasch, White, Dowd, and Adams (2008) on 275 married couples, and the resulted evidence denoted that husbands should try to provide more support without being demanded and wives should try to demand more support in order to try to enhance marital satisfaction. In the research by Lawrence et al., it was reported that although the support provided by the husbands (but not their support demanding) could predict the marital satisfaction of the wives and husbands, wives' support demand (but not their support provision) had the potential to forecast both partners' marital satisfaction" (2008, p. 458). The first set of compared factors included the amount of support and the adequacy of support. The second ones were support provision and support demand.

According to the findings by Lawrence et. al. (2008), no difference was found between husbands and wives regarding their feelings towards the amount of support, while husbands were more satisfied with the support adequacy than the wives. The adequacy of support for the husbands could predict their marital satisfaction, while support amount couldn't. However, about wives, both the amount and adequacy of support could predict their marital satisfaction, indicating the significance of the adequacy of support for both, but the wives were more under the influence of the amount of support than husbands.

The finding suggested that husbands providing support critically predicted both the partners' marital satisfaction and wives' positive demand of support could predict husbands' marital satisfaction. As implied by the finding, both positive and negative demands of support by wives predicted the wives' marital satisfaction.

Communication Skill in Marriage

Marital communication has been investigated from various angles including the pattern of interactions applied by married couples in daily life and conflict settlements, the effect on the quality of marriage relationships, the significance of communication skills, and the impacts of the communication skills intervention training on couple relationships. To put it simply,

communication as a key element directly influences the quality of couple relationships (Litzinger & Gordon, 2005).

The researches demonstrated that married couples go through pleasure and satisfaction in their relationship when both communicate positively (Christensen, Eldridge, Catta-Preta, Lim & Santagati, 2006) and experience dissatisfaction when both communicate negatively (Rehman & Holtzworth-Munroe, 2006; Baucom et al., 2010; Knobloch-Fedders et al., 2014). Negative communication, as showed by Gottman and Notarius (2002), brings about lower intimacy, poorer relationships, and the final spot, that is, divorce. As a result, communication serves as the principle factor in relationship dissolutions among the couples (Burchard et al., 2003).

The new study suggested that when both partners have more similar relationship standards, they are more likely to have positive communication (Peilian Chi, Xiaoyi Fang, Epstein, Lam, & Xiaoming Li, 2013). And the research reported that compared to the couples with fewer identical relationship standards, the couples who employ more constructive communication have fewer demands/withdrawals and less mutual avoidance. And due to communication, the similarity between the couples indirectly influences marriage satisfaction, which has been reported by the study. Non-verbal communication influence on couple satisfaction has been examined, too. Non-verbal communication refers to the communication mechanism utilized when the individuals don't use words, but which may accompany words or occur separately from words and involves the tone of voice, the volume at which people talk, smile, wink, and have hand gestures.

Gottman and Porterfield (1981) did a research on non-verbal communication for the first time, revealing that the husbands of dissatisfied wives were less capable to perceive their wives' non-verbal communication mechanism, while the husbands of satisfied wives were more capable to get it. A positive association between non-verbal competence and marital satisfaction has been gained by the research. Eye contact and smiles have been viewed as the two non-verbal communication mechanisms often maintaining the functions of promoting proximity, interest, feelings, and attitudes (Andersen, Guerrero, & Jones, 2006). As found by Johnson (2002), steady eye contact indicated positive involvement and concentration in a conversation. As supposed, eye contact and smiling associated with negative effects in any couple interactions are the most reliable predictors of future relationship satisfaction and stability, as the prevalent experience among dissatisfied couples.

Time Spent Together

Another theme throughout the interviews was spending time together that was strongly talked of. It seems vivid that not only the amount of time the couple spends together important, but also the quality of the time spent together are viewed equally highly significant by the study subjects. Because the time spent together gives the couple the chance to grow together and stay connected with each other as they go through life.

The literature finding about the importance of married couples spending time together has been strongly supported by the results for this theme. The research by Johnson and Anderson (2012) showed that spending time together brings about confidence raise in their marriage, which in turn results in marital satisfaction increase. The finding is consistent with the subjects' statement that the majority of them agreed that the married couples spending time together is critically important so that to come up with higher levels of marital satisfaction and success.

Forgiveness

The subjects' responses about the theme known as forgiveness were moderately strong. They not only believed how significant it is to forgive, but how important it is also to receive forgiveness in a marriage. The concept here is vital to consider when working with a married couple due to the fact that everybody is human and is prone to make mistakes which sure will hurt the ones you love, so lack of forgiveness in the relationship would make it tough to be fulfilling and in this regard, resentment and anger would probably appear. The reviewed literature hasn't dealt with forgiveness, thus it leads us toward more valuable factors that could meaningfully influence the marriages getting successful and satisfied.

Although several studies addressed the effects of forgiveness, no research analyzed the literature review for this project due to some reasons such as the studies not directly linking forgiveness to married couples, the limited topics searched during the literature review, and the researcher potentially ignoring them in reviewing the results. Besides, the findings in the research by Lambert and Dollahite (2006) stated that doing religious rituals may help couples avoid conflicts, or solve them and work together to make up in relationship, which are the topics stressed in the intervention of MP-SI by which, Muslim couples were sure enough that religion serves as a source to rely on to settle marital conflicts. In MP-SI sessions, the couples got involved in some efficient strategies to avoid and resolve marital conflicts employing the concept of syura (discussion).

The participants in the intervention were also reminded to get over and manage marital conflicts with prayer, supplication and patience. The drop of marital conflicts and anger expressions during arguments as a result of religious rituals (prayer and scripture reading) were reported by Lambert and Dollahite (2006). Moreover, religious rituals indirectly boost couple's communication and raise their commitment to relationship permanence and willingness to forgive.

Respect

The concept called respect between the partners was also moderately discussed in the interviews. The study subjects debated how significant it is for the married individuals to constantly strive to treat their partners with respect so that to be able to keep their relationships go on smoothly. Lack of respect will lead to higher possibility of resentment, frustration, and generally getting discontent with your partner and the relationship.

The literature addressed this concept, in particular Gottman, as the "horseman" of contempt at its core treating the other person with disdain. Gottman (1999) as the major source in the literature review presents his four "horsemen" including contempt. Gottman considers this as critical since the presence of contempt defined as the total lack of respect for the other individual almost always leads the married couple to divorce.

Intentionality

So far the issues discussed focused on the significance of the married couples to be intentional and conscious of their resolutions to communicate and spend time together. It has been stated that it's critically important to be aware of their time when they are really busy or when the children are involved, they require a lot of their time and attention. When not being intentionally engaged in the relationship during these times, it definitely would result in their relationship suffering from lack of consideration.

It is a relevant issue here in this term that intentionality is associated with the time spent together that exerts effects on the marriage success and satisfaction. As pointed by

Johnson and Anderson (2013), there is a positive relationship between time spent together and being generally successful and satisfied in marriage, thus being intentional and conscious of spending time together sure would have the same positive effects.

Differentiation of Self

Another issue getting as a key concept of Bowen's theory is termed the differentiation of self (Bartle et al., 2009). The participants from Western societies have took part in the study (Bowen, 1978) and claimed that highly differentiated individuals are more satisfied with their lives (Manzi, 2006) and marital relations (Peleg, & Yitzhak, 2011). As observed, this relationship is different between the genders, that is, male marital satisfaction demonstrated a negative correlation with emotional reactivity and emotional cut-off, though female marital satisfaction was negatively related with emotional cut-off only (Peleg, 2008).

However, the relations between differentiation of self and satisfaction in various national cultural groups haven't been much studied, and some mixed results were found. The first one done among the participants from the Philippines got to address the assumption behind differentiation of self with different meaning in the Philippines' collectivist context compared to that of American individualistic context. The proposed hypothesis is that a high connection level with others would be associated with low symptomatology and that standing up for one's beliefs (I-positions) would be harder to maintain due to strong commitment to family and community (Tuason, & Friedlander, 2000).

Happiness

As you know, most couples can achieve all of the key components in their marital relationships and get happy and satisfied with their married life. Unlike this, some other ones lack several components in their bond which brings about the outcomes not always desired, like wives' depression that is correlated with younger age, or lack of autonomy in marriage decisions, marital intercourse and so on. According to an old proverb, marriage bond occurs in Heaven and it's celebrated on the earth. It's a widespread common belief since the special bond of shared children is considered a critical component of happy marriage.

The couples not having able to have their own children mostly remain dissatisfied with their marital life and such marriages often end up in divorce or the husband remarrying. These two conditions bring about further distress and dissatisfaction in life. Infertility diagnosis is a vital factor to measure distress, and marital and sexual dissatisfaction between the couples (Lee, Sun, & Chao, 2001). Husband and wife as two souls tied in the wedding knot for the rest of their life (Dev, 2010).

Being religion bound and rituals may have their own role in a happy marriage. It has been discovered that husbands' satisfaction is more closely associated with ritual meanings and wives' satisfaction with routine practices (Barbara & Thomas, 2001). As Kieran (2001) concluded, being religious also influences the attitude towards divorce, commitment, and help seeking behavior among the newlywed couples and exerts positive impact on marital satisfaction in the couples with less neurotic husbands and a negative effect on the couples with more neurotic husbands. Generally speaking, religiosity induced effect was weak over the first four years of marriage.

Love and Marriage

A controversial subject for psychological research cases has always been love and marriage; naturally, the intensity of love and romantic feeling wanes over time resulting in a

dissatisfaction and relationship cut among the couples. Love and marriage are viewed as the significant ingredients of life, affecting the overall mental health of citizens dwelling in urban societies because they play role in decreasing stresses and the negative perceptions of the working population. Thus, we are required to be equipped both internally and externally full of energy in order to win people's hearts and do more exciting activities to sustain relationship.

Despite all said, the economic and family stability in Hong Kong still exert meaningful effects on maintaining a fertile relationship, thus, there is often no way to get rid of a tedious life since taking trips or playing exhaustive sports cannot be tolerated except at the expense of financial security and safety (Tseng, 2014-2015).

Education and Marital Dissolution

The studies presented a positive relationship between marital adjustment, divorce rate and higher education. It appears that the normative circumstances or social imitation are the potential sources of divorce risk considering the total education in a community. Aligned with this justification, a great number of the individuals with higher education in a community might indicate more liberal normative circumstances compared the one with fewer people having higher education (Lyngstad, 2011).

The study by Gerstein & Russell (1990) indicated that graduate education can take a great deal of personal effort, particularly for married students striving to create a balance between financial resources, work demands, marital commitment, parenting, and their marital relationship. Given the aforementioned points, Sanderson, Dugoni, Hoffer, and Myers (2000) reported that the presence of a relatively high divorce rate among graduate students is not surprising. The research by Harkonen and Dronkers (2006) addressed the women's educational achievement and divorce risk association among the couples in 17, especially European, nations, the derived findings showed the women with higher formal education possessing a higher marital instability risk and therefore, divorcing in the countries with high social and economic costs of divorce; in the case of low divorce costs, no association or a negative relationship was gained (Harkonen & Dronkers, 2006). In the case of Taiwanese women, Chen (2012) showed that divorce meaningfully was common among the women with formal higher education.

In contrast to the presented outcomes, other researchers support the positive role that education plays in stabilizing marriage. A negative relationship between education and divorce among middle-aged adults was reported by Brown and Lin (2012). They also came with the highest divorce rate among the individuals with the shortest duration of marriages. The probability of divorce among the middle-aged adults was found as higher than that of the older adults (Brown & Lin, 2012). In the research pursuing the goal to address relationship of marital conflict, divorce and socioeconomic progress in Iran, Mahmoudian and Khodamoradi (2006), stated that women's education positively affected the divorce rate. More recently Barikani, Sarichlow, and Mohammadi (2012) studied 572 divorce cases and figured out that the marital maladjustment and divorce were less in those with higher education compared to that of the couples with lower education. The finding was interpreted as the married individuals with higher education possessing the potential to control spouse family interference, being independent, resolving spouse's cultural differences and sexual problems in comparison with couples with lower education (Barikani, Sarichlow, & Mohammadi, 2012).

Discussion

Mindfulness can be defined as a psychological process of drawing one's attention to the experiences occurring at the time being (Kabat-Zinn, J 2013, Creswell J.D. 2017), which can be developed through meditation practice and other training. The term "mindfulness" correlates with the Pali term known as sati, which is the key element of Buddhist traditions (Lutz, Antoine et al., 2011, Van Gordon et al., 2014). In Buddhist teachings, mindfulness is utilized to develop self-knowledge and wisdom that gradually lead to what is described as enlightenment or the complete freedom from suffering (Karunamuni et al., 2017). The recent [when?] popularity of mindfulness in modern context is generally attributed to Jon Kabat-Zinn (Harrington et al., 2015).

It seems that mindfulness training is getting popular in the world of business, and many large corporations have been integrating mindfulness practice into their culture. (Good, et al., 2015, Boyatzis et al., 2005; Carroll, Michael, 2007). For instance, the companies like Google, Apple, Procter & Gamble, General Mills, Mayo Clinic, and the US Army present mindfulness coaching, meditation breaks and other resources to their employees in order to promote their workplace functioning (Schultz et al., 2014). As reported, mindfulness leads to employees' better wellbeing, lower frustration, lower absenteeism and burnout and generally, an enhanced work environment. (Schultz, 2014). Since there is a relationship between high levels of mindfulness and ethical decision-making and increased personal awareness and emotional regulation, mindfulness training has been proposed as a strategy to improve the business students' ethical intentions and behavior (Lampe, 2012).

Conclusion

This study focuses on the factors related to marital satisfaction in couples. In our study, we identified a large number of contributing factors for marital satisfaction. Our findings indicated that the demographic specifications could be one of the important factors affecting marital satisfaction. For example, income and economic status can exert a positive effect on the couple's satisfaction. Some studies are consistent with our findings. Additionally, we found an important association between marital satisfaction and the relationship, communication, and intimacy between couples. Some studies are in accordance with our findings.

We also found that personality attributes depicted in the five-factor model can be one of the great factors influencing marital satisfaction. We believe that personal health and marital satisfaction can have a bilateral effect on each other. Those with higher personal health are likely to perceive greater marital satisfaction. The results showed that various factors are an influence in creating marital satisfaction in a couple, which is why paying attention to them can play a significant role in married life. Family counselors and therapists can benefit from these results to obtain a deeper perception of the foundations of married life and, eventually, to help decrease the high divorce rate.

Thus, conducting research on marital satisfaction is crucial and indispensable with regard to providing evidence for effecting a management strategy as well as providing recommendation. Despite the issues raised in this review, other situations such as pregnancy, infertility, addiction, depression, accidents, and loss of loved ones can also directly or indirectly have a temporary or permanent impact on the level of marital satisfaction.

References

Albrecht, N. J., Albrecht, P. M., & Cohen, M. (2012). Mindfully teaching in the classroom: A.

- Alexander, J. F., Waldron, H. B., Robbins, M. S., & Neeb, A. A. (2013). *Functional family therapy for adolescent behaviour problems*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association
- Dehkordi, A. M. (2010). Relationship between women sexual function and marital adjustment. *Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 4(3): 199-206.
- American Heritage Dictionary. (1958). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (Fifth ed.)*. Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing. p. 189. ISBN 978-0-89042-555-8.
- Asadi, Z., Hosseini, M. V., Hashemian, M., & Akaberi, A. (2013). Application of BASNEF Model in Prediction of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Against Women. *The Journal of Asian Women*, 29(1):27–45.
- Barikani, A., Ebrahim, S. M., & Navid, M. (2012). The cause of divorce among men and women referred to marriage and legal office in Qazvin, Iran. *Global journal of health science*, 4(5),
- Bartle-Haring, S., Silverthorn, B., Toviessi, P., and Bhopal, K. (2009). Identity, empathy and “otherness”: Asian women, education and dowries in the UK. *Race Ethnicity and Education*.
- Billingsley, S., Lim, M-G., Caron, J., Harris, A., & Canada, R. (2005). Historical overview of criteria for marital and family success. *Family Therapy: The Journal of the California Graduate School of Family Psychology*, 32(1), 1-14.
- Blanchard, V., Hawkins, A. J., Baldwin, S. A., & Fawcett, E. B. (2009). Investigating the Effects of Marriage and Relationship Education on Couples' Communication Skills: A Meta-Analytic Study. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 23(2), 203-214.
- Bowen, M. (1978). *Family therapy in clinical practice*. Aronson, New York.
- Braithwaite, S. R., Selby, E. A., & Fincham, F. D. (2011). Forgiveness and relationship
- Brown, K. W., Ryan, R. M., & Creswell, J. D. (2007). Mindfulness: Theoretical foundations and evidence for its salutary effects. *Psychological Inquiry*, 18(4), 211–237.
- Brown, K. W., West, A. M., Loverich, T. M., & Biegel, G. M. (2011). Assessing adolescent mindfulness: Validation of an adapted mindful attention awareness scale in adolescent normative and psychiatric populations. *Psychological Assessment*, 23(4), 1023 .
- Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2003). The benefits of being present: Mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(4), 822-848.
- Brown, K. W., Ryan, R. M., Loverich, T. M., Biegel, G. M., & West, A. M. (2011). Out of the
- Brown, S. L., & Lin, I.-F. (2012). The Gray Divorce Revolution: Rising Divorce Among Middle-Aged and Older Adults, 1990–2010. *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 67(6), 731-741
- Burchard, G. A., Yarhouse, M. A., Kilian, M. K., Worthington, J. E. L., Berry, J. W., & Canter, D. E. (2003). A study of two marital enrichment programs and
- Christensen, A., Eldridge, K., Catta-Preta, A. B., Lim, V. R., & Santagata, R. (2006). Cross-cultural consistency of the demand-withdraw interaction pattern in couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68(4), 1029-1044.
- Cox, F., Demmitt, K. (2013) *Human Intimacy: Marriage, the Family, and Its Meaning*. 11 rd rev. ed. Canada: Cengage Learning. p. 131. [Ref list].
- Creswell, J. D. (2017). "Mindfulness Interventions". *Annual Review of Psychology*. 68: 491–516. doi:10.1146/annurev-psych-042716-051139.

- David, P., & Stafford, L. (2013). A relational approach to religion and spirituality in marriage: The role of couples' religious communication in marital satisfaction. *Journal of Family Issues*, xx(x), 1-18.
- David, P., & Stafford, L. (2013). A relational approach to religion and spirituality in marriage: The role of couples' religious communication in marital satisfaction. *Journal of Family Issues*, xx(x), 1-18.
- Day, R. D., & Acock, A. (2013). Marital well-being and religiousness as mediated by
- Day, R. D., & Acock, A. (2013). Marital well-being and religiousness as mediated by db=sih&AN=18437835&site=ehost-live.
- Dildar, S., Sitwat, A., Yasin, S. (2013) Intimate Enemies: Marital Conflicts and Conflict Resolution Styles in Dissatisfied Married Couples. *Middle-East J Sci Res.*; 15(10):1433–9. doi: 10.5829/idosi.mejsr.2013.15.10.11581.
- Elizabeth Nicole Greer. (2017). Professor of Kinesiology and Health Promotion, Lexington, Kentucky.
- Ellison, C. G., Burdette, A. M., & Wilcox, W. B. (2010). The couple that prays together: Race and ethnicity, religion, and relationship quality among working-age adults. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(4), 963–975. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2010.00742.x>Eric L.
- Fincham, F. D., & Bradbury, T. N. (1993). Marital satisfaction, depression, and attributions: A longitudinal analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 64, 442–452. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.64.3.442
- Fincham, F. D., & Linfield, K. J. (1997). A new look at marital quality: Can spouses feel positive and negative about their marriage? *Journal of Family Psychology*, 11, 489–502. doi:10.1037/0893-3200.11.4.489-502.
- Forster, P. M. (2017) Mindfulness and the Quality of Romantic Relationships: Is It All about Well-Being? *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 5, 59-3. <https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2017.55005>.
- Gambrel, L. E., & Keeling, M. L. (2010). Relational aspects of mindfulness: Implications for the practice of marriage and family therapy. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 32(4), 412–426
- Germer, C. K., Siegel, R. D., & Fulton, P. R. (2013). *Mindfulness and psychotherapy*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Gerstein, L. H., & Russell, N. (1990). The experience of medical school: A major life crisis. *College Student Journal*, 24(2), 128-138.
- Glenn, N. D., Uecker, J. E., & Love, J. R. W. B. (2010). Later first marriage and marital
- Gottman, J. M., & Porterfield, A. L. (1981). *Communicative competence in the*
- Gottman, J. M., & Silver, N. (1994). *Why marriages succeed or fail*. USA: Simon & Schuster Inc.
- Hosseinasab, D., Hashemi, N. A. T., & Fotouhibanab, S. (2009). The relationship between religious orientation and marital adjustment. *Quarterly-University psychology research.*;4(14):82–95.
- Johnson, M. D., & Anderson, J. R. (2013). The longitudinal association of marital confidence, time spent together, and marital satisfaction. *Family Process*, 52(2), 244-256.
- Johnson, M. D., & Anderson, J. R. (2013). The longitudinal association of marital confidence, time spent together, and marital satisfaction. *Family Process*, 52
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (2013). *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness*. New York: Bantam Dell. ISBN 978-0-345-53972-4.

- Kabat-Zinn, J. (1994). *Wherever you go there you are: Mindfulness meditation in everyday life*. New York: Hyperion.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (2011) Some Reflections on the Origins of MBSR, Skilful Means, and the Trouble with Maps. *Contemporary Buddhism*, 12, 281-306.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (2013). *Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face, stress, pain and illness*. New York, NY: Bantam Books .
- Karunamuni, N., Weerasekera, R. (2017). Theoretical Foundations to Guide Mindfulness Meditation: A Path to Wisdom. *Current Psychology*. doi:10.1007/s12144-017-9631-7.
- Kendra, C. J. (2011). *The Family Journal: Counselling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 19(4) 357-361.
- Keng, S. L., Smoski, M. J., & Robins, C. J. (2011). Effects of mindfulness on psychological
- Kieran, S. T. (2001). Understanding the relationship between religiosity and marriage: An investigation of the immediate and longitudinal effects of religiosity on newlywed couples. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 15, 610-626.
- King, A., Bernardy, N. (2003). Stressfull events, personality and mood disturbance:gender difference in alcoholics and problem drinkers. *Addict Beha*, 28(1):171–187.
- Lampard, R. (2013). Age at marriage and the risk of divorce in England and Wales.
- Lavner, J. A., Bradbury, T. N., & Karney, B. R. (2012). Incremental change or initial differences? Testing two models of marital deterioration. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 26,606–616.doi:10.1037/
- Lawrence, A. (2008). The Relationship Between Parent and Child Perspectives, *Journal of Divorce*, https://doi.org/10.1300/J279v04n02_07.
- Lawrence, E., Bunde, M., Barry, R. A., Brock, R. L., Sullivan, K. T., Pasch, L. A., White, G. A., Dowd, C. E., Adams, E. E. (2008). Partner support and marital satisfaction: Support amount, adequacy, provision, and solicitation. *Personal Relationships*, 15(4), 445-463.
- Lee, T. Y., Sun, G. H., & Chao, S. C. (2001). The effect of an infertility diagnosis on the distress, marital and sexual satisfaction between husbands and wives in Taiwan. Retrieved from <http://humrep.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/reprint/16/8/1762.pdf>.
- Lehrer, E. L. (2008). Age at marriage and marital instability: Revisiting the Becker Landes Michael hypothesis. *Journal of Population Economics*, 21(2), 463-484. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.stthomas.edu/stable/40344789> .
- Mahmoudian, H., & Khodamoradi, H. (2006). Investigating the relationship of socio economic progress and divorce rate among cities in 2006. *Social Security Studies (Persian)*, (23), 13-41.
- Mahoney, A. (2010). Religion in families, 1999-2009: A relational spirituality framework. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(4), 805-827.
- Manzi, C., Vignoles, V. L., Regalia, C., and Scabini, E. (2006). Cohesion & enmeshment revisited: Differentiation, identity and wellbeing in tow European cultures. *Journal of Marriage & Family*, 68, 673-689.
- Mirecki, R. M., Chou, J. L., Elliott, M., & Schneider, C. M. (2013). What factors influence
- Moos, R. H., & Moos, B. S. (1994). *Family environment scale manual: Development, applications, research*. 3rd ed. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press
- National Association of Social Workers. (2015). Code of Ethics. Retrieved November 25, 2015, from <http://socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>.
- National Housing Federation. (2010). *National Housing Federation: Young adults delaying*

- Oladiran, A. (2014). Security Challenge and Development in Nigeria: Leadership to the Rescue? *International Journal of Academic Research in Public Policy and Governance*, 1(1), 50-59.
- Peilian, C., Xiaoyi, F., Epstein, N. B., Lam, D. O. B., & Xiaoming, Li. (2013). Similarity of relationship standards, couple communication patterns, and marital satisfaction among Chinese couples. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 27(5), 806-816.
- Peleg, O. (2008). The relation between differentiation of self and marital satisfaction: What can be learned from married people over the course of life?. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 36, 388-401. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01926180701804634>.
- Peleg, O., & Yitzhak, M. (2011) Differentiation of self and separation anxiety: Is there a similarity between spouses?. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 33, 25-36. doi:10.1007/s10591-010-9137-z.
- Pruitt, I. T., & McCollum, E. E. (2010). Voices of experienced meditators: The impact of meditation practice on intimate relationships. *Contemporary Family Therapy*. doi:10.1007/
- Sanderson, A. R., Dugoni, B. L., Hoffer, T. B., & Myers, S. L. (2000). Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities: Summary Report, 1999. *Social Science Research*, 39(5), 715-724.
- Sauer, S., & Baer, R. A. (2010). Mindfulness and decentering as mechanisms of change in mindfulness- and acceptance-based interventions. In R. A. Baer (Ed.), *Assessing Mindfulness and Acceptance Processes in Clients: Illuminating the Theory and Practice of Change*. (pp. 25-50). USA: New Harbinger Publications.
- Saxbe, D. E., & Repetti, R. (2010). No place like home: Home tours correlate with daily patterns of mood and cortisol. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 36(1), 71-81. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167209352864>.
- Segal, S. K. (2016). Neuroscience meets salivary bioscience: An integrative perspective. *Behavioral Neuroscience*, 130(2), 156-175.
- Tasha, M. F. (2013). *Impact of Mindfulness Training on Counselling Students 'Perceptions of Stress*, Springer Science Business Media New York.
- The Alexander House. (2014). *The impact of divorce on our society*. Retrieved November 21, 2015, from <http://thealexanderhouse.org/the-impact-of-divorce-on-our-society> .
- Tuason, M. T., & Friedlander, M. L. (2000). Do parents' differentiation levels predict those of their adult children? And other test of Bowen theory in a Philippine sample. *Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 47, 27-35. doi:10.1037/0022-0167.47.1.27.
- Zahra, S. A. (2016). - Ph.D. Candidate of Health Education & Promotion, Department of Health Promotion, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran. Mar; 8(3): 2057-2065.