



MARITAL SATISFACTION AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG WORKING COMMUNITY IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

This study was conduct to highlight the importance of Marital Satisfaction and Mental Health among working community in Malaysia .The aims of this study was to examine the relationship between marital satisfaction and mental health, and also need to investigate whether women has lower marital satisfaction compare to men among working community of Malaysia .the study population consist of (N=60) 30 male and 30 female. Study design was non randomized convenient sample. The researcher used convenience sampling method. The data was collected by using questionnaire. Results revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between marital satisfaction and mental health with $r(58) = .400, p < 0.01$ respectively. This study concludes that marital satisfaction is positively correlated with mental health. Satisfactory and healthy relationship increased persons well being and mental health.

KEYWORDS : Marital satisfaction, Mental health, correlation, wellbeing.

INTRODUCTION

Over decades, the issue regarding marital satisfaction becomes worldwide. Need for happy life and harmony is the most important thing to be maintained in marriages. It has been observed that not all the couples attain adequate levels of satisfaction and harmony. It is important for couples to have a good communication in their relationship and also have better understanding with each other so that the marriage can be a harmony. Marriages can affect mental health and well-being to a greater extent than do other social relationships.^[1]

Mental health can be defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potentials, can cope with the normal stress of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. It is defined that marital satisfaction as a subjective evaluation by an individual of the degree of happiness, pleasure, or fulfillment experienced within the marital relationship between spouse and self^[2].

Marital satisfaction is a state that reflects the perceived benefits and costs of marriage to a particular person^[3]. Dysfunctional and unsatisfying marital relationships have undeniably negative effects on both spouse and decrease their life satisfaction.^[4] Marital satisfaction is tangible feelings of happiness, experienced satisfaction and pleasure by either partner considering all aspects of their marriages.^[5]

The marital satisfaction consists of a sense of content, experiencing content and enjoyment by husband and wife, concerning all different aspects of life. Sometimes problems could threaten the happiness of couples and consequently the whole family^[6]. Marital satisfaction plays a key role in fulfilment of couples' needs and depends on some elements including personal issues, marital relationship, problem solving, financial management, leisure, sexual relationship, and relatives and friends^[6]. When the most important element of marital satisfaction like sexual satisfaction is endangered it could damage couples' relationship or threaten their mental health^[7].

American Psychology Association revealed that marital satisfaction has positive correlation with mental health^[8]. Results from the research show that each spouse's level of anxiety and depression predicted not only their own marital satisfaction but their spouse's as well. The more anxious and/or depressed either spouse was, the more dissatisfied he or she was with the marriage. Interestingly, depression was found to influence both husbands and wives more than anxiety in how satisfied they felt about the marriage. At times spouse's depression level affect the other spouse's marital satisfaction. When a spouse suffers from anxiety, but not depression, the affect on the marital partner was less^[9].

Marital satisfaction is the most important thing in marriage life which can give a better life to a person. However, marital dissatisfaction can give negative affect and it can leads to many other problem. Research literature indicated the importance of mental health and marital satisfaction to study further. Therefore we conducted this study to find out impact of marital satisfaction on mental health in working community in Malaysia.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Study was conducted in city Putrajaya (Malaysia) in from February to June 2016. Survey method was used to get the data from population of working community in Putrajaya, (Malaysia) from Sedafiat and Putrajaya centers. Participants (n=60) were selected by using Convenient sampling, all participants were married. The method to collect data information was questionnaire. After receiving official permission from organizations, participants were briefed and informed consent was taken. All participant were requested to complete Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS, Graham Spanier in 1976 (Graham, Liu, & Jeziorski, 2006)., The questionnaire includes 32 items with four subscales which are Dyadic Consensus, Dyadic Satisfaction, Dyadic Cohesion and Affectional Expression. Mental Health Inventory (MHI-38) was administered to assess the mental health level. There are 38 items in the questionnaire which contain six subscales anxiety, depression, and loss of behavioral, general positive affect, emotional ties and life satisfaction. The entire item scored on a six-point scale (range 1 - 6), except items 9 and 28 which were scored on a five-point scale (range 1-5). The data

was analyzed through SPSS.

RESULTS

Figure 1: Demographic Information

Demographic Factor		N	%
Age	Under 20 Years	2	3.3%
	21 – 30 Years	15	25.0%
	31 – 40 Years	27	45.0%
	41 – 50 Years	15	25.0%
	51 Years and Above	1	1.7%
Education Level	Intermediate	5	8.3%
	Bachelor	12	20.0%
	Science Diploma	31	51.7%
	Certificate/Diploma	8	13.3%
	Others	4	6.7%
Year of Marriage	Under 5 Years	11	18.3%
	6 – 10 Years	9	15.0%
	11 – 20 Years	26	43.3%
	20 – 30 Years	13	21.7%
	31 Years and Above	1	1.7%
Total		60	100

Results show that most the participants were from young adulthood and having 11 to 20 years of marriage commitment. All the participants were from working community of Malaysia.

Figure 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Subscale in Mental Health and Marital satisfaction

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	
Positive Mental Health	General Positive Affect	37.95	8.17
	Emotional Ties	8.45	2.41
	Life Satisfaction	4.20	1.20
Negative Mental Health	Anxiety	24.00	5.95
	Depression	10.1	3.29
	Loss of Behavioural	22.62	6.05

Figure 2; showed the mean and standard deviation for each subscale in mental health. It divided into two conditions which are positive mental health and negative mental health. In positive states of mental health, the results showed the highest subscale is general positive affect which is (M=37.95, SD=8.17). However, in negative states of mental health, the highest score is anxiety which is (M=24.00, SD=5.95).

Figure 3 : Shows the correlation results of Marital satisfaction and mental health among community workers.

Figure 2: The Pearson Correlation Coefficients

Variables	Marital Satisfaction	Mental Health
Marital Satisfaction	1	.400**
Mental Health	.400**	1

Note: p < 0.01, two-tailed

DISCUSSION

Our results shows a significant positive relationship between marital satisfaction and mental health with $r(58) = .400, p < 0.01$ respectively.

Marital satisfaction is highly correlated with high mental health. The more the marital satisfaction, more the person will be adapted to experience positive emotions and feelings. It was found out that people having higher marital satisfaction will make use of effective

coping styles more appropriately and experience deeper feelings and emotions while they enjoy higher general health. On the other hand, marital dissatisfaction is correlated with weaker health state, symptoms of depression, personality problems, and inappropriate behaviors and weak social status^[10].

A study was conducted to highlight the importance of marital Satisfaction: The Differential Impact of Social Support Dependent on Situation and Gender in Medical Staff in Iran". The purposes of this study were to investigate the relationship between social and spousal support and marital satisfaction in medical staff in Iran. The participant of this research is 653 medical staff in hospitals that are affiliated to Tehran Medical University. In this study, the researcher used Enrich Marital Satisfaction Inventory (Evaluating & Nurturing Relationship Issues, Communication, and Happiness) to measure of marital satisfaction. The researcher also uses the Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ) in order to measure the social support of the spouse. The result indicates that, spouse support is more important than social support from other resources to explain marital satisfaction. The findings also showed that social support could decrease the explanatory impact of job satisfaction on scales of marital satisfaction^[11]

"Marital satisfaction and depressive symptoms among Chinese older couples", basically, the purposes of this study sample of Chinese older adult. There are 139 pairs of married couples recruited from the communities near Beijing Normal University to involve in this study. The ages ranged of the participant are from 57 to 88 years old. The husbands had an average of 11.71 (SD = 4.08) years of education, while the wives had an average of 9.58 (SD = 4.71) years of education. There are two instrument used in this study which is Chinese version of the Marital Adjustment Test and Chinese version of the 20-item Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression Scale. The results show that there will be no significant actor effects between marital satisfaction and depressive symptoms among older Chinese couples, when they controlled for their age, educational level and physical illness.^[12] these study revealed that marital satisfaction and mental health among different cultures.

The study was also looked into the relationship between life satisfaction and mental health by taking into account its less studied area such as personality disorder and childhood adversities. The sample of this cross-sectional study was derived from a population-based Kuopio Depression Study performed in Eastern Finland. The population aged range 25 – 64 years was randomly selected from the National Population Register from those living in the area (n = 1347). In this study, the researcher using self-administered 21-item Beck Depression Inventory (BDI-21), 12-item General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12), 20-item Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20), 28-item Dissociative Experiences Scale (DES-28), 20-item Somatoform Dissociation Questionnaire (SDQ-20) and Memory Complaint Questionnaire (MAC-Q) to indicate psychopathology, and used self-report 4-item Life Satisfaction (LS-4) to indicated their life satisfaction. The result shows that poor mental health indicators were associated with concurrent life dissatisfaction^[13] Other study was done to indicated life satisfaction; the result shows that poor mental health indicators were associated with concurrent life dissatisfaction.^[14]

Life satisfaction and social support significantly predict mental health; a study investigated the relationship between marital satisfaction and mental health verified a significant correlation between marital satisfaction and mental health [15]. According to results there was a positive significant relationship between marital satisfaction and mental health. Owing to the relationship between marital satisfaction and mental health, solving marital problems and enhancing couple's satisfaction can promote the level of mental health which will certainly be followed by the promotion of society and family health level [16].

Limitations of Study

Total sample consists of non-government workers. There is a chance that corporate non government organizations have a different

working environment. Second is social desirability might have affected self-report although the scales obtained satisfactory internal consistency values. Our sample size is small and this study needs to be done on larger sample to further appreciate the results.

Conclusion

Present study was significant to found the relationship between marital satisfaction and mental health among community centers Sedafiat and Putrajaya Staffs. Study highlighted that there is strong relationship of marital satisfaction and mental health. A positive and satisfied marital relationship can increase mental health. There is strong need of further researches to work on marital satisfaction to increase mental health among population.

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