

MARITAL SATISFACTION AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG WORKING COMMUNITY IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Marriage is a critical event in our lives. Satisfaction level in marital life has a direct effect on our mental health. This study was designed to highlight the importance of Marital Satisfaction and Mental Health among working community in Malaysia. Objective of this study was to investigate relationship between marital satisfaction and mental health, and to compare marital satisfaction between male and female among working community of Malaysia.

METHODS: This Study was conducted in city Putrajaya (Malaysia) from February to June, 2016. Convenient sampling technique was used to collect data on 60 individuals. Married volunteer male and female were interviewed on a structured questionnaire.

RESULTS: The study sample consisted of 30 male and 30 female (N=60). Results revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between marital satisfaction and mental health with $r = .400$, $p < 0.01$ respectively.

CONCLUSION: This study concludes that marital satisfaction is positively correlated with mental health. Satisfactory and healthy relationship increased person's wellbeing and mental health.

KEY WORDS: Marital satisfaction, Mental health, Correlation, Wellbeing.

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INTRODUCTION

Post marital dissatisfaction is a global issue. Serenity and harmony in marital life plays a pivotal role to maintain marriages. Unfortunately most of the couples do not achieve adequate levels of satisfaction and peace after marriages. Communication between husband and wife is very important for healthy relationship. Unsuccessful marriages can significantly affect mental health and well-being of the couples.¹

Sound mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potentials, can manage stress of life and can prove productive to the community. Marital satisfaction as a subjective evaluation by an individual of the degree of happiness within the marital relationship between spouse and self.² Unsuccessful marital relationships have gloomy effects on mental health both

spouse.³

Marital satisfactions are real feelings of pleasure by either partner.⁴ Sometimes domestic problems can endanger the happiness of couples and result in destruction of whole family.⁴ Marital satisfactions of couples plays an important role in achievement of their daily life needs.⁵ Sexual satisfaction or dissatisfaction among husband and wife plays decisive role on state of their mental health.⁶

American Psychology Association disclosed that marital satisfaction has positive correlation with mental health.⁷ Researchers has observed that anxiety and depression level of each spouse forecasts their marital satisfaction. Sometimes spouse's depression level affects the marital satisfaction of his or her partner.⁸

Marital satisfaction is the major thing in marriage life which can give

a better life to a person. Therefore we conducted this study to find out impact of marital satisfaction on mental health in working community in Malaysia.

MATERIAL & METHODS

This study was conducted in Putrajaya (Malaysia) from February to June 2016. Population of working community in Putrajaya from Sedafiat and Putrajaya centers was studied. Non probability convenient sampling technique was used. All participants were married. The data was collected using questionnaire. After receiving official permission from organizations, participants were briefed and informed consent was taken. All participants were requested to complete Dyadic Adjustment Scale.⁹ 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 distributed to evaluate 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 using SPSS-20.

RESULTS

There were 60 participants, 30 male and 30 female. Their age, education level and length of marital life is shown in Table No 1. All the participants belonged to working community of Malaysia. Table No 2 shows the mean and standard deviation for

each subscale in mental health. It is 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 ($M=24.00$, $SD=5.95$).

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Demographic Factor		N(%)
Age	Under 19 Years	2(3.3)
	20 – 29 Years	15(25)
	30 – 39 Years	27(45)
	40 – 49 Years	15(25)
	50 Years and Above	1(1.7)
Education Level	Intermediate	5(8.3)
	Bachelor	12(20)
	Science Diploma	31(51.7)
	Certificate/Diploma	8(13.3)
	Others	4(6.7)
Year of Marriage	Under 5 Years	11(18.3)
	6 – 9 Years	9(15)
	10 – 19 Years	26(43.3)
	20 – 29 Years	13(21.7)
	30 Years and Above	1(1.7)

TABLE 2: THE PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS

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

$p < 0.01$

DISCUSSION

Our results show significant positive relationship between marital satisfaction and mental health with $r(58) = .400$, $p < 0.01$ respectively. Marital satisfaction has a direct impact on high mental health. People who are satisfied with their marital life can handle other daily life issues in a better way. Marital dissatisfaction leads to poor health, depression, personality disorders and compromised social status.¹⁰ A study was conducted to highlight the importance of marital

Satisfaction. They concluded that for a better marital life spouse support to each other is more important than social support.¹¹

A similar study was conducted on 139 pairs of married couples in Beijing Normal University. Their results show that there was no significant correlation between marital satisfaction and depressive symptoms among older Chinese couples.¹² These findings reveal that marital satisfaction and mental health among different cultures may be different.

Bakhshipourroudsari et al also reported a significant positive correlation between marital satisfaction and mental health.¹³ Owing to the relationship between marital satisfaction and mental health, solving marital issues and supporting couple's satisfaction can promote the level of mental health which will lead betterment of society as a whole.¹⁴ Our sample size is small and this study needs to be done on larger sample to further appreciate the results.

CONCLUSION

Our study concludes that there is strong relationship between marital satisfaction and mental health. A positive and satisfied marital relationship can increase mental health.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None declared.

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