



Correlates of Marital Satisfaction of Indian Married Couples

Nayana, K. B* & James, J. K**

*Clinical Psychology Associate, NIMHANS, Bengaluru, India.

**Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Christ University, Bengaluru, India.

Abstract

Received: 20 May 2017
Revised: 27 May 2017
Accepted: 11 June 2017

Keywords:

Marital relation, Marital satisfaction, Communication style, sexual intimacy.

The focus of the present study is to identify the significant factors behind successful marital relationships. The sample consisted of 60 married couples, who have lived together, at least 8 years and a maximum of 25 years, successfully. The measures were taken using Communication style Measure, Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale, Personal Assessment of Intimacy Questionnaire and Communication styles Inventory. Findings indicated that marital satisfaction had significant relationship with some of the communication styles and nonsexual intimacy. Relationship between communication styles and marital satisfaction was different in love marriage and arranged marriage, whereas marital satisfaction found to be similar among them.

© 2017 Guru Journal of Behavioral and Social Sciences

Relationships begin with an optimum level of hope regarding the persistence of intimacy and the warmth of love (Markman, Stanley, & Blumberg, 1994). Unfortunately, over the course of life, when test of time brings changes in the person, physique and emotional responses, breaches in the expected intimacy would start to occur. The challenges begin to rise against the stability. The concept of marital satisfaction, thus, gets strayed, and the consequences are marital disharmony and divorce. Generally discussed correlates of marital satisfaction are communication and intimacy (Chi, Epstein, Fang, Lam, & Li, 2013; Montesi, Conner, Gordon, Fauber, Kim, & Heimberg, 2013). The present study explores the factors of the marital relationship in Indian context with a special emphasis on marital satisfaction, from own and partner perspective.

Marriage is a socially or ritually recognized union or legal contract between two individuals. Irrespective of the cultural variation, it is principally an institution in which interpersonal relationships, usually intimate and sexual, are acknowledged (Haviland, Prins, McBride & Walrath, 2011). Along with the authentication of a marriage, the establishment of the rights and obligations among the couples will also be realized. An extension of this agreement may influence the relationship of each spouse with their children, and with their in-laws.

There were theorists who evaluated the marital relationship in a profit-loss dichotomy (Pillemer, Sutor, Mock, Sabir, Pardo, & Sechrist, 2007). When the partners had perceived more benefits than costs, they tended to be satisfied. But, if they feel less benefit and more cost, satisfaction becomes a difficult factor. Numerous studies of the past few decades report that similarities between partners in regards to intelligence, education, values, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and physical attractiveness predict greater rates of relationship satisfaction among couples (Gaunt, 2006; Zhang, Ho, & Yip, 2012).

Years of marriage and marital satisfaction showed a clear nonlinear relationship (U shaped model). Satisfaction with marriage tends to be high in the early years of marriage and 'empty nest' period of life; whereas every marriage is found to have a tough time in between (Schoebi, Karney & Bradbury, 2012). One of the major precipitator of the initial decline in the marital satisfaction is immediately after the birth of first child (Clements, Martin, Cassil, & Soliman, 2011). Couples who became parents were more likely to report increased conflict and disagreements. They are less likely to view themselves as "lovers". At the same time, the focus

of both the partners will be shifted to the hopes about the new born baby and, as a result, their relation gets stabilized, but in the form of fulfilling the title role of wife and husband (Twenge, Catanese, & Baumeister, 2003).

Romantic intimacy and marital satisfaction

Intimacy plays an important role in the marital satisfaction among couples. Men and women perceive sexual and nonsexual intimacy differently due to the social and gender stereotypes. Instance is the preference of men to be dominant in sex and love making. Elliot and Umberson (2008) studied on such frequent conflicts around sex in marriage. Couples undertake emotional strategies to alter the perception of the spouse about sex (Timm, Margaret, & Kailey, 2011). These discrepancies may alter the harmony of the self-reported dimensions of love (intimacy, passion, commitment) which, in turn, can lead to dissatisfaction (Sternberg, 1997). Majority of Elliot and Umberson (2008) sample reported that sexual relationship is an inevitable component of the marital satisfaction.

Different findings thus lead to the fact that both sexual and non-sexual intimacies were important for marital satisfaction. But, literature lacks significant studies from an Indian background to place this as an interculturally valid argument.

Gender difference and marital satisfaction

Men and women are different in their attributions regarding the causes of marital disharmony. A usual, but major, complaint of men against the partner was about the conflict initiating behaviour of the wife. Women's usual dissatisfaction was the withdrawing nature of the husband after the marriage (Kurdek, 2005). The influence of attachment styles on the marital satisfaction were also subjected to study. It was noted that securely attached adults are more often satisfied in the marital relationship than those who are avoidant or anxiously ambivalently attached (Stone, Shackelford, & Buss, 2007). Gender difference exists in the strength of marital satisfaction. Men tend to experience higher levels of marital satisfaction compared to female (Connides, 2001). But, paired comparison of husband and wives showed similar levels of marital satisfaction (Kurdek, 2005). One of the well accepted feminist perspective is the discrepancy in the benefits women experience in the marriage (Ferree, 2010). Mutual understanding about the difference, which each of the partners' faced in the past from birth through growth, along with a mutual respect on the virtues of each, can enhance the self esteem and diminish the ego of both.

Whether these facts are same in an Indian scenario is less inquired. More information related to the gender differences in marital satisfaction among the Indian couples are yet to be empirically gathered in order to provide a generalized conclusion.

Communication styles and marital satisfaction

Unconditional acceptance is primary expectation hold by the partners. Conditionality in acceptance could lead to real or potential unfaithfulness in behavior that would result in marital dissatisfaction (Stone, Shackelford, & Buss, 2007). In order to achieve the mutual understanding, there should be common interests among the couples so that they communicate each other about those topics. Such interactions have a vital role to play in the marital stability (Gabriel, Beach, & Bodenmann, 2010). Many of the predictors of marital satisfaction are expressed or perceived through interaction. Researchers on marital satisfaction have wide consensus on the role of interaction among couples. For example, Gottman's theory of marriage (1989) emphasis on the need for positive and friendly interaction patterns as the essential criteria of marital satisfaction and stability. In fact, constructive communication styles are found to be effective in dealing with marital issues arise from work-family conflict and other forms of stress (Carrol, Hill, Yorgason, Larson, & Sadberg, 2013; Ledermann, Bodenmann, Rudaz, & Bradbury, 2010). Interestingly, premarital communication is also related to marital satisfaction (Markman, Rhoades, Stanley, Ragan, & White, 2010).



The relationship between communication styles and marital satisfaction has been considered as bidirectional interaction. The idea that marital satisfaction may affect how partners interact with each other is also represented by Karney and Bradbury's (1997) vulnerability-stress-adaptation model. But, the present study approach communication styles as predictors of marital satisfaction. The most common pattern associated with dissatisfaction is either withdrawal or demand in which any one of the partners perceived to be changed from initially approved behaviour. Criticisms and discussions may accelerate the disengagement and later reach dissatisfaction among both the partners. Gender has a moderating role in the relationship between communication styles and marital satisfaction. For instance, Men tend to be affected by destructive communication styles, whereas avoidant communication style affects women (Wijnberg, Van de Wiel, Kams, & Hoeskstra-Weenebers, 2015). The content of the communication is also important in understanding the predictors of marital satisfaction. For example, religious communication among couples is found to increase the stability in marriage (David & Stafford, 2015). Similarly, sexual communication is a significant predictor of both sexual and marital satisfaction.

However, studies which relate communication and marital satisfaction were scarce when we look to the literature from India. There is a need for an empirical inquiry to gather more information in this area

Culture and marital satisfaction

Pattern of Marriage and consequent family lifestyle are defined differently based on culture. Determinants of culture, such as structure of family, the function of the family, and interaction among family members, etc. play a vital role in the relationship satisfaction (Triandis, 1995). Unfortunately, the literature on marital relationships is majorly from western culture. Generalization of the results of those studies may lead to erroneous conclusions. The fundamental difference in the Indian context, the collectivist culture, stabilized marital relationships. Marriage is considered as a relationship among two families than two individuals in the Asian context. Compared to individualism, collectivism gives priority to the needs, beliefs, feelings, cohesion and loyalty of the in-group. In the context of a marital relationship, such values have to be considered as facilitators of marital health (Georgas, Berry, van de vijver, Kagitcibasi & Poortinga, 2006).

Scholars identified many cross-cultural differences in the marriage related aspects ranging from partner preference, selection, meaning of marital relationship, the importance of love during marriage, factors that influence marital stability and experience of falling in love etc. (Riela, Rodrigues, Aron, Xu, & Acevedo, 2010). Any study on marital satisfaction of the couples from India would be incomplete without including the types of marriage such as 'Arranged marriage' and 'Love marriage'. These labels explain the way they begin their marital relationship. Along with the widely accepted belief, high levels of marital satisfaction were reported by the couples who had arranged marriage (Yelsma & Kuriakose, 1988). The same study reported couples who had love marriage from the state Kerala expressed low quality of communication compared to arranged married counterparts. Thus the present study addresses the role of the type of partner selection on the marital satisfaction of the couple.

Still there is a gap regarding the information which throw a cross cultural insight from Indian based studies.

Considering the limits in the literature to provide much information on marital satisfaction and its bond with romantic intimacy, gender differences, communication styles and cultural differences, but giving adequate importance to the previous findings, the following hypotheses were stated.

Hypotheses

1. Sexual and Non sexual romantic Intimacy would be significantly related to marital satisfaction of the couples
2. There would be a significant difference in marital satisfaction, with respect to Gender.
3. Communication styles would be significantly related to marital satisfaction of the couples.
4. There would be a significant difference in marital satisfaction, with respect to types of marriage.

Method

Participants

The sample consisted with 60 married couples selected by convenient sampling method out of which 30 had arranged marriages and 30 had love marriages. The sample was selected from various economic status groups of Kerala, India. Both, inflated intimacy on the initial level of marriage and adaptation due to long term relationship, might have extraneous influences (Kurdek, 1998). Hence, to control this, married couples less than 8 years of relationship and more than 25 years of relationship were excluded. The mean age of the sample is 42.2 years. Individual with experience any psychological imbalance and who attended any marital counseling were excluded from the study. Other demographic details of the sample are presented in the table 1. Voluntary participation and confidentiality were assured with informed consent.

Table 1

Demographic details of the participants

Variable	Group	F	²
Gender	Male	60	--
	Female	60	
Type of marriage	Arranged	60	--
	Love	60	
Economic status	less than 15000	28	.950
	15,000 - 30,000	29	
	30,000 - 50,000	35	
	50,000 Above	30	
Years of marriage	8 - 13 Years	54	19.86**
	14 -19 Years	32	
	20 -25 Years	34	

**p < .01

Instruments

1. Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMSS) developed by Schumm et al. (1983) was used to assess marital satisfaction of the couple. The KMSS is a short and precise measurement with three questions: "How satisfied are you with your husband/wife as a spouse?," "How satisfied are you with your marriage?," and "How satisfied are you with your relationship with your husband/wife?" Each item on the KMSS has a possible score ranging from one to seven. Cronbach's alpha for the KMSS has been reported as .84 (Schumm et al., 1985) and .96 (Jeong, Bollman, & Schumm, 1992). Test-retest reliability was .71 (Schumm et al. 1983). Regarding validity, couples scoring in the distressed range on the KMSS also scored in the distressed range on the RDAS and DAS. Alpha coefficient, as a measure of internal consistency, is found to be .79 in the present study.

2. Communication style inventory (CSI): Developed by de Vries, Bakker-Piep, Konings and Schouten (2013) was used to measure 24 communication styles based on the four domains of communication. Among the 24 communication styles, 12 were based on the studies related to marital satisfaction. The scale consisted of 48 statements with five point Likert scale response pattern. CSI is shown to be an adequate instrument, with all reliabilities of the domain-level scales surpassing the .80 level. As a measure of validity, personality, as operationalized using the HEXACO Personality Inventory-Revised (HEXACO-PI-R) and Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R), was found to have medium to strong associations with communication styles, supporting the integration of the trait and communication styles perspectives. Alpha coefficients, as measures of internal consistency, were ranging from .62 to .91 in the present study.
3. Communicator Style Measure (CSM) by Norton (1978) was used to measure the communicator style among the couples. Four dimensions of communicator style measures include Friendly, Impression Leaving, Attentive, and Open styles. Norton (1978) reported the following internal reliabilities for the CSM variables: Friendly, .37; Attentive, .57; Impression Leaving, .69; Open, .69. Various researchers have reported similar results (Duran & Zakahi, 1984; Hailey, Daly, & Hailey, 1984). Various studies support the construct validity of the CSM. Communicator style has been positively associated with a host of communication behaviours and perceptions such as attractiveness and communication apprehension (Brandt, 1979). Alpha coefficients, as measures of internal consistency, were ranging from .75 to .97 in the present study.
4. Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR; Schaefer & Olson, 1981) was used to measure the intimacy in relationships among the couples in the sample. The PAIR is a 24 -item measure of the current overall level of intimacy in a relationship and consists of two intimacy subscales: sexual and nonsexual (Schaefer & Olson, 1981). A global measure of intimacy in relationships can be reached (PAIR Score) through the summated scores of the two subscales. Total PAIR scores range from 0 to 96, with higher scores indicating greater relationship intimacy. The Cronbach's alphas for each of the total PAIR scales of husband and wife were .87. But, coefficients were .69 and .83 in the present sample.

Results and Discussion

Considering the demographic details, representation of the sample is equal in gender and types of marriage. The majority of the subjects belong to 30,000 to 50,000 income category in the economic status. In years of marriage, more subjects come under the category '20 to 25 years' ($X^2 = 19.86, p < .01$).

Correlation coefficients, indicating relationship of Communication styles with self marital satisfaction and with Partner marital satisfaction are presented in the Table 2. Self marital satisfaction showed a significant relationship with partner marital satisfaction, which indicated that satisfaction of the couples always go together ($r = .532, p < .01$).

Table 2

Correlation among Partner marital satisfaction, Self Marital satisfaction and Communication styles

Variable	Self Marital Satisfaction	Partner Marital Satisfaction
Self Marital Satisfaction		.532**
Talkativeness	-.178	-.048
Conversation Dominance	-.041	.044
Humor	.209*	-.119
Informality	.385**	.338**
Thoughtful	.120	.095
Angriness	.098	.102
Authoritarianism	.095	.130
Non-supportiveness	-.399**	-.334**
Argumentativeness	-.216*	.014
Sentimentality	-.181	-.082
Worrisomeness	-.348**	-.288**
Defensiveness	-.038	.018
Concealingness	.342**	.311**
Friendly	.321**	.262**
Impression Leaving	.284**	.121
Attentive	-.115	.009
Open	.366**	.234*

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Further, Communication styles such as Humor ($r = .209, p < .05$), Informality ($r = .385, p < .01$), Concealingness ($r = .342, p < .01$), Friendly ($r = .321, p < .01$), Impression Leaving ($r = .284, p < .01$) and Open ($r = .366, p < .01$) were found to be positively related to the Self marital satisfaction whereas Non-supportiveness ($r = -.399, p < .01$), Argumentativeness ($r = -.216, p < .05$), and Worrisomeness ($r = -.348, p < .01$), were negatively related. Some of the communication styles which are significantly related to self marital satisfaction are not found to be related to the partner satisfaction such as Humor, argumentativeness, and Impression leaving. While Informality ($r = .338, p < .01$), Concealingness ($r = .311, p < .01$), Friendly ($r = .262, p < .01$) and Open communication styles ($r = .234, p < .05$) were positively related to Partner marital satisfaction, Non-supportiveness ($r = -.334, p < .01$) and Worrisomeness ($r = -.288, p < .01$) styles were negatively related.

Table 3

Regression analysis predicting marital satisfaction from communication styles

Communication style	β			
	Self satisfaction		Partner satisfaction	
	Arranged	Love	Arranged	Love
Informality	.322**	--	.310**	--
Argumentativeness	-.244*	--	--	--
Worrisomeness	-.230*	-.383**	-.425**	--
Friendly	--	.416**	--	--
Attentive	--	--	.328**	--
Non-supportiveness	--	--	--	-.340**
Concealingness	--	--	--	.306*
R ²	.304	.326	.270	.284
F	8.164**	12.81**	6.92**	10.52**

Results of multiple regression analyses presented in the Table 3 compare the relationship of communication styles with marital satisfaction based on the type of marriage. As far as self satisfaction is concerned, worrisomeness is found to be a common negative predictor ($\beta = -.230, p < .05$; $\beta = -.383, p < .01$). Among love marriages, friendly communication pattern increases the marital satisfaction ($\beta = .416, p < .01$). Informal pattern ($\beta = .322, p < .01$) is found to be a positive predictor of marital satisfaction while argumentativeness reduces it ($\beta = -.244, p < .05$). Informality, Argumentativeness and Worrisomeness could explain 30.4 % of variation in self marital satisfaction of the arranged marriage couples ($R^2 = .304, F = 8.16, p < .01$) whereas friendly and Worrisomeness contributes to 32.6 percentage to the self satisfaction of love marriage couples ($R^2 = .326, F = 12.81, p < .01$).

While predicting the marital satisfaction of the partner, among arranged marriage couples, Informality ($\beta = .310, p < .01$), Worrisomeness ($\beta = -.425, p < .01$) and Attentive ($\beta = .328, p < .01$) patterns were found to be significant and accounted for 27% of variation ($R^2 = .270, F = 6.92, p < .01$). Among love marriages, Non-supportiveness ($\beta = -.340, p < .01$) and concealingness ($\beta = .306, p < .05$) patterns are found to be significant predictors and could explain 28.4 percentage of variation ($R^2 = .284, F = 10.52, p < .01$).

Table 4

Correlation among Partner marital satisfaction, Own Marital satisfaction and Romantic intimacy

Variable	Self Marital Satisfaction	Partner Marital Satisfaction
Non-Sexual romantic intimacy	.310*	.287*
Sexual romantic intimacy	.129	.105

* $p < .01$

Among romantic intimacy dimensions, Non sexual intimacy were found to be a significant covariate of both Self and partner marital Satisfaction ($r = .310, .287, p < .01$, Table 4). Sexual romantic intimacy did not show a significant relationship with satisfaction. Results of the student 't' test presented in the Table 5 indicated that marital satisfaction of the people do not differ with respect to the Gender and Type of marriage ($t = .969, .723, p > .05$).

Table 5

Descriptive statistics and 't' ratio of Marital satisfaction between Gender and Type of marriage

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	't'
Gender	Male	60	16.29	1.65	.969
	Female	60	15.98	1.79	
Type of Marriage	Arranged	60	16.25	1.61	.723
	Love	60	16.01	1.84	

In marital relationship, the satisfaction of one of the partners can contribute to the satisfaction of the other. Social support provided by one partner to the other can influence marital satisfaction, and thereby, to the success of the marital relationship. Thus, Interaction patterns between the partners are important. Behaviour and Communication are two patterns of interaction. Both these patterns play an important role in the success of marital relationship.

To state Gottman's theory of marriage (1989), positive interaction and friendship is the key to marital satisfaction, based on which the prediction of marital stability over time can be done. Interaction between the partners has to be informal and impressive, so that both need not disregard one another, but value the words of each other. The feeling of being valued and respected can enhance satisfaction. On the other hand, when partners are demanding, as well as withdrawn, the interest in communication in either of them shall be lost, which in its turn could bring a gap between each other. Interpersonal communication has a great deal of importance in marital satisfaction. Communication gap can affect the relationship negatively. When one is able to be open and free towards the partner, there are fewer chances for pretending and this can enhance the self satisfaction. Self satisfaction has an interesting role in interaction pattern.

The study provides insight about the discrepancy in self image of one's communication styles and in the perception of the partner. Individuals showed self satisfaction with a particular communication style they follow. When the partners were enquired about these communication styles, they did not seem much impressed or as satisfied as the individuals thought their partners did. For instance, the individual may perceive oneself as humorous, but may not be so in the perception of the partner. Here, the satisfaction of the self is not due to one's understanding about the partner satisfaction. This discrepancy can have inverse influences on the marital relationship. This has an important therapeutic value. Therapists should deal with such egocentric believes of the partners so that the understanding of the expectation would be better. Perspective taking approach may be incorporated into the sessions.

Communication styles such as humour and concealingness would be comfortable for those who love silliness. An Inappropriate sense of humour may irritate others. Ziv and Gadish (1989) explained the gender differences in such perceptions. In their opinion, perception regarding humour in each of the partners has to be given concern, while predicting marital satisfaction. Complete openness about the truth need not be an attracting factor. If hiding any information can nurture the relationship, it is better to keep it hidden. Maintenance of secrecy was found to be a positive predictor of marital satisfaction (Finkenauer & Hazam, 2000). However, hiding unpleasant information from the partner, Protective Buffering, is generally considered to be lead to partner dissatisfaction (Suls, Green, Rose, Lounsbury, & Gordon, 1997). The knowledge about the spouse regarding the concealing could be a mediating factor in this relationship.

The belief in oneself about the ability to leave an impression on others would be obviously relevant; but the way others perceive it can be different. Expressing their emotion exactly the way they experience it could hurt partner's emotions. The perception of one partner



about the interaction of the other partner shall give better information in this context. Conventionally, friendly communication style is perceived to be appropriate for better interpersonal relationship (Henry, Berg, Smith, & Florsheim, 2007). Friendly communication pattern helps them to be more open to the partner which in turn may lead to perception of satisfaction. A causal relationship between communication pattern and marital satisfaction cannot be established. Negative relationship between worrisomeness and marital satisfaction would be a better example of this notion. Both could be results of decreased socio economic status. Anyhow, worrisomeness was found to be the common predictor in the regression analysis.

For a healthy maintenance of the relationship, interaction pattern has to be appropriate. Analyzing transactions among couples have a therapeutic value as evidences clearly indicate that communication pattern has a clear role in the marital satisfaction. Understanding such factors will definitely help the therapist to work with the defective communication pattern and helps the client with the development of a healthy pattern. Generally, communication / problem-solving training (CPT) is perceived as less effective compared to other forms of marital therapies. Communication training has to be considered as an add-on program to other marital therapy as it serves a purpose of enhancing the marital relationship than curing it. Absence of such training may lead to the relapse of distress in the relationship. Such relapses have to be attributed to the exchange of the communication between the partners. Few religious communities in India consciously take the effort to prepare their members for marriage. These programs are primarily aimed to develop a religious culture in the family. Fortunately, such programs address communication related issues for the well being of the family also. Trainers and counselors have to give a special care about the differences in the self and communication style difference in the marital satisfaction.

As a relationship begins, intimacy is low, but it quickly increases. In a successful relationship intimacy will continue to increase, maybe at a slower rate. Like intimacy, passion will have a rapid increase in the beginning, but later it will level off. Commitment is the slowest to increase, but would reach the peak at last (Sternberg, 1997). All the studies previously conducted had proved that sexual intimacy has an important role throughout a relationship. Surprisingly, in this study, sexual intimacy did not show a significant role in the marital satisfaction. Here, cultural factors and values of the society might have been intervened. Indeed, physical attraction has its role in its first few years. After that, the main role is for non sexual intimacy, which includes emotional, social, recreational and intellectual aspects of life.

Another area in which this study was mainly focused was on the influence of types of marriage in the marital success. According to the social expectation in the Indian context, especially in South India, love marriages are always in the 'Don'ts list' and is considered to be something not as worthy as arranged marriages. The majority in the society believes that love marriages would obviously result in divorce. As per the results, the types of marriage (love/arranged) did not show a significant difference. But, the relationship between communication styles and satisfaction was different among arranged marriage and love marriage. Hence, the common sense perception regarding the failures in love marriages seems to be wrong. Further, it indicated that marital satisfaction did not differ with respect to gender.

Conclusion

Communication styles have a prominent role in the marital satisfaction and success of marriages. The present study differentiated the communication styles that are related with the self marital satisfaction and partner marital satisfaction. The findings have a high social relevance. All the researches so far conducted did only focus on the self satisfaction of couples in a married life. The partner marital satisfaction is an area where much importance is not given in the studies so far. In counselling and therapeutic processes significance of satisfaction has to



be specifically attended. Relevance of nonsexual intimacy aspects which have been ignored at the time of partner selection were highlighted in the study. Further, findings suggest that marital satisfaction does not vary with respect to the Gender and Types of marriage.

References

- Brandt, R. B. (1979). *A Theory of the Good and the Right*. Clarendon Press.
- Carroll, S. J., Hill, E. J., Yorgason, J. B., Larson, J. H., & Sandberg, J. G., (2013). Couple Communication as a Mediator Between Work-Family Conflict and Marital Satisfaction. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 35(3), 530-545.
- Chi, P., Epstein, N. B., Fang, X., Lam, D. O., Li, X. (2013). Similarity of relationship standards, couple communication patterns, and marital satisfaction among Chinese couples. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 27(5), 806-816.
- Clements, M. L., Martin, S. E., Cassil, A. K., & Soliman, N. N. (2011). Declines in Marital Satisfaction Among New Mothers: Broad Strokes Versus Fine Details. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 73 (1), 13-17.
- Connides, I. A. (2001). *Family ties and aging*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- David, P., & Stafford, L. (2015). A Relational Approach to Religion and Spirituality in Marriage: The Role of Couples' Religious Communication in Marital Satisfaction. *Journal of family issues*, 36(2), 235-249.
- deVries, R. E., Bakker-Pieper, A., Konings, F.vE., & Schouten, B. (2013). The Communication Styles Inventory (CSI): A Six-Dimensional Behavioral Model of Communication Styles and Its Relation With Personality. *Communication Research*, 40 (4), 506-532.
- Duran, R., & vZakahi, W. R. (1984). Competence or style: What's in a name? *Communication Research Reports*, 1, 42-47.
- Elliott, S., & Umberson, D. (2008), The Performance of Desire: Gender and Sexual Negotiation in Long-Term Marriages. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70 (2), 391-406.
- Ferree, M. M. (2010). Filling the glass: Gender perspectives on families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72, 420-439.
- Finkenauer, C., & Hazam, H. (2000). Disclosure and Secrecy in Marriage: Do Both Contribute to Marital Satisfaction? *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships April*, 17(2), 245-263.
- Gabriel, B., Beach, S. R., & Bodenmann, G. (2010). Depression, marital satisfaction and communication in couples: investigating gender differences. *Behaviour Therapy*, 41(3), 306-16.
- Gaunt, R. (2006). Couple similarity and marital satisfaction: are similar spouses happier? *Journal of personality*, 74(5), 1401-20.
- Georgas J., Berry J. W., van de Vijver F. J. R., Kagitcibasi C., & Poortinga, Y. H. (2006). *Families across cultures: A 30-nation psychological study*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Gottman, J. M., & Krokoff, L. J. (1989). Marital interaction and satisfaction: A longitudinal view. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 57, 47-52.
- Hailey, J.L., Daly, J.A. & Hailey, J. (1984). Communicator characteristics associated with relationship disengagement strategies. *Communication Research Reports*, 1, 1-6.
- Haviland, W. A., Prins, H. L., McBride, B., & Walrath, D. (2011). *Cultural Anthropology: The Human Challenge* (13th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Henry, N. J. M., Berg, C. A., Smith, T. W., & Florsheim, P. (2007). Positive and negative characteristics of marital interaction and their association with marital satisfaction in middle-aged and older couples. *Psychology and Aging*, 22(3), 428-441.



- Jeong, G. J., Bollman, S. R., & Schumm, W. R. (1992). Self-reported marital instability as correlated with the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale for a sample of midwestern wives. *Psychological Reports*, 70, 243-246.
- Karney, B. R., & Bradbury, T. N. (1997). Neuroticism, marital interaction, and the trajectory of marital satisfaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72 (5), 1075-1092.
- Kurdek, L.A. (1998). The nature and predictors of the trajectory of change in marital quality over the first 4 years of marriage for first-married husbands and wives. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 12(4), 494-510.
- Kurdek, L.A. (2005). Gender and marital satisfaction early in marriage: A growth curve approach. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 67 (1), 68-84.
- Ledermann, T., Bodenmann, G., Rudaz, M., & Bradbury, T. N. (2010). Stress, Communication, and Marital Quality in Couples. *Family Relations*, 59(2), 195-206.
- Markman, H.J., Rhoades, G. K., Stanley, S.M., Ragan, E.P., & Whitton, S.W. (2010). The premarital communication roots of marital distress and divorce: The first five years of marriage. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 24(3), 289-298.
- Markman, H. J., Stanley, S. M., & Blumberg, S. L. (1994). *Fighting for Your Marriage: Positive Steps For A Loving and Lasting Relationship*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, Inc.
- Montesi, J. L., Conner, B.T., Gordon, E. A., Fauber, R. L., Kim, K. H., & Heimberg, R.G. (2013). On the relationship among social anxiety, intimacy, sexual communication, and sexual satisfaction in young couples. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 42, 81-91.
- Norton, R. W. (1978). Foundation of a communicator style construct. *Human Communication Research*, 4, 99-112.
- Pillemer, K., Suito, J. J., Mock, S. E., Sabir, M., Pardo, T. B., & Sechrist, J. (2007). Capturing the complexity of intergenerational relations: Exploring ambivalence within later-life families. *Journal of Social Issues*, 63 (4), 775-791.
- Riela, S., Rodriguez, G., Aron, A., Xu, X., & Acevedo, B. P. (2010). Experiences of falling in love: Similarities and differences in culture, ethnicity, gender, and speed. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 27, 473-493.
- Schaefer, M. T., & Olson, D. H. (1981) Assessing intimacy: The PAIR Inventory, *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 1, 47-60.
- Schoebi, D., Karney, B. R., & Bradbury, T. N. (2012). Stability and change in the first 10 years of marriage: Does commitment confer benefits beyond the effects of satisfaction? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 102(4), 729-742.
- Schumm, W. R., Anderson, S. A., Benigas, J. E., McCutchen, M. B., Griffin, C. L., Morris, J. E., et al. (1985). Criterion-related validity of the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale. *Psychological Reports*, 56, 719-722.
- Schumm, W. R., Scanlon, E. D., Crow, C. L., Green, D. N., & Buckler, D. L. (1983). Characteristics of the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale in a sample of 79 married couples. *Psychological Reports*, 53, 583-588.
- Sternberg, R. (1997). Construct validation of a triangular love scale. European Journal of validity study. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 12, 403 - 413.
- Stone, E.A., Shackelford, T.K., & Buss, D.M. (2007). Sex ratio and mate preferences. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 37, 288-296.
- Suls, J., Green, P., Rose, G., Lounsbury, P., & Gordon, E. (1997). Hiding Worries from One's Spouse: Associations Between Coping via Protective Buffering and Distress in Male Post-Myocardial Infarction Patients and Their Wives. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 20 (4), 333-349.



- Timm, T.M., Margaret, K., & Keiley, M. K. (2011). The Effects of Differentiation of Self, Adult Attachment, and Sexual Communication on Sexual and Marital Satisfaction: A Path Analysis. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 37(3), 206-223.
- Triandis, H. C. (1995). *Individualism and collectivism: New directions in social psychology*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Twenge, J. M., Catanese, K. R., & Baumeister, R. F. (2003). Social exclusion and the deconstructed state: Time perception, meaninglessness, lethargy, lack of emotion, and self-awareness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85, 409-423.
- Wijnberg-Williams, B. J., Van de Wiel, B. M., Kamps, W., & Hoekstra-Weebers, H. M. (2015). Effects of communication styles on marital satisfaction and distress of parents of pediatric cancer patients: a prospective longitudinal study. *Psycho-Oncology*, 24(1), 106-112.
- Yelsma, P., & Kuriakose, A. (1988). Marital Satisfaction and Communication Practices: Comparisons Among Indian and American Couples. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 19(1)37-54.
- Zhang, H., Ho, P.S., & Yip, P.S. (2012). Does Similarity Breed Marital and Sexual Satisfaction? *The Journal of Sex Research*, 49(6), 583-593.
- Ziv, A., & Gadish, O. (1989). Humor and Marital Satisfaction. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 129(6), 759-768.