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Attaining Satisfaction in Marriage: A Study of Marital Satisfaction Levels of Married Christians in a Developing Country

Rita Holm Adzovie

Department of Guidance & Counselling, Faculty of Educational Foundations, College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast
rholm@ucc.edu.gh

Abstract. Marriage is the foundation of all communities, societies and the nation at large. If marriages do not succeed, there is bound to be problems in society. Using the descriptive research design, this study sought to find out the levels of marital satisfaction of 400 married Christians in the Accra Metropolis, Ghana. The study found that Christian married men and women in Accra Metropolis were relatively satisfied in their marriages. Also, there were significant differences in marital satisfaction levels with regard to duration of marriage. Although there were no significant differences in marital satisfaction levels with regard to gender, females reported lesser satisfaction than males. Based on this, women were entreated to initiate counselling when needed to enhance their marital satisfaction.

Keywords. Marital satisfaction, Christians, married, gender, duration of marriage.

1. Introduction

The concept of marriage is not a recent practice; it has existed right from creation. Marriage is a gift of God. Marriage is a union between two individuals which is recognized by society. It is a form of relation where two people are approved by society to establish a family, and this involves mutual rights and duties. This therefore means that it is a social institution which is accepted universally (Haviland, Prins, McBride & Walrath, 2011). Olson and DeFrain (2000:45) defined marriage as the “emotional and legal commitment of two people to share emotional and physical intimacy, various tasks and economic resources”. Generally, in Ghana, marriage is recognized as a union between a man and a woman with the knowledge of both families of the bride and the groom. The purpose of marriage is to provide companionship for the couple, the means to offer support for each other, and a legitimate avenue for sexual satisfaction and reproduction. Marriage is usually a group affair in Ghana which involves not only the immediate relatives of the couple but more distant kin folk (Wreh & Kofitse, 1998). Fowers (1998) describes love and marriage as the primary source of individual happiness and meaning in life. This makes a powerful case for the wealth of research on marital satisfaction and understanding the processes that operate within a marriage.

Marital satisfaction constitutes one of the most essential aspects of family life, and the quality of one's marriage is critical for life satisfaction (Waite, 1995). Studies of marital satisfaction attracted widespread attention in the 1990s from scholars representing diverse orientations and goals (Bradbury, Fincham & Beach, 2000). Marital satisfaction can affect not only the physical and mental health of both spouses (Holt-Lunstad, Birmingham & Jones, 2008) but also their children's development, well-being, biological function, academic performance, social skills, and relationships (Cummings & Davies, 2010).

Marital satisfaction refers to a global level of favourability that individual spouses report with their marital relationship (Roach, Frazier & Bowden, as cited in Knowles, 2004). The conceptualisation and measurement of marital satisfaction has been viewed by different researchers. However, irrespective of the conceptualisation of marital satisfaction, there are factors that appear to remain common to happy couples - they are likely to spend more quality time together, are more humorous and affectionate and less hostile towards each other.

Several prior studies have looked retrospectively at long lasting marriages in order to determine the reasons for their longevity. Robinson and Blanton (1993) found that the key characteristics identified by happy couples included: intimacy, balanced autonomy, commitment, communication, similar religious orientation, and congruent perceptions of the relationship. Finkel and Hansen (as cited in Sokolski, 1995) examined 31 couples who were married 30 years or more. The results of their study indicated a curvilinear pattern of satisfaction, with the respondents remembering satisfaction as lower in the middle, childrearing stage of the family life cycle.

Amankwah (2013) has indicated that divorce cases in Ghana are high. He further stated that data available at the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) indicated that a total of 618 marriages were dissolved in 2007 out of 1,511 marriages that were registered in that year. Statistics from the Greater Accra Head Office of Legal Aid Ghana indicates that at least 40% of marriages registered annually in the region break up within a span of 14 months. The divorce situation is proof that several people experience dissatisfactions in marriage. In relation to this, Farahbakhsh (cited in Mostafavi, Ghosvami & Mosavi, 2014) noted that incidence of marital dissatisfaction may be preliminary to separation and divorce.

Scholars have conducted studies in Ghana on issues related to marital satisfaction. Researchers like Arthur-Norman (2015); Akpadago (2014); Dabone (2012) and Ackumey (2011) have conducted investigations into the issues related to marital satisfaction in the Ashanti, Central, Brong-Ahafo and Northern Regions of Ghana respectively. All of these studies found that several married couples in Ghana were dissatisfied in their marriages. Although there are reports of high levels of divorce in Accra Metropolis, it appears little has been done on assessing the marital satisfaction levels of Christians in Accra Metropolis. I therefore considered it necessary to conduct this study; to establish the levels of marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction among married Christians in Accra Metropolis. The Greater-Accra region is chosen because according to Ankrah (2013), it has the highest number of divorce cases in Ghana. The study sought to answer questions related to the level of marital satisfaction of married Christians in the Accra Metropolis, differences in the marital satisfaction levels of married Christians in the Accra Metropolis with regard to gender and duration of marriage.

2. Literature review

The Literature is reviewed under the relationship between marital satisfaction and the following: religion, gender, duration of marriage, communication, and marital roles.

1.1. Religion and marital satisfaction

Whether a couple matches up in their spiritual beliefs or not can be a potential source of major contention because of its deeply personal nature. People often operate from the framework that when basic spiritual beliefs differ between two people who are trying to live a life together; it can lead to several problems (Nelson, 2008). An abundance of research has documented that religious and spiritual factors contribute to adult psychological well-being (Pargament, Mahoney & Shafranske, 2013). Religious practice (regular attendance at religious services) promotes the well-being of individuals, families, and the community (Fagan, 2006).

Religiosity is a feature which aids the prediction of marital satisfaction. Mahoney (2010) found a positive association between religiousness (i.e., religious beliefs and practices) and greater marital quality. Fincham et al. (cited in Webbo, Kihara & Karume, 2017) found a positive correlation between religiosity and relationship satisfaction. They noted that young couples who regularly engaged in religious prayer reported high levels of happiness and satisfaction in their relationship.

2.1.1. Gender and marital satisfaction. Extant research suggests that men and women act in different ways and manner when they are in romantic relationships. This claim has however been challenged in studies of couples reporting a lack of gender differences (Karantzas, Goncalves, Feeney & McCabe, 2011). Research suggests that while men and women may behave differently in relationships, their underlying needs, wants and perspectives may not be so different; especially for couples in committed relationships (Hendrick, Hendrick & Adler, 1998). In a longitudinal study of couples, Kurdek (2005) found few differences over time in men and women's ratings of marital satisfaction, social support and spousal interactions. Moreover, the strength of the associations between these factors was similar for men and women.

Research regarding gender differences in marital satisfaction perceptions has yielded mixed results. Heaton and Blake (1999, p.30) found that being in a happy marriage was more important to women than men and they also found that women's overall experiences of marriage were more negative than that of men. Amato, Booth, Johnson and Rogers (2007) have found that men were somewhat more satisfied with their marriages than women. The situation as shown by Ackumey (2011) is not so different in Ghana. Her study confirmed that men were slightly satisfied in their marriages than women before treatment.

2.1.2. Duration of marriage and marital satisfaction. Prior research which examined the relationship between duration of marriage and marital satisfaction have lacked consistency regarding their findings, thereby leaving room for debate in literature regarding the exact nature of the relationship between duration of marriage and marital quality (Clements & Swensen, 2000). However, a well-documented account about marriage is that marital relationships have a strong tendency to decrease in satisfaction over the first twenty years of the marriage. Most newly married couples report very high satisfaction and any change from that point would probably be in a downward direction (Broderick, cited in Animasahun & Oladeni, 2012)

2.1.3. Communication and marital satisfaction. In the past two decades, Bradbury, Fincham and Beach (2000) assert that scholarship has focused on the influence of interaction and communication behaviour on marriage and marital quality. It is assumed that marital communication is instrumental for marital quality and even one of the most crucial factors contributing to marital satisfaction (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). According to Noller and Fitzpatrick (1990:839) "there is a weight of evidence that marital interaction causes marital

satisfaction”. Communication plays a central role in marriage. Consistent with survey findings, communication problems constitute the most frequent complaint of couples who go for therapy (Geiss & O’Leary, as cited in Burleson & Denton, 1997). A popular assumption has been that the cause of many marital communication problems is deficient communication skills on the part of spouses (O’Donohue & Crouch, 1996). Snyder (2017) also names personality differences, busy lifestyles and resentment relating to other interpersonal differences as part of the reasons why married persons suffer communication difficulties. From the literature reviewed, it appears that communication is very important in marriage.

2.1.4. Marital roles and marital satisfaction. According to Baldwin, Ellis and Baldwin (1999) marital satisfaction is very high when one spouse who is strongly committed to an activity receives significant role support from the non-committed spouse. The roles of husband and wife carry a complex pattern of expectations of the responses which are to come from the other. Whether or not a marital partner responds consistently with the expectations of the other depends on his/her own preconceived concept of his/her role, his/her own expectations regarding the reciprocal role of his/her spouse, his/her perception of his/her mate’s expectations of him/her, and the degree of correspondence between the two sets of role concepts and expectations (Julien & Markman, 1991).

The division of household labour appears to relate differentially to women and men’s estimations of marital satisfaction. According to Heaton and Blake (1999), when wives perceive unfairness, their perceptions of unfairness has a stronger effect on marital satisfaction than husbands’ reports of unfairness has. Research has shown that perceptions of fairness regarding the distribution of household labour seems not more important in the assessment of marriage than the amount of housework performed by each spouse (Perry-Jenkins & Folk, 1994). This is supported by Blair’s (1993, p. 193) view that the “subjective perceptions of marriage are more important than the demographic characteristics of couple unions with regard to understanding marital satisfaction”. Blair further stated that if conflict does arise over the division of labour, it is because wives are dissatisfied. It appears that husbands generally, regardless of gender ideology, education or class status remain satisfied with an unequal division of labour until their wives become dissatisfied, and then only sometimes, will they alter their behaviour to redress the inequality (Dillaway & Broman, 2001).

3. Research methods

This quantitative study adopted the descriptive research design. The population for the study comprised all Christian married men and women in the Accra Metropolis of Ghana. The sample comprised only Christian married men and women in the Accra Metropolis. A sample of 400 was purposively drawn from a population of 34,518 for the study. The research instrument used was the Marital Satisfaction Inventory (MSI); a standardised inventory developed by Essuman (2010). Based on the four-point Likert type scale, the mean scores were categorised as follows:

- Not at All Satisfied is an interval of $1.0 \leq 1.5$
- Not Satisfied is an interval of $1.6 \leq 2.5$
- Satisfied is an interval of $2.6 \leq 3.5$
- Very Satisfied is an interval of $3.6 \leq 4.0$

4. Results and Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the level of marital satisfaction of married Christians in the Accra Metropolis. In addition, the differences in the marital satisfaction levels of married Christians regarding gender and duration of marriage was investigated. Table 1 displays the demographic distribution of respondents.

Table 1. Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Variable	No. of Respondents	Percent (%)
Sex		
Male	192	48
Female	208	52
Age		
20-35 years	164	41.0
36-50 years	179	44.7
Over 50 years	57	14.3
Duration of Marriage		
0-10	249	62.3
11-20	109	27.2
Over 20	42	10.5
Church Attendance		
Attend same church	285	71.3
Attend different churches	115	28.7
Presence of Children		
Have children	329	82.3
Do not have children	71	17.7

Table 1 reveals that, out of the 400 respondents, there were 192 men and 208 women. About age, most of the respondents were aged between 20-50 years. It can also be seen from Table 1 that quite a large number (249 out of 400) of the respondents had been married between 0-10 years. Regarding religious affiliation, 71% of the respondents indicated that they attended the same church with their partners. Also, majority of the respondents (82%) were married with children. The results in Table 1 have been used in the discussion of the research questions.

Research Question One: What is the level of marital satisfaction of married Christians in the Accra Metropolis?

This question sought to find out the marital satisfaction levels of married Christians in Accra Metropolis. Responses were obtained from all the 400 respondents. Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations of Respondents' Level of Marital Satisfaction

Marital Satisfaction Scale	N	Mean	S.D.
Temperament	400	2.72	.67
General Evaluation	400	2.65	.76
Affection, Love and Appreciation	400	2.64	.54
In-law Issues	400	2.63	.49
Character	400	2.61	.62
Relationship	400	2.53	.66
Marital Roles	400	2.49	.64
Overall	400	2.61	.55

From Table 2, the overall mean score for all the sub-scales was 2.61 and this falls in the range of 'Satisfied' (which is between 2.6-3.5). Notably, on five out of the seven scales, the mean scores fell within the 'Satisfied' range, whilst for the 'Relationship' and 'Marital Roles' scale, the means were below 2.61; indicating dissatisfaction.

Contrary to the finding that the respondents were relatively satisfied in their marriages, researchers like Bogler (2013) and Amankwah (2013) have reported increasing levels of marital dissatisfaction in Ghana. Possible reasons why the overall mean score showed that the respondents were satisfied could be because the population used in this study were Christians who attended church. As indicated earlier in Table 1, 71% of the respondents reported that they attended the same church with their partners. In support of this, Fagan (2006) noted that regular attendance at religious services is linked to healthy and strong marriages. Nelson (2008) also indicated that, whether or not a couple matches up in their spiritual beliefs can be a potential source of major contention because of its deeply personal nature.

It was also observed that, generally, the respondents reported dissatisfaction on the Relationship and Marital Roles scales. The Relationship scale of the MSI focuses on issues related to communication among couples. The fact that the score on relationship shows 'dissatisfaction' implies that communication among Christian couples was not so healthy. Supporting this finding, research has shown that marital communication is instrumental for marital quality and even one of the most crucial factors contributing to marital satisfaction (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). According to Noller and Fitzpatrick (1990, p. 839) "there is weight of evidence that marital interaction causes marital satisfaction". Communication plays a key role in marriage. Snyder (2017) names personality differences, busy lifestyles and resentment relating to other interpersonal differences as part of the reasons why married persons suffer communication difficulties.

With regard to respondents showing dissatisfaction on the 'Marital Roles' scale, it implies that some of the respondents felt their partners did not fulfil their expected or perceived roles in the marriage. The current result finds support in Dancer and Gilbert's (as cited in Sokolski, 1995) finding that equity or the perception that a spouse was doing his/her fair share was particularly important in higher ratings of marital adjustment and satisfaction in both spouses. This perhaps means that the respondents in this study, perceived unfairness in the household division of labour. Julien and Markman (1991) also reported that spousal support (especially husbands) was a critical variable in relationship satisfaction. They further indicated that whether or not a marital partner responds consistently with the expectations of the other depends on some variables. These include his/her own preformed concept of role expectations regarding the reciprocal role of his/her spouse, and the perception of spousal expectations. If these role concepts are similar, communication is easier and the relationship existing between the marriage partners is more satisfactory to both. Perhaps respondents in this study experienced 'Relationship' challenges because of dissatisfaction experienced in discharging their marital roles.

To answer Research Question One, it can be concluded from Table 2 that Christian married men and women in Accra Metropolis are relatively satisfied in their marriages.

Research Question Two: What differences exist in the marital satisfaction levels of married Christians in the Accra Metropolis with regard to gender?

This question sought to find out the level of marital satisfaction of married Christian men and women in Accra Metropolis. Table 3 presents the results based on an independent samples t-test analysis at the alpha level of 0.05.

Table 3. t-test on Gender Differences in Marital Satisfaction Levels

Marital Satisfaction	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t	df	Sig.
Relationship	Male	192	2.55	.65	.139	398	.890
	Female	208	2.53	.66			
Affection, Love & Appreciation	Male	192	2.63	.49	-.028	398	.977
	Female	208	2.63	.58			
Character	Male	192	2.63	.64	.559	398	.576
	Female	208	2.59	.60			
Temperament	Male	192	2.76	.68	.962	398	.337
	Female	208	2.69	.66			
In-Law Issues	Male	192	2.70	.74	1.478	398	.140
	Female	208	2.59	.71			
Marital Roles	Male	192	2.50	.71	.124	398	.901
	Female	208	2.49	.74			
General Evaluation	Male	192	2.71	.78	1.473	398	.142
	Female	208	2.60	.78			
Overall	Male	192	2.62	.54	.362	398	.718
	Female	208	2.60	.55			

p<.05

From Table 3, there were no significant gender differences in marital satisfaction levels. In relation to this, researchers like Hendrick et al. (1998); and Kurdek (2005) found no gender differences regarding marital satisfaction. They suggest that while men and women may behave differently in relationships, their underlying needs, wants and perspectives may not be so different, especially for couples in committed relationships.

It can be also observed from Table 3 that, in general, the males expressed slightly higher satisfaction than the females. In relation to this, Heaton and Blake (1999); Ackumme (2011) found that women's overall experiences of marriage were more negative than men. A possible reason why the males in this study reported relatively better satisfaction than the women could be the care of children which seems to require more effort from women than men. It is important to note that as indicated in Table 1, 82% of the respondents in this study have children. In support of this, Twenge, Campbell and Foster (2003) found that the transition to parenthood affects wives' satisfaction more than that of husbands. Meijer and Van den Wittenboer (2007) found a decrease in marital satisfaction that was more pronounced in women than men following the birth of their first child. They attributed this finding to the insomnia created by a crying baby and the gender norms that dictated that child care was a woman's job. Supporting the finding that the females reported higher dissatisfaction with regard to marital roles although both sexes were dissatisfied, Blair (1993) stated that if conflict does arise over the division of labour, it is because wives are dissatisfied. Almeida and Horn (2004) also reported that women report higher levels of role overload and daily stress than men.

Research Question Three: What differences exist in the marital satisfaction levels of married Christians with regard to duration of marriage?

This question focused on how the duration or length of marriage affects marital satisfaction levels. Tables 4 and 5 display the results. Table 4 presents the means and standard deviations whilst Table 5 shows the ANOVA results.

Table 4. Means and Standard Deviation with regard to Duration of Marriage

Marital Satisfaction	Duration	Mean	S.D.
Relationship	0-10	2.60	.68

	11-20	2.35	.57
	Over 20	2.61	.58
Affection, Love and Appreciation	0-10	2.71	.54
	11-20	2.48	.53
	Over 20	2.69	.49
Character	0-10	2.69	.66
	11-20	2.43	.47
	Over 20	2.60	.63
Temperament	0-10	2.83	.65
	11-20	2.52	.60
	Over 20	2.60	.81
In-law Issues	0-10	2.52	.60
	11-20	2.65	.46
	Over 20	2.73	.63
Marital Roles	0-10	2.54	.66
	11-20	2.37	.60
	Over 20	2.51	.60
General Evaluation	0-10	2.70	.81
	11-20	2.39	.65
	Over 20	2.62	.85
Overall	0-10	2.65	.54
	11-20	2.47	.45
	Over 20	2.62	.55

The overall results in Table 4 shows that respondents married 0-10 years and those married over 20 years reported more marital satisfaction than those married between 11-20 years.

Table 5. ANOVA on Differences in Marital Satisfaction with regard to Duration of Marriage

Marital Satisfaction		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Relationship	Between Groups	5.061	2	2.530	6.007	.003
	Within Groups	167.225	397	.421		
	Total	172.286	399			
Affection, Love & Appreciation	Between Groups	3.947	2	1.974	6.950	.001
	Within Groups	112.741	397	.284		
	Total	116.688	399			
Character	Between Groups	5.061	2	2.530	6.808	.001
	Within Groups	147.553	397	.372		
	Total	152.613	399			
Temperament	Between Groups	7.898	2	3.949	9.150	.000
	Within Groups	171.337	397	.432		
	Total	179.234	399			
In-Law Issues	Between Groups	2.425	2	1.212	3.762	.024
	Within Groups	127.957	397	.322		
	Total	130.382	399			
Marital Roles	Between Groups	2.259	2	1.129	2.754	.065

	Within Groups	162.824	397	.410		
	Total	165.083	399			
General Evaluation	Between Groups	6.996	2	3.498	5.842	.003
	Within Groups	237.719	397	.599		
	Total	244.715	399			
Overall	Between Groups	2.564	2	1.282	4.763	.009
	Within Groups	106.845	397	.269		
	Total	109.408	399			

p<.05

A look at Table 5 shows that in general, there were significant differences in marital satisfaction levels with regard to duration of marriage. Also, in general, those married between 0-10 years reported more satisfaction than the others. Again those who had been married for over 20 years reported more satisfaction than those married between 11 and 20 years. It can also be observed that with the exception of 'Marital Roles', there were significant differences in the marital satisfaction levels of the respondents with regard to duration of marriage. Notably, all the respondents, regardless of the duration of marriage reported dissatisfaction with regard to marital roles. With regard to in-law issues, respondents who had been married for 0-10 years, reported dissatisfaction.

To confirm where the significant differences were, a post hoc was done using the Tukey HSD statistics. Table 6 presents the overall Post Hoc results.

Table 6. Tukey HSD on Marital Satisfaction with regard to Duration of Marriage

	(I) duration of marriage	(J) duration of marriage	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
Overall	0-10	11-20	.18313	.006
		Over 20	.03210	.927
	11-20	0-10	-.18313	.006
		Over 20	-.15103	.246
	Over 20	0-10	-.03210	.927
		11-20	.15103	.246

p<.05

From Table 6, it can be observed that the significant differences were between 0-10 years and 11-20 years.

To affirm the finding that those who had been married for over 20 years reported high satisfaction in marriage, Karney and Bradbury (1997) reported that marital satisfaction was once believed to follow a U-shaped trajectory over time, such that couples began their marriages satisfied, this satisfaction somewhat reduced over the years, but resurfaced to newly-wed levels after many years together. Contrarily, Karney and Bradbury (1995) and Vaillant and Vaillant (1993) have reported that a common pattern in marital satisfaction was a slowly decreasing linear trajectory where levels of

marital satisfaction were highest in the early stages and continually declined throughout the rest of the marital relationship.

I believe the respondents in this study who have married over 20 years expressed high marital satisfaction because their marriages may have been practised on some religious principles. According to Mahoney (2010), religious beliefs and practices among couples leads to greater marital quality. Their satisfaction levels could also probably be because after living together for several years, some couples accept their partners as who they are. They are not prepared to divorce or remarry and are thus ready to live harmoniously with each other.

In relation to finding that those married between 11-20 years reported lesser satisfaction on most of the scales of the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, Van Laningham, Johnson and Amato (2001)'s, longitudinal data have shown that marital duration had a negative impact on marital happiness; marital relationships have a strong tendency to decrease in satisfaction over the first twenty years of the marriage. A reason for the low marital satisfaction among those married for 11-20 years could be related to parenting challenges. All things being equal, marriages in Ghana that have lasted between 11-20 years, would have adolescent children; the adolescence stage has been described as a time of storm and stress (Arnett, 1999). Arnett further stated that, extreme parent-child conflict and adolescent rebellion are an inevitable part of teen years. Parents of teens are faced with the challenge of surviving the teen years until their teens grow out of this rebellious stage. Faulty parent-child relationship could affect marital satisfaction in that, it creates misunderstandings among spouses. Sometimes a spouse blames his/her partner for issues relating to misbehaviours of their children. This creates a situation where couples are usually in constant conflicts over the right way of raising children. The more such conflicts arise, the more dissatisfaction would be experienced in the marriage.

With regard to the In-Law scale, respondents who had been married for 0-10 years, reported dissatisfaction. In relation to this finding, Timmer and Veroff (2000) reported that the level of conflict between couples and their in-laws affects couples' marital happiness especially in early marriages. Possible reasons for the 'not so strong' in-law relationship for those married from 0-10 years could be because in early marital relationships, some parents go and live with their children/son or daughter-in law to ensure their sons or daughters are happy in marriage. Others stay in their son or daughter's matrimonial home to help with taking care of new born babies, or as part of their own adjustment process after their son or daughter has left home to live with his or her spouse. This situation could create some discomfort and probably unhappiness for newly married couples.

5. Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that married Christians in Accra Metropolis are relatively satisfied in their marriages. They are satisfied with the expression of affection, love and appreciation by their partners, differences in temperament as well as character displayed. With regard to the duration of marriage, those married for up to ten years and those married over 20 years reported more marital satisfaction than those married between 11-20 years. Communication challenges and the performance of marital roles have the potential to improve or reduce satisfaction in marriage. The findings of the study show that marital satisfaction can be high or low regardless of gender differences. Both men and women experience marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions that were drawn from the study, the following recommendations were made.

Married men and women are requested to consciously learn how to communicate effectively with their spouses in ways that will not encourage frequent conflicts and be willing to resolve conflicts as soon as they occur. This recommendation is made because communication challenges proved to be major issues affecting marital satisfaction.

In general, females in this study reported lesser satisfaction in marriage than the males. Based on this, wives are entreated to initiate counselling when they find the need to enhance their marital satisfaction. They should also initiate discussions with their husbands when they are uncomfortable with certain situations in their marriage to prevent escalation of problems and hence enhance their marital satisfaction.

It is recommended that to-be couples should work on knowing more about their in-laws and also seek for professional help when they observe situations they find difficult to understand about their in-laws to be. This may quicken the adjustment process in marriage.

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