



Marital Adjustment In The Light Of Some Variables

Dr. Keltoum Aicha Safi University of Oran2 (Algeria), safi.aicha@univ-oran2.dz ORCID:0000-0001-8691-8063

Dr. Kheira kouider University of Oran 2 (Algeria), Kouider.kheira@univ-oran2.dz
ORCID:0000-0002-4781-8382

Abstract:

This study aims at knowing the effect of the ages of the couple, the duration of marriage, and having children on the marital adjustment. We conducted the study on a sample of 60 married people whose ages are between 25-58 years old and who had been chosen at random. The study uses the Dyadic Adjustment Scale of Spinner (1976) which had been adapted to the Algerian environment by Mansouri & Zouaoui (2017). Findings show that there are no statistically significant differences between the means of the degrees of the studied people regarding the level of the marital adjustment. Moreover, the marital adjustment differs with the ages of the couple, not with the duration of marriage or having children or not.

Keywords: marital adjustment; duration of marriage; ages of the couple; having children.

Introduction:

The marital adjustment is an effective indicator of intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and sexual communication and harmony between the couple. This adjustment helps achieve suitable adjustment styles that help overcome the obstacles they face and achieve a considerable amount of happiness and satisfaction. In this context, the successful marriage depends on many considerations that must be respected by the couple such as the duration of marriage. Barron et al., (1998) see that the long-term relationship between the couple is an indicator of the satisfaction about the marriage because the continuity of the marital relationship for a long time reflects the feelings of trust and security of the couple. Moreover, having children allows the couple to feel parenthood and satisfaction about the relationship. In addition, it may create opportunities of mutual acceptance and correlation (Bent Abdalbaki, 2008, p. 87).

In the same line, the marital adjustment is a modern scientific trend as it is one of the topics that have been studied from different angles. The marital adjustment is determined through the good choice of the partner, the readiness to the marital life, the mutual love between the couple, sexual gratification, bearing the responsibilities of the marital life, ability to solve problems, the marital stability, satisfaction, and happiness (Jilani, 2009; Darling, Fleming & Cassidy, 2009; Bylund et al., 2009). The couples is not in adjustment or is having bad adjustment if one's behaviors hurt the other, hinder them of satisfying their needs, do not help achieve the marital goals, or ruin their marital relationship (Watad, 2015).

In addition, the marital maladjustment between the couple manifests in the emotional dissatisfaction, the marital disputes, and the negative feelings. Hence, insecurity, anxiety, depression, nervous exhaustion, psychological and spiritual imbalance, fear of the future, and feeling of loss prevail. These indicators make strong incentives for the psychological anxiety of the misadjusted individuals of both sexes (Mustafa, 1993, p.6).

In the same vein, the study of Jib Allah (2006) in Sudan, entitled “the marital adjustment and its relation with the criteria of choosing the partner and some other variables”, aimed at knowing the relation between the marital adjustment and the criteria used in choosing the partner and some other variables. It found that there is no correlation between the marital adjustment and the criteria of the spouse, the age difference, the duration of marriage, the educational level, the income of the families of the couple, and the duration of engagement. Moreover, it found that there are no differences between the family that has children and the one that does not. However, there is a direct correlation between the marital adjustment and the spiritual dimension and the educational level of the wife. Moreover, there are differences in the marital adjustment between the couple and the intellectual dimension for the husbands.

Besides, the study of Hicham (2008) in Egypt, entitled “a study of some variables that determine the marital adjustment”, included a sample of 92 husbands and 81 wives and used Spinner’s Dyadic Adjustment Scale DAS. It aimed at knowing some variables that determine the marital adjustment. Its findings show that there is a statistically significant relation between marital adjustment and the duration of marriage; the longer the duration is, the more the marital adjustment is. Furthermore, there is a negative statistical relation between the marital adjustment and the number of children as the marital adjustment decreases with the increase of the number of children.

The marital relationship does not come from the marriage contract only; rather, it is a foundation that needs continuous innovation to preserve it. Hence, we try through this study to know the level of the marital adjustment between the couple and whether it differs with the ages, the duration of marriage, and having children. In so doing, some questions arise such as:

- Are there statistically significant differences regarding the marital adjustment between the couple?
- Does the marital adjustment change according to the age?
- Does the marital adjustment differ according to the duration of marriage?
- Does the marital adjustment differ according to having children?

To answer these questions, we hypothesize that:

- There are statistically significant differences in the marital adjustment between the couple.
- The marital adjustment may differ according to the age.
- The marital adjustment may differ according to the duration of marriage.
- The marital adjustment may differ according to having children.

Importance of the study:

This study aims at revealing the marital adjustment in the Algerian society because it is one of the important topics. Moreover, it aims at telling the couples about the role of harmony and adjustment in creating a happy marital life and a good psychological health, and about their

reflections on child raising and the positive relations with the family. Furthermore, the study discloses the factors that affect the marital adjustment and the related problems.

Aims of the study:

The study aims at knowing the differences in the level of the marital adjustment and the factors that affect it including age, duration of marriage, and the number of children.

1. Definition of the marital adjustment:

There are many definitions to this notion. Some see that it is the readiness for the marital life, the mutual love between the partners, the determination to face the material and social problems, and making efforts for the continuity of the marital relationship. This definition agrees with the findings of Abdul Mooti & Dassuqi (1992). Moreover, marital adjustment refers to the state of harmony between the couple, their agreement on the house issues, and the mutual acceptance of the other (Bent Abdalbaki, 2008, p. 79).

The term “adjustment” in psychology refers to the process that aims at achieving harmony between the individual and his social surroundings. However, the marital adjustment refers to the acceptance of the mutual positive feelings, feeling of ease, achievement of the needs, participation in activities and tasks, and the achievement of the marital expectations of each in order to achieve a happy marital life. The marital adjustment aims at achieving a degree of intellectual and emotional communication with the other part of the marital relationship in order to achieve happiness, satisfaction, and common styles that help the couple cope with the needs of the marital life and overcome the obstacles (Kaouja, 2014, p. 353).

Generally, we can have a consensual definition from that of Morsi (2004) who defines it as a mutual and balanced relationship between two people who have personal characteristics. Moreover, mutual understanding through using the communication skills and the interaction potentials determines the level of the marital adjustment. Al Khuli & al Aqqad (2003) add that the marital adjustment is made up of:

- The marital choice.
- The familial adjustment.
- The emotional maturity.
- The effective interpersonal relations.

From what has been said, we see that the marital adjustment includes the relative agreement between the couple regarding the vital topics related to their common life, the participation in common activities and works, and the exchange of emotions. These are considered among the most important objectives for the couple and help achieve a good degree of intellectual and emotional communication with the other side in a way that creates consensual styles that help coexist and overcome the obstacles and achieve happiness and satisfaction.

1.2 Factors of the marital adjustment:

Sociologists and psychologists set some factors that lead to the marital adjustment including the social, economic, and personal situations and other factors such as:

-Childhood experiences: They negatively or positively affect the marital adjustment of the couple because the psychological atmosphere of the family where each member of the couple grew affects the couple happiness. Moreover, the way each had been treated in childhood, the rewards or punishments got, the social criteria, the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the fundamental needs, the need for acceptance and belonging, the need for psychological security, and the relationship of the parents with each other and with the others are necessary to determine the marital adjustment of the couples (Dabaa, 2002).

- Marital selection: The family is the fundamental basis for building the society. In order for it to succeed in doing its various roles, the partners must correctly choose each other to achieve love and harmony which impact the level of the psychological health. We can agree that the most important decision made by the human in his life is choosing his partner due to its effect on the psychological health and its quality (Morsi, 1998).

- Age of marriage: Statistics in the US society show that the divorce level of the teenage couples is 4 times of those who are in the 20s. Moreover, Ferdjani (1990) points that the age difference between the couple affects the degree of the marital adjustment because the elder the couple who have a big difference in age get, their sufferance increases mainly in the sexual and emotional sides. This harms the adjustment.

- Children: Giving birth to children is one of the factors that lead to love and rapprochement between the couple and creates a very important link. It contributes to the marital adjustment because parenthood is a transitory period that makes important changes in the roles of the couple. In this regard, the husband turns into a father and the wife into a mother; in addition to the previous marital roles. This change requires the ability of the marital adjustment with these roles. Hence, the role of the father is to face the renewable financial responsibilities while the mother's is to make the continuous decisions to provide care for the child and satisfy his needs as necessary. This chain of costs needs a continuous adjustment between the couple (Aissaoui, 1993).

- Marriage expectations: The orientations of one of the partners may be negative through considering marriage as an inevitable evil that requires bearing responsibilities and burdens, raising children, and expenditures. If one of the couple believes this way, marital adjustment will not be achieved. In addition, al Azza (2000) points that the irrational thoughts of one of the couple about the self, the partner, and marriage create sickness, excessive sensitivity, negative thinking, and depression.

- The educational level of the couple: al Khuli (1984) mentions that the big variance in the educational level between the couple creates negative emotional communication which may lead to separation. Hence, the educational, cultural, and intellectual rapprochements are factors that help the success of the marital life (Sarai, 2011, p. 87).

- The duration of marriage: The 1st years of marriage have a big importance in drawing the marital adjustment bases. Morsi (1995) points that the shorter the duration of the marriage is,

the higher the divorce probability is; and vice versa. It has been found that the 1st two years of marriage witness high divorce levels because of the excessive emotionality of the couple, the bad choice, and difficulty of understanding because of the lack of experience of each about the other, the marital life, and the familial disputes. On the other hand, the studies disagreed about the effect of the years of marriage on the marital adjustment. In this context, the marital adjustment changes into a routine with time whose results and dimensions are easily predicted (Al Hanya, 2013, p. 26).

- **The sex:** The sexual adjustment is the most arbitrary and spontaneous despite the fact that it is the most difficult due to biological, social, and psychological factors. It is the common denominator between love and satisfaction, or depression and repulsion (Samadi, 2004).

- **Emotion:** It means that each part feels love, respect, esteem, and the emotional and psychological link to the other. In order for the familial and marital relations to play their role in the common life, the existence of enough mutual emotional relations allows the existence of security and rest in the couple, pushes them to work hard, and helps achieve familial stability and continuity in their life (Suleiman, 2005).

- **Emotional maturity:** The main condition for the adjustment between the couples in the marital life is the emotional maturity as it provides a special look for life based on balance and good knowledge about the social life. Thus, it is an indicator of the level of the development of self-perception and the others' objectively. Moreover, it helps distinguish the reality from the illusion (Samadi & Hamdan, 2011, p. 04).

2. Methodology of the study:

The authors relied on the descriptive method for scientific analysis and interpretation.

2.1 Sample of the study:

The sample includes 60 individuals (21 husbands and 39 wives) who had been chosen at random. Their ages are between 25 and 58. Some of them are employed while others no and most of them live in their own houses.

Table 01. Distribution of the members of the sample according to the gender

Gender	Members of the sample	Percentage
Male	21	35%
Female	39	65%
Total	60	100%

We notice from table 01 that the number of husbands is less than the wives who answered the questionnaire because the husbands refused to participate in the study mainly after knowing the topic.

Table 02. Distribution of the members of the sample according to the age

Age	Members of the sample	Percentage
-----	-----------------------	------------

20-30	18	%30
31-40	22	%36.66
41-50	10	%16.66
51+	10	%16.66
Total	60	%99.98

We notice from table 02 that most of the members participating in the study are between 31 and 40 years old with a percentage of 36.66% of the total participants.

Table 03. Distribution of the members of the sample according to the number of children

Children	Members of the sample	Percentage
Having children	08	%13
Not having children	52	%86
Total	60	%99

From table 03, we see that most of the informants have children with a percentage of 86% of the sample.

Table 04: Distribution of the members of the sample according to the duration of marriage:

Duration of marriage (years)	Members of the sample	Percentage
1-5	12	%20
6-5	18	%30
11-15	08	%13
16-20	15	%25
21+	07	%11
Total	60	%99

We notice from table 04 that the duration of marriage was the highest in the category (6-10) which represents 30% of the total while the lowest was in the category (21+) with 11%.

3.2 Tools of the study:

The educational and field researches need tools for data collection from the study sample. There are many tools for this process which the author chooses according to his aims and methodology. In our study, we relied on DAS of Spinner (1976) which has been arabicized by Mansouri & Zouaoui (2017) in the Algerian settings with confirmed psychometric characteristics which proved good validity and consistency coefficients. It is made up of 32 statements distributed on 04 dimensions that are the marital agreement, the marital satisfaction, the marital cohesion, and the emotional expression.

3.3 Results of the study:

-Results of the 1st hypothesis: It says that there are statistically significant differences in the marital adjustment between the couple. To check it, we calculated T test to know the

significance of the difference between the degrees of the wives and husbands on DAS. The following table illustrates that:

Table 05. Results of T test of one sample compared to the means of the degrees of the research group

Husbands		wives		Calculated T value	Significance level
Arithmetic mean 1	Standard deviation 1	Arithmetic mean 2	Standard deviation 2		
96.50	9.38	94.85	9.01	1.21	Insignificant

From table 05, we see that the arithmetic mean of the husbands' degrees on DAS reached 96.50 with a standard deviation of 9.38. As for the wives, the arithmetic mean reached 94.85 with a standard deviation of 9.01. T value equals 1.21 which is less than Table T whose value is 1.77 and is statistically insignificant.

-Results of the 2nd hypothesis: It says that the marital adjustment may differ according to the age. The following table shows that:

Table 06. ANOVA test to know the effect of the age of the marital adjustment

Source of variance	Total squares	Average squares	Calculated F value	Level of significance
Between the groups	127.55	63.77	3.314	0.05
Inside the groups	267.38	19.247		

From table 06, we see that the calculated F value equals 3.31. Thus, it is statistically significant at significance level 0.05.

-Results of the 3rd hypothesis: It says that the marital adjustment may differ according to the duration of marriage. The following table shows that:

Table 07. ANOVA test to know the effect of the duration of marriage on the marital adjustment

Source of variance	Total squares	Average squares	Calculated F value	Level of significance
Between the groups	14.34	7.12	0.36	Insignificant
Inside the groups	289.09	19.57		

From table 07, we see that the value of F equals 0.36 which is less than the value of Table T test. It is statistically insignificant because, theoretically, according to Mahmud (2008, p. 28), the marital adjustment is a process that can be achieved in many months or years because the durations differ according to the couples based on the personal and environmental

circumstances they undergo. In this regard, al Khuli (1989) believes that the quality of the marital adjustment and compatibility decreases with time and the aging of the couple. These results agree with those of Hicham (2000) who found a statistically significant relation between the marital adjustment and the duration of marriage.

Results of the 4th sub-hypothesis: It says that the marital adjustment may differ according to having children. The following table shows that:

Table 08. Means, standard deviations, and T value of the variance significance between the degree of marital adjustment of the couples who have children and those who do not.

Children	husbands		Wives		Calculated T value	Significance level
	Arithmetic mean 1	Standard deviation 1	Arithmetic mean 2	Standard deviation 2		
Having children	28.83	4.71	29.12	4.68	0.51	Insignificant
No children	26.01	4.11	25.64	4.41	0.27	Insignificant

From table 08, we see that the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the husbands and wives who have children and those who do not, do not affect the marital adjustment. T value that reached 0.51 for the husbands and 0.27 for the wives is not statistically significant. Theoretically speaking, these results explain that the children affect and get affected by the adjustment between their parents because one of the main tasks of the family is raising children and providing educational and healthcare (Hachem, 2000, 9. 68).

Moreover, al Khuli (1989, p. 58) adds that having children generally alleviates the disputes that may affect the marital relationship because the parents may want to raise children in a natural atmosphere where the father and mother exist. Despite that many issues between the couple are because of children and the efforts, care, and expenditures they need, their existence plays a vital role in achieving the marital adjustment and the emotional and psychological rapprochement between the couple.

Conclusion:

The results of the 1st hypothesis showed statistically significant differences between the means of the degrees of the studied wives and husbands regarding the level of marital adjustment. This can be interpreted saying that they are due to the bases on which the selection is made by the individuals, the existence of an equivalence between the couple, and their consensus on common objectives that contribute to the marital adjustment. Moreover, the results show that the marital adjustment differs according to the ages of the couple and differs from one age category to another. This result agrees with many studies that see that the ages of the couple contribute to the increase of the experience and the social interaction.

Based on what has been said, we suggest:

- Conducting studies about the variables of this research on other samples (doctors, police...etc)

- Making comparative studies on the marital adjustment between the newly married couples and those that have long time.
- Carrying out researches about the marital adjustment and its impact on children.
- Making more studies that include guidance programs related to the newly married couples and marital adjustment.

Bibliography:

- 1- Al Hania, Maymuna Bent Yaakub Ben Odai (2013), some factors contributing to misconduct and reconciliation in Muscat governorate, published Magister thesis, University of Nzui.
- 2- Al Khuli, Sana (1989), Marriage and Family in a Changing World, University Knowledge House, Alexandria.
- 3- Bent Abdel Baqi, Fouzia (2008), marital adjustment of Omani Couples in the Light of Some Variables, Jordan: Journal of Educational and Psychological Studies, Sultan Qaboos University, No. 02.
- 4- Dabaa, Abdurraouf (2002), familial sociology, al Wafa house, Alexandria, Vol. 01.
- 5- Falata, Mahmud Ibrahi Qamar (2008), Marital Adjustment of Parents and its relationship to the self-understanding of teenagers in Medina, unpublished doctoral thesis, Taiba University, Medina
- 6- Farjani, Hala Abdul Moumin Mohamed (1990), the mutual recognition between the couple and its relation with the age difference: a pilot study, Magister thesis, the general Egyptian organization of books, Egypt.
- 7- Hachem, Sami Mohamed (2000), a study of some variables that determine the marital adjustment, the international congress of the psychological counseling center, Cairo.
- 8- Hassan, Mustafa Hassan & Hussein, Mahmud Rawya (1993), marital adjustment and its relationship to self-esteem, anxiety and depression, Journal of Psychology: Egyptian General Authority, Issue (28).
- 9- Jib Allah, Sihem (2006), Marital Adjustment and its Relationship to Partner Selection Criteria and Some Other Variables: Applied Study in Omdurman Locality, Unpublished Magister Thesis, Sudan.
- 10- Kaouja, Mohamed Saghir (2014), Marital Adjustment Representations and its Relationship with the styles of the female workers in the architectural sector Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, No. 16.
- 11- Samadi, Abdulmajid & Hamdan, Hilal (2011), marital adjustment of a sample of health and education workers in the Sultanate of Oman, Jordan: Journal of Psychological and Educational Studies, Issue (07).
- 12- Sana, Suleiman (2005), the marital adjustment and the stability of the family from an Islamic, psychological, and sociological perspective, Books World, Cairo, Egypt.
- 13- Sarai, Mahdi (2011), Psychological burnout and its relationship with Marital Adjustment among middle and secondary school professors, Magister thesis in Counseling and Mental Health, University of Algiers.
- 14- Sayad, Mohamed Abdurrahman (1993), the emotional maturity and its relation with the marital adjustment, journal of the Education Faculty, Zaqazis University, Vol. 02, No. 04, Egypt.

- 15- Watad, Salah Dine Ali (2015), The Relationship Between Marriage Expectations and Marital Adjustment of Palestine Couples in the Southern West Bank, Gaza University: vol. 19, No. 02.
- 16- Zoauoi, Mansouri (2017), the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, intellectual horizons journal, pp. 214-226.