

Effect of Marital counseling on marital satisfaction among married couples- A Mini Review

Mrs. Barkha Devi^{1*}, Mrs. Nazung Lepcha², Mrs. Doma Giri³

¹ Associate Professor, Sikkim Manipal College of Nursing, Sikkim Manipal University, Sikkim, India

² Assistant Lecturer, Sikkim Manipal College of Nursing, Sikkim Manipal University, Sikkim, India

³ Assistant Professor, Sikkim Manipal College of Nursing, Sikkim Manipal University, Sikkim, India

* **Corresponding author address:** Mrs Barkha Devi, Assistant Professor Sikkim Manipal College of Nursing, Sikkim Manipal University, Gangtok, Sikkim, India, Email-barkhadevi2@gmail.com, [Mobile No. 7479278673](tel:7479278673)

Abstract:

Introduction: Marital satisfaction is an essential part for successful family life and personal growth. The fulfillment and positive development are potential only if the link between couples is coherent and satisfactory. **Aim:** The aim of this narrative review is to seek out data on the effectiveness of marital counseling towards marital satisfaction among married men and women. **Methods:** This is a brief review and several other databases were used for the article search. The literatures were enclosed during this review, from different parts of the country. **Results:** Around 440 samples from 5 published articles that concentrate on effectiveness of marital counseling on marital satisfaction among married couples, particularly within the kind of conjugal relationship, marital stability, effectiveness of marital counseling were analyzed. **Conclusions:** The results when compilation of all the enclosed literatures shows that the marital counseling is very important to marital satisfaction in any community, religion, and culture. Majority of the participants during this review found marital counseling more successful than no treatment in decreasing marital unhappiness. Counseling helps couples to acknowledge and resolve conflicts caused by an excessive amount of responsibility arising from careers and family and therefore improve their relationships. When reviewing the studies, it looks that analysis on number of factors research influencing the rise in marital satisfaction like marital conflict, intimacy and communication is limited and more generalizable studies are essentially to be done in this context.

Keywords: Marriage, Marriage counseling, Narrative review, Married Couples, Marital counseling, couple counseling

Introduction

In many parts of Asia, non-marriage and divorce are getting increasingly common. In East Asia, excluding China, marriage rates have fallen and divorce rates in short reached as excessive as the levels seen in countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). In Southeast Asia, too, marital dissolution via divorce or separation is rising.¹ In China where marriage rates have now no longer declined to the levels visible in different East Asian nation, divorce rates have tripled or quadrupled over the past decades. The primary exception to this trend in Asia is South Asia in which marriage is still almost conventional and comparatively yearly, and divorce believed to be notably uncommon.²

In India, despite huge social adjustments during the last three decades, marriage remains is still predominately caste endogamous, universal and early, and entails active participation of family and kin in spouse selection. Though there were adjustments in a number of aspects of the marriage system including marriage age and spouse selection, those have now no longer significantly converted the institution of marriage. Marriage is a completely unique dedication in the lives of men and women for whom they are expected to enjoy love, happiness, provision, protection, procreation and respect in the society.^{2,3,4}

Burke and weir cited that one of the most important crucial among a man and woman is marriage. It entails emotional and legal dedication which is very important in adult life. Moreover, deciding on partner and stepping into a marital settlement is considered both maturational milestone and personal achievement.⁴ As observed by Okpechi human beings marry for plenty reasons, together with Love, Happiness, Companionship and choice to have children, physical attraction or choice to break out from an unhappy situation.⁵

One of the most important goals of marriage is the desire to attain marital satisfaction. According to the literature, marital satisfaction is the subjective assessment of one's experience in their marriage.^{6,7} By subjective assessment it is supposed that marital satisfaction can only be rated through absolutely everyone in reaction to the question.^{8,9} The stage of one's satisfaction cannot be decided through absolutely everyone else. Marital satisfaction is not a assess of a relationship; it is far a subjective experience and opinion. Marital satisfaction is an extraordinarily strong mind-set and characteristic which displays the person's overall assessment of the relationship.⁵ It is a complicated and multi-dimensional phenomenon, which has been substantially explored through the most diverse scientific fields.¹⁰ Marital satisfaction may be affected immediately or not directly through person in addition to social factors which include commitment, education, effective communication, income the presence of kids and employment.¹¹

Worldwide assessment of the state of one's marriage and a mirrored image of marital happiness and functioning. From an evolutionary perspective, marital satisfaction may be regarded as a psychological state of regulated mechanisms that screen the advantages and costs of marriage to a selected person.¹² After marriage, people are trying to find a lifestyle full of happiness and satisfaction; therefore, more significant than the marriage itself is success in marriage and marital satisfaction.^{13,14} One of the exceptional definitions of marital satisfaction is provided through Hawkins; He described marital satisfaction as a visible feeling of happiness, delight, and pleasure experienced by a husband and wife who considered all factors in their marriage.¹⁵ Satisfactory marital relationships develop competence and capacity to evolve and compromise in people and those people commonly have an extended lifestyle, and have lower depression and psychological disorders and their kids are more adaptable, and feature higher educational achievements^{15,16}.

It is the most important subject in marital lifestyles, and may both result in balance or failure of the relationship.¹⁶ Groza¹⁷ posit that it's far a perceptual state that echoes the meant remunerations and costs of marriage to a person, and when the marriage places greater cost on one partner, the more unsatisfied that partner becomes. As a result, a lower in marital satisfaction now no longer creates an inappropriate atmosphere in a family additionally also leads to family instability and divorce.

According to Sholfer and Shoben¹⁸, couple experience crisis and conflicts that sometimes result in divorce, separation, damaged homes, violence against women or men, child neglect and numerous different devastating outcomes of intra-marital conflicts. In spite of the reality that couples are aware about the intimate agreement they're into in marriage and the implication of this agreement to their lives, they come across demanding situations that they sometimes cannot handle. . The survival of such marriages in large part relies upon on how powerful the couples are in handling their marital relationship.

Kehinde¹⁹ in his study found that out of 547 cases of marital conflict investigated, 206 of them had been resolved and 314 disintegrated their marriages because of conflicts and infertility. Some techniques adapted by couples in resolving marital conflicts consist of the conventional round-desk agreement through both family members of married couples and intervention through near. In most instances, those techniques are faulty, one-sided and will make topics worse. Cole²⁰ says marital counseling teaches couples a way to empathize with their spouses in important situations and limit misinterpretations and enhance marital satisfaction.

Marital counseling, additionally known as couple's therapy, is a kind of psychotherapy that is performed through certified therapists.²¹ Gagliardi, Guise, Lapidus, & Vickers²² mentioned in their study that Physician Abraham and Hannah Stone opened the primary marriage-counseling center in 1929 in New York City. Unlike individual therapy, marriage counseling in the beginning, a short-time period undertaking to fix an impaired relationship, and it normally treated with present issues rather than the past. The creation of general systems theory and family research triggered marital counseling to pay attention at the shape as a framework for behavior .

Gurman & Fraenkel²³ mentioned that marriage counseling changed into legitimized in the 1960's by receiving licensure. By the mid-1980's, couples therapy established sustained theory development and empirical studies than before. 1986 was the year of publication of Jacobson and Gurman's Clinical Handbook of Marital Therapy. The insurance of that handbook appeared to suggest couple's therapy as perceptible and permanent.

Usually concerning each partner, marriage counseling enables couples to understand underlying conflicts and enhance their relationship. It can assist married couples make considerate decisions, overcome variations and improve communication among them.²⁴ Marital counseling consists of a very broad range of technical interventions for reduction of marital disharmony. The focus and desires of the marital counseling are normally the resolution of the immediate presenting problems and the provision of the spouses with emotional help and enhancement in their self-esteem and optimism.²⁵ The advantages pursuing marriage counseling is to assist couples handle the demanding situations of married life and get the relationship returned on track. It emphasized at the now and the troubles confronted by couples recurrently. It's offers possibility to speak about variation, differences and compromises.²⁶

A report discovered in the Marriage Counseling stated that many couples are seeking this form of counseling to intensify their relationships and acquire a higher appreciation of one another. Couples counseling is regularly used to cope with specific concerns, including: divorce, betrayal, anger, monetary concerns, substance use and abuse, conflicts around parenting, combined families, sexual issues, lack of communication, etc.²⁷

Hahlweg & Markman²⁸ in their study stated that marital therapy is more successful than no treatment in reducing marital unhappiness. The average percentage of enhancement after therapy is about 40%. The chance of the relationship improving increases from approximately 30% to approximately 70% for persons who received marital therapy. Additionally, this study also determined the similarity between the European and United States studies, revealing that marital therapy is about uniformly successful in numerous cultural locations. This delivers strong indication for generalizability of the consequences of marital therapy.

Footnote²⁹ performed studies to discover the adjustments in marital satisfaction after counseling and found that about 48% of couples exhibited both enhancement or complete recuperation in marital satisfaction at a five-year follow up. It was determined that

relationship decline resulted for 38% of spouses and 14% stayed the same. Another study conducted by Byrne, Carr, & Clark³⁰ after treatment 66% of spouses confirmed development after treatment. Third, following treatment, 62% of spouses fell into the non-distressed scope on psychometric strategies of marital misery and 54% preserved these improvements six months to four years later. This study signifies the effect of marital counseling on couples.

Brown & Manela³¹ performed a study on client satisfaction with marital counseling, in which he discovered that 75% of the participants who participated in the study discovered marital counseling helpful. In this regard, the existing review study was aimed at investigating the effectiveness of marital counseling on marital satisfaction among married couples.

Material and Methods

The present narrative review study was carried out in order to investigate the effect of marital counseling on marital satisfaction among married couple, in articles published during 2000-2021. First, the researcher used keywords like marital counseling, couple counseling, marriage counseling, couple therapy, marital satisfaction, married couples and marital relationship, to search relevant research studies, study summary and reviews in English language in scientific databases. Likewise, a manual PUBMED and Google scholar search was undertaken using the keywords and search synonyms from the articles. Finally, studies that had focused on marital satisfaction among married couple over the last twenty one years were scrutinized. In doing so, studies that had focused on effectiveness of marital counseling (post marital) on marital satisfaction were chosen. As a result, 5 articles were found in the database. Initial search recovers more than 2000 articles over which 380 articles were selected manually. 280 articles were rejected as a result of replication in the database. Replication was removed and reviewed 80 articles for acceptability. 75 more studies have been rejected due to non-availability of the overall text and concept. There is limited research on the satisfaction rate of couples counseling among partners who participated in marital counseling. Hence 5 articles were screened which includes quantitative experimental studies. The inclusion criteria for deciding on the articles had been research studies that are targeted on the effectiveness of marital counseling on marital satisfaction components, Married couple, (male or female or both), irrespective of their occupational status, focuses on marital counseling, only experimental quantitative research design, articles published between 2000-2021 and in complete text, are in English. Whereas the exclusion criteria for the study involve other than married couple, studies focused on premarital counseling, or other form of intervention for family satisfaction, not from the authentic source, studies articles published earlier than 2000 and studies with much less than 30 samples.

Findings

Details from the 5 articles selected for the review were summarized in the form of a table containing the following information: reference number, authors, journal, year, volume, issue number and title of study, design and sample size, instruments used and inference of the study.

Ref. No	Author/journal name/Year/Vol,issue	Tittle	Design and Sample size	Instrument	Inference
32	Margot J Schofield, Nicholas Mumford, Dubravko Jurkovic, Ivancica Jurkovic and Andrew Bickerdike, BMC Public Health, 2012 12:735	Short and long-term effectiveness of couple counseling: a study protocol.	Quasi-experimental pre-post-post evaluation design 201 couples	Center for Epidemiologic al Studies Depression scale (CESD-10)	Couple counseling improved relationship and health outcomes
33	DIMKPA, I. Daisy, Edo Journal of Counselling ,2010;3(2)	Effect of marital counselling on women's attitude towards marital stability	Pre-test post-test quasi experimental design 52 women	Women's Attitude towards Marital Stability Questionnaire'	It showed that marital counseling had a significant effect on women's attitude towards marital stability.
34	Siji. M.M & Dr. Rekha .K.S International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention. 2018;7 (04),	Effectiveness of Marital Counselling on Marital Quality among Young Adults: A Pre-Post Intervention	Pretest posttest design 60 couple	Marital quality scale by Shah (1995)	Significant differences in most of the dimensions of marital quality, before and after marital counseling.

35	Zahra Shams Mofaraheh, SaeedehBotlani Esfahani1, MarziehShahsiah, Journal ofHumanHealth 2015;1:85-9.	The Effect of Marital Counselling on Sexual Satisfaction of Couples	Quasi-empirical in two groups of experimental and control 60 couples	Larsson ISS sexual satisfaction questionnaire	Marital counseling effects on the quality of sexual relationship and increase couples' sexual satisfaction. Marital counseling is effective methods of health education to help people to improve their quality of life through the improvement of sexual satisfaction and their relationships.
36	SeyedehZahraMasoumi,Farid ehKazemi,BehnazNejati,Paris aParsa,ManoochehrKarami, Electronic Physician, 2017;9(1)	Effect of Sexual Counseling on Marital Satisfaction of Pregnant Women Referring to Health Centers in Malayer (Iran): An educational randomized experimental study	Randomized experimental study 80 married pregnant women	Enriching Relationship Issues Communication and Happiness (ENRICH)	Sexual counseling was associated with marital satisfaction and was effective in its promotion.

Discussion:

1. Marital Relationship and Stability

Studies have determined significant enhancements in relationship satisfaction from pretest to posttest intervention in and over the course of one to two years following counseling. Therefore, whereas most studies indicate enhancement in relationshipsatisfactionfollowingcouple counseling, they are restricted by the samples and measures used, mostly short run follow up times frames and analyses that don't account for the dyadic nature of coupleinformation.Marital stability refers to a firm, consistent well balance and wholesomeconjugal relationshipamongcouples. Stability is ensured as every member fulfills his/her positionin the relationship. Marital stability cause a well-balanced and well-adjusted family that successively result in well-adjusted progressive society, marital stability and happiness are to massive extent pondered in the ratio of positive to negative behavior in the relationship.³⁷ Empirical proof from a study in Port Harcourt Municipality, Nigeria by Ambakederemo and Ganagana³⁸ using a sample size of 150 subjects found that self-control, peer group influence have an effect on and spending quality time at home are the most positive signs to marriage stability in Nigerian houses meanwhile, the reasons of marital instability are in clusters of five, this is absence of affection and trust, anti-social vices, economic, socio-cultural and sexassociated situations. It is therefore recommended that premarital in addition tomaritalcounseling is emphasized by authorities and expertcounsellors to nip in the bud the prevalence of those situationsto keep away from instability in the family.

2. Effectiveness of outcome of Marital counseling

Marital counseling is meant for couples of everyage and all walks of life. Relationship process and recognize need to hold a satisfying marriage goal as well as target. Comparing the result of couple counseling, earlier efficacy research studies have mentioned several treatment options that can be taken into consideration. For example, Behavioral Marital/Couple Therapy and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy-based couple counseling have appreciablydecreasedrelationship distress, as measured with the aid of usingMarital Adjustment Scale (MAT), and the DAS, with outcomes maintained over time, and in comparison to no-remedycontrols. Emotion Focused Therapy has establishedcomparableoutcomes, and is considered effective.³⁹The confined effectiveness research studies that exists up to nowindicates that couple counseling can enhance results which includesrelationship satisfaction, communication skills and general well-being.Successful therapy regularly resolves maximum of the issues that reasonsvolatileconjugal relationship, the fulfillment of marital counseling consultationrely oneverycompanionmotivation and determination to the process and couples can expect to become good listeners and communicators and to locate new methods to guide one another. Convenient and conducive surroundings are needed for making the desired privacy and comfort. The counseling sections hereby cut back the instability in marriages and enhance a healthy relationship with fewer issues.

Conclusion:After the thorough compilation of all studies, the present narrative review indicated that marital counseling positively impacts on couple's behavior towards marital satisfaction. Marital counseling leads to increased social adjustment which in turn leads

to marital stability which leads to reduction of divorce among couples. Marital counseling help separated individuals to positively adjust to marital life and also to enhance stability when the individual remarry. When couples remain together they produce healthier, happier and well-adjusted families which result in a well-adjusted society.

Recommendations:The author, therefore suggests, that the counselors should focus on addressing role conflicts, enhancing life skills, and helping to foster wellness and resiliency to cope with stress, fatigue, and role overload.

Limitations of the short review: Literatures written other than English languages were not included and only five studies from few countries were included.

Acknowledgments: The researchers would like to sincerely thank the Sikkim Manipal college of Nursing and Research Unit, SMIMS, for their unwavering efforts and help in writing this review.

Conflict of Interest: There is no conflict of interest to be declared.

References

1. Prakash R and Abhishek S. Who marries whom? Changing mate selection preferences in urban India and emerging implications on social institutions, *Population Research and Policy Review*.2013;33(2): 205-227.
2. Jiehua L, and Wang X.Changing patterns of marriage and divorce in today's China, *Analysing China's Population: Social Change in a New Demographic Era*. London: Springer. 2014: 37-49.
3. Dommaraju P. 2016. "Divorce and Separation in India." *Population and Development Review* forthcoming.2016. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301284623>
4. Heshmati H, Behnampour N, Arabameri S, Khajavi S, Kohan N. Marital Satisfaction in Refereed Women to GorganHealthCenters. *Iran J Psychiatry*. 2016; 11(3): 198-200.
5. Burke, M., & Weir, D. (1987). *Our being a mother*. London: Tailstocks Publishing Company.
6. Okpechi, P.A. (2012). Influence of marital stressors on role performance of married academic women in tertiary institution in Cross River State, Nigeria. Unpublished Ph. D Thesis, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Nigeria
7. Rebello K, Silva Junior MD, Brito RCS. Fundamental Factors in Marital Satisfaction: An Assessment of Brazilian Couples. *Psychology*. 2014; 5(7): 777-84. doi: 10.4236/psych.2014.57088.
8. Zainah AZ, Nasir R, RuzySulizaHashim, NorainiMdYusof. Effects of Demographic Variables on Marital Satisfaction. *Asian Social Science*. 2012; 8(9): 46-9. doi: 10.5539/ass.v8n9p46.
9. Farahmand Z, Ahmadnia SH. A gender study on the relationship between the ways (traditional and modern) of mate selection and marital satisfaction of families in shiraz city. *Iran social sciences studies*. 2014; 11(42): 91-105.
10. Pakravan E, Haghayegh S, Nshatdoust H, Molavi H. Efficacy of problem solving method on the marital satisfaction and psychological profile of the couples of Brojen city. *Culture counseling*. 2014; 4(16): 15-31.
11. Narimani M, Porzoor P, Atadokht A, Abbasi M. The role of spiritual well-being and religious adherence in predicting marital satisfaction among nurses. *Journal of Clinical Nursing and Midwifery*. 2015; 4(3): 1-10.
12. Mirfardi A, Edalati A, Redzuan M. Relationships Between Background Factors and Female Marital Satisfaction. *Journal of Social Sciences*. 2010; 6(3): 447-52. doi: 10.3844/jssp.2010.447.452.
13. Copen CE, Daniels K, Vespa J, Mosher WD. First marriages in the United States: data from the 2006-2010 National Survey of Family Growth. *Natl Health Stat Report*. 2012; 21: 1.
14. Silliman B, Schumm WR. Marriage preparation programs: A literature review. *Fam J Alex Va*. 2000; 8(2): 133-42. doi: 10.1177/1066480700082004.
15. Hawkins JL. Associations between companionship, hostility, and marital satisfaction. *J Marriage Fam*. 1968; 30(4): 647. doi: 10.2307/349510.
16. Wagheiy Y, Miri M, Ghasemipour M. A survey about effective factors on the marital satisfaction in employees of two Birjand universities. *J.ofBirjand University of Med.Sci*. 2009; 16(4): 43-50.
17. Groza JR, Shackelford JF, editors. *Materials processing handbook*. CRC press, 2007.
18. Sholfer, L. T. &Shoben, E. J. (2014). *Psychology of Adjustment*. Cambridge: River Side Press
19. Amao-Kehinde, A.O. (2002). The Relative Effectiveness of Conflict Resolution Skills Training on Marital Adjustment of some selected couples. *The Counsellor*, 19(1), 1-11.
20. Cole CL, Cole AL. Marriage enrichment and prevention really works: Interpersonal competence training to maintain and enhance relationships. *FamRelat*. 1999; 48(3): 273-5. doi: 10.2307/585637.
21. Jackson GL, Trail TE, Kennedy DP, Williamson HC, Bradbury TN, Karney BR. The salience and severity of relationship problems among low-income couples. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 2016, 30(1): 2.
22. Gagliardi, J., Guise, R., Lapidus, J., & Vickers, M. (2001, January 1). Study guide for the marriage & family therapy national licensing examination.
23. Gurman, A., &Fraenkel, P. (2002). The History Of Couple Therapy: A Millennial Review. *Family Process*, 41(2), 199-260

24. GanesanShanmugavelu,AmutaArumugam. The process and importance of marriage counseling for married couples: an overview.EPRA International Journal of Research and Development. 2020;5(12)
25. Rezaee M, Foruzandeh E. Effectiveness of family life education on marital satisfaction of couples attending counseling center in Isfahan city. *Int J EducPsychol Res* 2016;2:54-9.
26. Akande, J. A.; Olowonirejuaro, O. A. &Akuchie, R. C. (2008). Attitude of Colleges of Education Students towards some Essential Concepts for Excellent Academic Performance. Paper presented at the 32nd Annual National Conference of Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) held between 18th - 21st August in University of Ilorin, Nigeria
27. Marriage Counseling. (2011, November 19). Retrieved from <http://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/marriagecounseling/basics/definition/prc-20012741>
28. Hahlweg, K., &Markman, H. J. (1988). Effectiveness of behavioral marital therapy: Empirical status of behavioral techniques in preventing and alleviating marital distress. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 56(3), 440-447.
29. Foote, L. (2014, May 1). Premarital Counseling. Retrieved from <http://www.goodtherapy.org/pre-marital-counseling.html>
30. Byrne, M., Carr, A., & Clark, M. (2004). The Efficacy Of Behavioral Couples Therapy And Emotionally Focused Therapy For Couple Distress. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 361-387.
31. Brown, P., &Manela, R. (1977). Client Satisfaction with Marital and Divorce Counseling. *National Council on Family Relations*, 26(3), 294-303
32. Margot J Schofield, Nicholas Mumford, DubravkoJurkovic, IvancicaJurkovic and Andrew Bickerdike, Short and long-term effectiveness of couple counseling: a study protocol .*BMC Public Health*, 2012 12:735
33. Dimkpa, D. I. (2007). Perceived causes of wife Battery by Women in PortHarcourt Urban of Rivers State, Nigeria. *Journal of Creativity and Scientific Studies*, 2(1), 80-89
34. Siji, M.M. "Effectiveness of Marital Counselling on Marital Quality among Young Adults: A Pre-Post Intervention." *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention (IJHSSI)* 7.04 (2018): 11-23
35. Mofaraheh ZS, Esfahani SB, Shahsiah M. The effectofmaritalcounsellingonsexualsatisfactionofcouples.*JHumHealth* 2015;1:85-9.
36. Siji. M.M & Dr. Rekha .K.S. Effectiveness of Marital Counselling on Marital Quality among Young Adults: A Pre-Post Intervention. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*. 2018;7 (04),
37. Eremie, D. Maxwell Adonye-Abbey, Ogbolo Ada. Couples' Perceptions Of Factors Influencing Marital Conflict In Selected Local Government Areas Of Rivers State: Implication For Family Counseling .*International Journal of Innovative Research and Advanced Studies (IJIRAS)*.2019 6(4)
38. Ambakederemo, E. T. &Ganagana, T. (2006). Causes of Marital Instability in the port-harcourt municipality, Nigeria: Solutions and Counselling implication. *Nigerian Journal of Guidance and Counselling* 11 (1) 14-24
39. Gladys Bett Dr. MereciaSirera and Prof. Gladys Kiptiony. Role of Guidance and Counseling in Promoting Married Career Individuals' Marital Relationship in Kericho County, Kenya *Journal Of Humanities And Social Science*. 2019; 24(8):01-09