

# Study on the Relationship Between Self-Congruence and Marriage-Quality of Professional Women

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**Abstract.** At present, the divorce rate is increasing year by year. The study on marriage quality and its influencing factors is crucial to the stability and harmony of family and society. Therefore, this paper is about investigation of relationship between self-congruence and marriage-quality among 245 married professional women by using Locke-Wallace Short Marital Adjustment and Prediction Test and Self - Consistency and Congruence Scale. The results showed that there was a close relationship between self-congruence and marriage-quality of professional women. The higher self-congruence, the better marriage-quality.

**Keywords:** marriage-quality, self-congruence, professional women

## 1. Introduction

With the rapid development of economy and the arrival of the information age, great changes have taken place in China's social culture and moral cognition. More and more women are entering into the workplace, no longer position themselves as a housewife. However, married men are not willing to return to the family for their duties, which causes professional women to bear more pressure after marriage. With the diversification of identity, the increase of responsibility and pressure, the happiness level of married women is more important for the society and country. Therefore, whether out of the consideration of work participation, family harmony or their own development, how to reduce their pressure, or even turn pressure into motivation and improve the happiness of married women is a current problem.

In studies, scholars often consider marriage-quality as an indicator of happiness of married people to examine their happiness level [1]. As an indicator of happiness, marital quality not only directly affects the physical and mental health of the couple, the healthy growth of the next generation, but also has a great impact on the society. According to the latest statistics bulletin on social service development in 2014 released by the Ministry of Civil Affairs through the Internet in 2015, the number of couples legally divorced in 2014 was 3.637 million, with a crude divorce rate of 2.7%. Since 2003, the divorce rate has been rising for 12 consecutive years. Researchers focused on the divorce in the post-80s generation. The emergence of these phenomena shows the practical significance and necessity of the study on the marriage-quality of married women in China.

The research on Marriage-quality started from the discussion on Marital adjustment in the late 1920s in the west [2]. Due to the rising divorce rate, it developed in the 1960s and entered an active period in the 1970s [1].

In retrospect, due to the special cultural and historical background, the study on the localization of marriage quality began in the 1990s. Marriage-quality was mainly studied from the aspects of income difference, personality combination, role equality, gender difference, marital motivation and sexual life. The study included teachers, nurses, pilots, middle-aged couples and divorced people. Studies have also shown that the marriage quality of female employees in the company is generally lower [3]. The marriage quality of young female doctors is generally lower than the norm [1]. As mentioned above, since most studies take special groups as subjects to investigate the marriage-quality, whether the lower marriage quality of married women is universal, if not, which groups have the lower marriage quality needs to be integrated and analyzed. In addition, marriage quality is an important index to measure the subjective well-being of married women, and it is highly positively correlated with subjective well-being ( $r=0.286, p<0.05$ ) [1]. In addition, existing

studies on marriage quality are insufficient. Therefore, this study took married women of various occupations as the object of investigation to investigate the characteristics of marriage quality of married women in the current society.

In addition, marriage quality of previous researches point out that the influencing factors on the quality of the marriage. they were affected mainly from three aspects: individual factors (cultural background, values, personality, etc.), international marriage factors (marital power and role allocation, communication between a couple, etc.), the external factors (economic status, and the relationship between children and parents) [4]. Self-consistency and congruence is the core characteristic of personality harmony [5]. Previous studies have found that the level of self-harmony is positively correlated with the quality of marriage [3, 6]. At present, the research on self-consistency and congruence in China is mainly a survey of current situation, and the research on groups is mostly focused on students [7].

To sum up, the study on the relationship between self-consistency and marriage-quality is realistic and feasible, which not only broadens the research ideas, but also helps to promote the social attention on the physical and mental health of professional women.

## **2. Research Methods**

### **2.1 Research Objects**

In this study, married women in Shangqiu, Henan and Linyi, Shandong was selected as the main subjects. A total of 350 questionnaires were issued and 245 effective questionnaires were recovered, with an effective recovery rate of 70%. The age range of the subjects was 23-58 years old, among which 236 people were 20-50 years old, accounting for 96.3% of the total number. In terms of education level, 81.2% of the participants (199 people in total) had a degree between high school and master's degree. The valid questionnaire covers 6 occupations, including Seller, teacher, waitress, individual household, office clerk, doctor.

### **2.2 Research Tools**

#### **2.2.1 Self-Consistency and Congruence Scale**

Self - Consistency and Congruence Scale (SCCS) compiled by Dengfeng Wang[8], there are 35 items, in three dimensions, namely "Self and experience not harmonious question (16 items)", "Self flexibility (12 items)", "Self Consistency (7 items)". The scale was scored from 1 (completely inconsistent) to 5 (completely consistent). In addition to the positive score of "self-flexibility", "Self -dissonance" and "self-rigidity" were scored in the reverse direction. Take the average score of all items as the score of self-consistency and congruence. The higher the score, the higher the level of self-consistency and congruence. In this study, the internal consistency test was carried out on the samples, and the results showed that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the total scale was 0.85, and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the dimension was 0.84, 0.75 and 0.60, respectively.

#### **2.2.2 Locke-Wallace Short Marital Adjustment and Prediction Test**

Locke-Wallace short marital adjustment and prediction test was compiled by Loche and Wallace in 1959 [8]. There are 15 items in the scale, and the answers of each item have fixed scoring criteria. The total score of the scale is the sum of the scores of each item. The total score ranged from 2 to 158 points. the higher the score, the better the marriage adjustment. In order to facilitate data processing, the average score of the total items in the questionnaire was used as the research results. The scale is applicable to all married people with good reliability and validity of marital adjustment evaluation. In this study, the internal consistency test was carried out on the subjects, and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.80.

### **2.3 Research Procedures**

The research was divided into two parts. the questionnaire was distributed simultaneously on the professional questionnaire website while the actual measurement questionnaire was distributed.

According to the character of the work, some tests are carried out according to the nature of the work, and some are carried out individually. In order to ensure the effect of the test, the participants were given a unified instruction to explain the precautions before the test. In the process of testing, the participants are guaranteed to answer the questions and the answer correctly.

**2.4 Data Collation and Statistical Analysis**

SPSS21.0 was used for data entry, descriptive statistics, one-way anova, and correlation analysis.

**3. Results and Analysis**

**3.1 Present Situation of Marital Quality of Professional Women**

In order to investigate the differences of marriage quality among married women in occupation, age group and education level, one-way analysis was conducted with marital quality of married women as the dependent variable and occupational, age group and education level were as the independent variable. The results showed that, except for significant differences between occupations ( $F=4.87, P<0.001$ ), there were no significant differences between educational background and age groups ( $F_s<1.88, P_s>0.05$ ) (see table 1 for the results). After a further comparison of the marital quality of women with different occupational types, it was found that the marital level of women who were teachers, doctors and waitresses was significantly higher than that of individual household and office clerks. In addition, the marital quality of women who work in sales is also significantly higher than that of office clerks, and there is no significant difference between other occupations ( $P_s>0.05$ ).

Table 1. mean and standard deviation of marital quality of professional women ( $n=245$ )

education background	$M\pm SD$	profession	$M\pm SD$	age	$M\pm SD$
middle school and below	6.43±1.44	seller	6.47±1.52	20-30	6.29±1.47
high school	6.37±1.55	teacher	6.65±1.54	30-40	6.36±1.60
college	5.83±1.52	waitress	6.80±1.61	40-50	6.73±1.53
bachelor	6.66±1.53	individual household	6.00±1.42	50-60	6.55±2.08
master	6.64±1.93	office clerk	5.71±1.49		
doctor	6.49±0.68	doctor	7.27±1.33		
sum	6.41±1.56				

**3.2 Correlation Analysis Between Self-consistency and Congruence and Marital Quality**

In this study, Pearson correlation was used to analyze the relationship between self-consistency and congruence and marital quality. As can be seen from table 2, marital quality is positively correlated with self-consistency and congruence level.

In terms of the three dimensions of self-consistency and congruence, there was a significant positive correlation between marital quality and self-consistency and congruence after reverse scoring, while other correlations were not significant.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis of Professional Identity and Marital Quality of Professional Women ( $n=245$ )

Variable	self flexibility	Self dissonance	self rigidity	self-consistency and congruence
Marriage quality	0.120	0.163*	0.109	0.215**

Note: \* $P<0.05$ , \*\* $P<0.01$ , \*\*\* $P<0.001$ ;The correlation analysis is a bilateral test.

## **4. Discussion**

### **4.1 The Characters of Marital Quality of Professional Women**

This study analyzes the marriage quality of married women in various occupations (sale, teacher, waitress, individual household, office clerk, doctor). It finds that the occupational differences in married women's marriage quality are significant. In this study, the marriage quality score of doctors was significantly higher than that of most occupations, while the marriage quality score of individuals and office clerks was significantly lower than that of most occupations. The main reason is that the doctor belongs to a professional technical personnel (occupation classification and coding), The personnel engaged in the occupation must have high professional knowledge and technology, so the work and income are relatively stable and the social recognition is high. Married women who work as a doctor can have independent sources of income and higher social status, and can gain more respect in family life, which is conducive to improving their marriage quality.

On the contrary, married women have a low threshold to engage in self-employed business and often work with their husband, but they have competitive pressure, high capital investment, high risk and unstable income. They are not financially independent and work and family life are not easy to separate, so the quality of marriage may not be high. However, married women have the lowest marriage quality scores among office clerks, which is inconsistent with previous research results [9]. The reason may be related to the background of the investigation. The staff referred to in this study are usually known as civil servants. Based on the obvious effect of anti-corruption campaign in recent years, their work pressure increases compared with the former, which may cause the imbalance between work and marriage life and lead to the deterioration of marriage quality.

This study also found that there was no significant difference in marital quality between married women in terms of age, which is consistent with previous studies [9]. At the same time, there is no significant difference in the marriage quality of married women in terms of education, which is consistent with the actual life. The reason lies in that no matter what the individual's education level is, the quality of marriage comes from the interaction and joint maintenance of each other.

### **4.2 Relationship between Self-Consistency and Congruence and Marital Quality**

This study found that the total average score of marital quality was significantly positively correlated with the level of self-consistency and congruence, that is, the higher the level of self-consistency and congruence, the higher the total average score of marital quality. This is consistent with previous studies [10]. In addition, we can also understand a person with a high level of self-consistency and congruence, who can well adapt and deal with all aspects of life in a good way, so that the uncoordinated and contradictory conflict in life can achieve inner harmony. Specific to this study, it can be expressed as a professional woman with a high level of self-consistency and congruence. When faced with dissatisfaction with work or dissatisfaction with marriage, she can also adjust herself to improve the current situation to achieve inner harmony in her heart.

There is a significant positive correlation between the dissonance of self and experience (reverse scoring), that is, the more dissonance between self and experience, the worse the marriage quality of married women will be. The dissonance between self and experience refers to the relationship between self and experience, including self-evaluation of ability and emotion, self-consistency, helplessness, etc., and its symptoms more reflect unreasonable expectations of experience [8]. The higher the level of disharmony between the individual's self and experience, the more irrational expectations are caused. These unreasonable expectations will inevitably affect the quality of marriage.

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