

Marital Satisfaction in Individuals Who Remarry After Divorce

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ABSTRACT

Every individual who enters married life certainly expects the presence of happiness in domestic life with the same person from beginning to end, one forever. Due to several different factors, in reality married life has its respective problems, so that family life cannot be compared with one another. However, due to several varied causes, not all couples were successful in resolving conflicts in their marriage, so that some married couples ended their marital conflicts with divorce. Hoping the divorce decision will end the conflict, Some individuals have high hopes that the disappointment in their previous marriage will be cured if after the divorce they will remarry with someone they think is better than their previous spouse. This study aims to determine the level of marital satisfaction in individuals who remarry given the high expectation brought to the next marriage after experiencing disappointment due to the failure of the previous marriage. The findings from this study are expected to be beneficial form of psychoeducation for the community, given the increasing phenomenon of divorce everywhere.

Keywords: *Marital Satisfaction, Remarrying.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Every family is never free from problems and disputes, even though at first it was only a small problem, it is not impossible that it eventually develops into a big problem that disturbs the balance and endangers family life. Not infrequently, disputes and quarrels between partners can lead to divorce [1].

In the context of social relationships, Schoenbron found that in an interview survey of 127,545 adults in the United States, individuals who were married, especially in early adulthood, tended to be physically and psychologically healthier than those who were never married, families without marriage, widowers, separated or divorced [2]. Everyone wants their marriage to remain intact throughout their lifetime, but not a few marriages that are painstakingly developed have to end in divorce [3].

According to BKKBN data, Indonesia's divorce rate is the highest in the Asia Pacific. Of the two million couples married in 2010 alone, 285,184

couples divorced, 70% of which were due to divorce. Data from the Supreme Court's Religious Courts Affairs Agency states that the divorce rate in Indonesia continues to increase drastically, during 2005-2010 an increase of 70%. Wahyu Widiananda as the Director General of Badilag MA explained that the divorce rate since 2005 has continued to increase by over 10% every year [4].

Marriages involve couples who remarry often occur in East Asian societies such as in China with an occurrence rate of around 23% [5]. More than 20% marriages registered in Singapore in 2017 were marriages under charter women's law (i.e. civil marriage) and around 29% of marriages recorded within Muslim law were remarriage [6] (Singapore Statistics Department, 2018). Whereas a few numbers are known in several other parts of Southeast Asia and South Asia, researchers have noted that the pervasiveness of marriage and reconciliation [7][8][9].

Although the incidence of divorce and remarriage in Asia changed, events remarriage, conflict, and stepfamilies in Asia still included in the low number with the number of cases is limited.

In some countries such as South Asia and Southeast Asia, remarriage is an essential culture and is also deemed necessary for men and women to escape the repercussions of association in order not to be seen as an incomplete family unit [10]. Remarriage is not a personal decision but rather a dynamic network of relationships with extended family members, representing family and social decisions [5]. Sharon Quah's paper on marriage adopts a viewpoint on transnational marriage, intersectional marriage, as part of an exploration of the narrative of individuals remarried in Singapore. Instead of entering into marriage on the basis of love, romantic, intimacy as is typically associated with a modern marriage; transnational remarriage is largely driven by pragmatism.

Approximately half of all marriages in the United States inevitably end in divorce or permanent separation [11]. In addition, a considerable number of marriages do not encounter separation, but the relationship is tarnished by persistent tension between parents. The results showed that the separation that occurred in both parents [3][12][13] and disputes that occurred in a marital relationship [14] elevated children's risk, such as the occurrence of problems: Behavioral, emotional, social, and academic issues.

The divorce rate has increased over the past four decades, by 600%. About 40–50% of all first married in North America undergo divorce, with the US having the highest divorce rate in the Western world. The majority of those who divorce ends up remarrying with many of those who remarry have children from their previous relationships [15].

Stepfamilies have the potential to improve the quality of a functioning family from a single parent home even though remarriage is unstable like the first marriage. The divorce rate among spouses who remarry is about 10% higher than that of the first marriage. The quality level of the first marriage is comparable to remarriage, but remarriage is more at risk of experiencing divorce. Remarriage views divorce as the best conflict resolution for resolving marital disputes [16] and maintaining a low initial divorce threshold [17][18]. Likewise, most divorcees feel they can handle separation from their

previous romantic partners [19] and have little moral judgment on feelings of objection to divorce [20].

Research shows that the higher conflict in second marriages is the reason the divorce rate in second marriages is higher (about 10% higher for subsequent marriages than for first marriages). Many studies on the function of marriage show differences in conflict resolution such as defensiveness, protective behavior, and the use of more open and destructive communication patterns [21-26].

2. METHOD

The research method used in this study is a systematic review by focusing on the main objective of this study, namely to determine the level of marital satisfaction of individuals who remarry after experiencing divorce. Systematic reviews have criteria where the review of articles is carried out in a structured and planned manner. Systematic review increases the depth in reviewing and making summaries in research evidence [27]. In this study, the search for articles began with the use of the Indonesian language Google Scholar as a tool to find the required articles. The keywords used in the article search were marital satisfaction, remarriage. The inclusion criteria applied were that articles were published from 2011 to 2020, and have an abstract and corresponds to the themes of marital satisfaction and remarriage. Sorting is done by reading and understanding the abstract in each article. From a total number of 4,830 articles, the author used 2 articles as the main sources to conduct a systematic review literature process.

3. RESULT

Based on the process of tracing articles that have been carried out, several research results were found related to the theme of this paper regarding marital satisfaction in individuals who remarried after experiencing divorce.

Senoaji's [28] research on marriage satisfaction in men who have been divorced aims to determine marriage satisfaction in men who return to marriage after divorce. This research is qualitative research using purposive sampling technique. There were three respondents and the data collection technique was interviews. The results showed that marriage satisfaction occurs due to the fulfillment of factors

and aspects of marriage satisfaction itself. From the results of the research, the third subject experienced marriage satisfaction because all aspects of marriage satisfaction had been fulfilled, but it was different from the first and second subjects who experienced dissatisfaction in their marriage. This is due to the absence of good two-way communication and no effort from the subject to improve relationship.

Mubina and Anisatuzzulfi's research [29] aims to describe marriage satisfaction in early adult women who remarried. Referring to the results of the study, it can be seen that the cause of divorce of the two subjects is the existence of conflict with a partner and family interference. The results of this study also indicate that marriage satisfaction in subject 1 (one) tends to be low. Meanwhile, marriage satisfaction in one (1) other subject tends to be high.

3.1. Marriage Satisfaction

Iqbal [30] mentions that marriage satisfaction is the subjective feeling of a husband and wife partner towards their behavior and interactions in marriage to meet the needs of life during marriage, both spiritual, physical, psychological, economic, sexual, social, and other needs. In order for marriage satisfaction to be realized, there must be a reciprocal effort between husband and wife to provide mutual satisfaction, both in terms of fulfilling life's needs, sexually, love, affection, and attention, and so on.

Latifah [31] also states the factors that influence marriage satisfaction, i.e. open communication, open expression of feelings, mutual trust, absence of partner domination, satisfying sexual relationships, social life, place of residence, income enough, children, religious beliefs and relationship with in-laws / in-laws.

3.2. Remarriage

E. Mavis Hetherington in his research found 6 pathways that are generally followed by men and women after divorce [32]. Of the 6 routes, some of them discussed groups of people who remarried after the divorce. One of these groups are named *the seekers* (seekers).

Re-married adults usually decide early to marry with an average of 50% of them remarrying within three years of divorcing. Sweeney [32] says that remarriage occurs more quickly in couples filing for

divorce, especially in the early years after divorce and in women who are older, than those who do not.

The couple hopes that in remarriage they will find better marital relationships than before. The facts regarding the benefits of remarriage for adults are still uncertain. Couples who remarry face a more unstable situation than their first marriage, and they are more potentially to divorce, particularly in the first years after remarriage, than their first marriage. The mental health status of adults who remarry is lower (e.g. experiencing higher rates of depression) when compared to the mental health status of adults in the first marriage, but remarriage will improve the financial status of adults who do so, especially women. Researchers found evidence that the marital relationships of adults who remarried tended to be more equal and characterized by the presence of joint decisions compared to previous marriages. Wives who remarried also reported that they had a greater influence on financial problems in their new family when compared to their previous marriage, as Waite describes [32].

Why is it difficult for adults who remarry to maintain their new marriages? One reason is that many people remarry not for reasons of love but rather for financial reasons, getting help with reducing loneliness and raising children. They also carry negative patterns in previous relationships that have led to the failure of that previous marriage into their new family. Couples who remarry also experience more stress in raising children than parents who never divorced. They also carry negative patterns that have previously led to failure at previous marriages into new families [33].

Research demonstrates how the higher tension between partners in second marriage relationships is the reason why the rate of divorce in second marriages is higher (about 10% higher in remarriage than in first marriage). Many research on the role of marriage indicate variations in dispute resolution, such as defensive behaviors, protective actions and the use of more transparent and damaging patterns of communication [21-26].

It is predicted that there would be a phenomenon in which about half of individuals live together with an occurrence rate of about 25% of married men and women will divorce and remarry [33]. Data comes from the Relationship Evaluation Survey (abbreviated as RELATE).

First marriage individuals have a higher quality of marriage than those who remarry [34][35]. This disparity in the quality of marriage is also often attributed to the variations in how marital dispute is handled in remarriage and to the problematic nature of first marriage [36][37]. For illustrative example, couples who remarry are recorded to have less friendships, rarely go on vacation, conflict communication skills, and problem-solving skills performed by couples at the start of marriage [26][38][39][40].

Since they are not skilled at managing issues and resolving disputes, stressors accumulate more than the problems that arise and can be resolved by the married couple, so that more stress is generated by less efficient conflict management [26][38][39][40]. Ineffective stress response patterns are thought to be the source of lower marital satisfaction and lower relationship stability for married couples to remarry than first married couples [41][42].

The remarried couples who are most likely to experience divorce are those who have a high level of marital dissatisfaction and who experience tension in parent-child relationships. One of the key mechanisms that predict divorce is through a decline in the quality of the marriage. Stepfamily relationships predict a significant change in marital quality in the two years after marriage and a decline in marital quality is the mechanism whereby poor stepfamily relationship disputes contribute to divorce in the last twenty years which has continued to increase.

The results of other studies provide a variety of data. Remarriage seems as rewarding as the first marriage. Skinner et al. [19] found equal levels of satisfaction, communication, fairness and discord between the first and second marriage partners. Amato et al. [17] noted that there was no difference in recent marital satisfaction. However, couples who remarried had a lower sense of marital stability compared to married couples who were first married. Even with almost half the occurrence of first marriages resulting in divorce, more than 60% of second marriages would result in separation [43].

Researchers interviewed a total of 180 men and women who suffered divorce living in the United States. The inference that can be drawn from this research is that remarriage would not jeopardize their welfare because the findings of the study report that there is no substantial difference in welfare between

those who divorced and those who divorced and subsequently remarried. However, the findings of the study are limited because they are limited by sample representation. The research is focused on interviews with a relatively small number of people with an intentionally collected number of respondents, and only 35% of them ended up remarrying at the time of the second data collection.

The first married group registered data with an improvement of +0.237 points in marital life satisfaction, while for the remarried group it was +0.459 points, which surpassed +0.222 points in the previous group. Not only were both changes ($P = 0.000$) but even the gap between them ($P = 0.008$) statistically important. Higher and permanent satisfaction registered by remarried individuals does not make remarriage a sufficient solution to the stigma, as the difference between usual and stigmatized remains largely unchanged. In other words, stigma is eliminated only from people and not from society as a whole.

The infectious aspect of social stigma often poses its own issues. Goffman argues "The tendency to spread stigma from stigmatized individuals to their close connections provides a reason why such relationships tend to be avoided or terminated, if any" [44]. Although this article does not discuss the degree to which intergenerational social stigma has an impact, families and particularly children from divorced families may still be socially excluded [45][46].

3.3. Conclusion

Study findings report that more people would undergo remarriage than their first marriage and expect remarriage to be better than their last marriage. Findings on whether remarriage is better than previous marriages are not well known. Based on the findings of the analysis, it was reported that the relationship between pride and marital satisfaction was higher in the second marriage whereas several other studies reported no difference or higher satisfaction in the first marriage.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

DW conceptualizes, analyses, and writes the article.

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