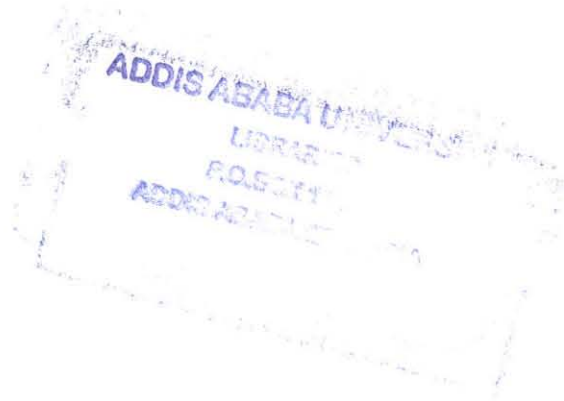


**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHILDREN AND MARITAL
SATISFACTION OF PARENTS IN ADDIS ABABA**

BY: TSEHAY ARARSA



June, 2005

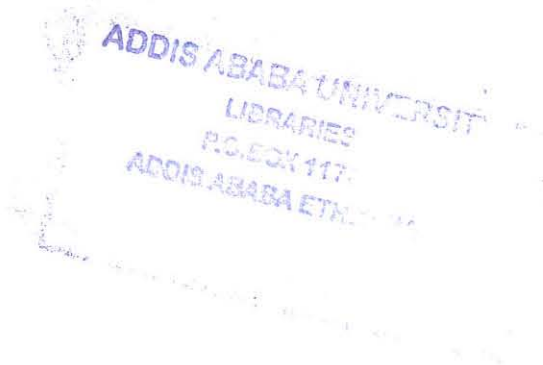
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**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY**

BY: TSEHAY ARAKSA



**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Masters of Art in
Educational Psychology**



June, 2005

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Approval of Board Examiners

Tamiric Ardualem 

Chair Person, Department

Signature

Graduate Committee

Tamiric Ardualem



Advisor (Name)

Signature


Dr. USHA DEVI P



Examiner (Name)

Signature

Dr. P. MOHAN RAJU



Examiner (Name)

Signature

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship of the presence of children to the marital satisfaction of parents in Addis Ababa. To do this, a sample of 200 married individuals (100 males and 100 females) were selected using purposive and random sampling techniques. Snyder's marital satisfaction scale (Snyder, 1997) was used to collect the data. Descriptive statistics, a univariate analysis of variance and post hoc comparison were employed to analyze the data. The findings of the analysis indicated that children have an effect on marital satisfaction of their parents. Regarding other demographic variables studied sex of parents, age at marriage and family income were found to be significant predictors of marital satisfaction while educational status was found to be not related to marital satisfaction. Some implications and suggestions of the findings are discussed.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Marriage is a popular and universal life event in most countries of the world. As Eshleman stated despite conflict, divorce, delays in marriage and a changing marital scene most people marry. Normative expectation considers marriage as an appropriate and desirable state with rare exceptions this end is accomplished (Eshleman, 1991).

From developmental perspective marriage is seen as a normative life event that occurs in early adulthood (Vaillant, 1977) and influence the nature of subsequent developmental tasks (Havigurst cited in Hurlock, 1980).

Marriage has many functions and involves many positive and negative consequences. Supporting this view, Larson and Holman, (1994) expressed that marriage is the most important and fundamental human relationship and rearing generation. According to Eshleman, (1991) marriage provides a person with establishment of one's own family, children, companionship, happiness, love, ego support, affection, economic security, an approved sexual outlet, elimination of loneliness and infintium.

Aldous, (1996) also proposed that marriage provides individual with a sense of meaning and identity in their lives.

Researchers have demonstrated that people are generally happier and healthier when they are married. In line with this view, Gottman, (1994) expressed that compared to the unmarried, married persons are generally happier, healthier, less depressed and disturbed, and less prone to premature death with some evidence suggesting the difference in well being between unmarried and married persons are becoming greater than smaller.

However, some other results of investigations challenge this assumption. For instance, Glenn and Weaver's research results show a rather steady decline from 1972 through 1976 in the positive relationship between being married and happiness (Glenn and Weaver, 1978).

Some authorities and researchers have suggested that married couple should choose to invest in the relation ship in order to achieve a higher value of marriage. For instance, Becker, (1993) cited in Knauth, (2001) indicated a very important, at least a very long term investment in marital relation ship is children. Children represent according to Becker, a marital specific

investment since they belong to the couple rather than either of the partners, which also implies that the value to both partners of having children is not fully preserved outside marriage.

Similarly, in most societies of the world there is a strong expectation that married couples should not only have children but should want to have them. Emphasizing this idea, Kammeyer, (1987) suggested that in most countries of the world married couples face a considerable cultural and social pressures to become parents based on the assumption that couples should have children in order to continue family. Most of the developmental theorists also consider becoming a parent as one of the most significant family life cycle event. Moreover, many writers do not consider married couples as a family until they have a child or children (Eshleman, 1991). From extensive review of various research Kammeyer, (1987) concluded that in many society women who do not bear children are held low regard and are often treated badly. According to him, in some societies of Africa, Middle East and Asia women can be divorced by their husband if they do not bear children. Children are also highly valued among our society.

In contradiction to traditional values of societies given to children a number of authorities have cited the advent of children as one of the events that brings about changes in individual life style and nature of marriage. For instance Baca and Etizen, (1997) stated that with the arrival of children the dyadic (husband and wife) marital relationship becomes triadic (Parents and children). In addition, with the coming of children the role of family members changes. Accordingly, married couple carries out the social roles of husband and wife before they become parents. But through the birth of their children they start to carrying out the distinct roles and responsibilities of father and mother.

The study performed by LeMaster quoted in Twenge, etal; (2003) indicated that the addition or removal of family member could force a reorganization of the family system which may be described as a crisis. Exploring the above idea, Cowan and Cowan, (1992) argued that, with the transition to parenthood couples are needed to make adjustment with considerable changes that comes as a result of children arrival. For example, couple will need to make adjustment with financial burden, change in spouse relationships, emotional and psychological pressures of child bearing and interpersonal relationship.

While the study of the relationship between children and marital satisfaction has a long and well documented history in western countries particularly in the United States the exploration of this relationship is very scant in Ethiopia. The present study attempts to fill this gap.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

According to Erickson's theory on psychosocial stage of human development, bearing children is considered as one of the significant function of adulthood. Erickson mentioned that generativity which involves helping and guiding the next generation can be done through parenthood (Hurlock, 1980). Hyun (2000) stated that, becoming a parent is a natural life event that should be taken as stage of adult socialization process.

Parenthood is also commonly perceived by most societies of the world as one of the most welcomed events in couple lives and most people want to have or expect to have children at some time in their lives.

As a number of writes and marital researchers have pointed out, having children have privileges and costs. From their study of why people value children, which was conducted on American adults, Hoffman and Manis, (1978) cited in Baca and Etizen,

(1999) mentioned that children are source of companionship. They help to hold families together, provide stimulation and fun, give adult status and social identity. They added that children may also give economic utility, and security in old age and symbolize a link with the past and future. The research findings of Breham, (1992) also shows that married couples stay together longer than those without children and less likely to experience divorce.

From the review of different researches on the benefits of having children those authors concluded that most parents describe their children as positive influence or as positive part of their lives. However, some authorities and the results of numerous scientific investigation show strong evidence that children affect the couples marital relationship negatively. A study conducted by Tomlinson suggests that couple's experience greater disagreements in aims, goals and handling of family affairs after the children's birth (cited in Vanlaningham, etal., 2001). It would appear from the research conducted by Cowan and his colleagues that these increasing difference in ideas, opinions, perceptions and satisfaction between partners can lead to a decline in marital satisfaction. They further explained that couples characterize

their marriage as more of a partnership and less of a romance following the birth of children, expressing less positive affection for each other (Cowan, etal. 1986 cited in Vanlaningham etal; 2001)

Harford and Markman, (1997) viewed that raising children affects the development and well being of parents through various pathways, including effects on individual development, emotional adjustment. Social role and economic well being. As indicated by Baca and Etizen, (1999); Cowan and Cowan, (1992); Kammeyer, (1987), starting with limiting the amount of time and energy husband and wife can devote to each other, the arrival of children affects time available for the relationship, increase role complexity and responsibilities, declines the freedom of the spouses in a marriage and requires more financial expenditure. To Eshleman, (1991) the presence of children in the family lowers a marital happiness or satisfaction for the parents. According to him, this is true for all groups of people regardless of sex, level of education, religious performance, employment status, and other grouping. A study performed by Belesky and Penesky (1988) summarized in Harford and Markman, (1997) as well as other results of family research have shown that couples without children are happier in

their marriage than those with children. Similar findings are suggested by Spainer, et al., (1975) in Kolter, (1985) that marital quality of parents decline through child bearing and rearing stages of family.

Marital relationship is not only affected by the coming of children but also by the number, age of children, educational level, family income and age at marriage.

Based on the previous findings and views of authorities on the relationship between children and marital satisfaction the following leading questions are formulated.

1. Is the presence of children related to marital satisfaction?
2. Do married males and females differ in their level of marital satisfaction?
3. Do the number of children living at home cause variations among parents in their level of marital satisfaction?
4. Does age of children affect the marital satisfactions of parents?
5. Do demographic variables such as age at marriage, level of education and family income influence the marital satisfaction of married individuals?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between children and marital satisfaction of the parents. The specific objectives are:

1. To determine if children affect marital satisfaction of their parent.
2. To assess the magnitude and direction of the effect of children on marital satisfaction of partners.
3. To identify if there is marital satisfaction difference among parents in terms of children's age and number.
4. To examine whether there is observable gender differences among subjects in their marital satisfaction.
5. To examine if age at marriage, level of education and family income affect marital satisfaction.

1.4. Significance of the Study

1. The researcher of this study believes that investigation of the effect of children on marital satisfaction will be helpful for those who want to make an informed decision about having children.

2. The study will contribute to the existing knowledge about the effect of children on marital satisfaction of parents.
3. The study will also be helpful for the concerned bodies in providing basic information on the relationship between parenthood and marital quality and is also expected to initiate other interested researchers for further study.

1.5 Delimitation of the Study

Since it is difficult to study all factors that affect marital satisfaction of married couples the researcher limited the scope of this study in examining the effect of children on marital satisfaction of parents. More over in order to make the research manageable, the area is delimited to yeka kefle ketma.

1.6 Operational Definition of Important Term

- Marital satisfaction: refers to the quality of the marital relationship of married individuals with their spouse. This was measured operationally using Snyder's (Snyder, 1997) marital satisfaction scale.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review of Related Literature

In marital relationship marital satisfaction is sought or expected by most married individual but it doesn't seem always true that marital satisfaction is easily achieved. Family researchers have made numerous attempts to identify the components of marital satisfaction on different stages. Some of these includes studies of long term relationships (those lasting more than 20 years), studies of newlyweds married, studies of individual in mid length marriages, studies that include individuals in all family life cycle stages. Affection, age at marriage, children, socio economic background, religious attendance, similarity in goal and interest, educational level (years of schooling) and household size are some of the variables that have been considered. Among the many correlates of marital satisfaction investigated one of those receiving greatest attention has been the presence of children.

In this chapter the works of various researchers and the views of authors on the relationship between the presence of children at home and marital happiness is discussed.

2.1 Children and Marital Satisfaction

A number of research findings have shown the desire to have children to be the main reason why people marry in the first place (Feldman, 1971); that most couples approach to parenthood assuming that children will bring them together (Belesky and Kelly as cited in Baca and Etizen, 1999); that most parents do not regret having had children and the major life change that parenthood brings is the positive part of becoming adult or having responsibilities (Hoffman and Manis, 1979).

In contrast to these findings, there are substantial research results that suggest children can affect marital satisfaction of their parents. The most frequently cited evidence for the effect of children on marriage and parents come from the cross sectional sample (studies that include individuals at various stages of family life cycle). The majority of these studies report that couples marital relationship is characterized by high marital satisfaction in the early years (or pre parental years) of marriage, a decline in marital happiness during the middle or (parental years) and a raise in marital happiness in later (or post parental years). For instance, Rollins and Feldman, (1970) assessed marital satisfaction in a sample of predominantly middle class white

couples in New York city. Their Findings indicated that marital satisfaction of couples decline from the beginning of marriage corresponding to the birth of the first child to the stage of school age children reaches low point as children grow into adolescence and increase when children leave home.

Orbuch and his colleges found that having children accounted for some of the apparent decline in satisfaction in the any years of marriage while much of apparent increase in marital satisfaction after the launching of children which is correlated to the reduction in work and parental responsibilities (Orbuch, etal., 1996). According to Hurlock, (1980) couples tend to report highest level of marital satisfaction in the pre-child rearing of marriage, least satisfaction through child rearing years and return to a higher level of satisfaction in latter years. The research findings of Hoffman and Manis, (1978) cited in Eshleman, (1991) shows that couples with children tend to have higher spousal conflicts, less interaction, and lower satisfaction with their relationship.

In their study of 900 Detroit wives Block and Wolfe cited in Vanlaningham, etal., (2001) found a gradual decline in marital satisfaction throughout the child rearing years and a slight raise after the children have left home.

Feldman compared couples with children to those without children and found that childless couples were more communicative, felt closer to each other, had more or higher marital satisfaction and placed a higher value on their marriage. On the other hand, couples with children talk less to one another, and up on doing so, spoke primarily about their children. (cited in Glenn and Weaver, 1978). A study conducted by Renne, (1970) suggests that couples who are currently in the process of raising children tended to be more dissatisfied with their marriage than couples who didn't have children or whose children were grown and had left home. Similarly, Cowan, et al., (1986) examined how marriage changes before and after having children. Their research results indicated that there is a significant decline in marital satisfaction of couples with children as compared to matched couples who remained childless. Husu and Tsang, (1991) cited in Tsang, et al., (2001) likewise reported that a couple may not have difficulty in relating to each other as husband and wife, but encounter problems when children involved. According to them, marital conflict often begins when couples have children; the problem disappear when children are out of picture.

The results of those studies indicated that the changes of marital relationship between marital partners seems to follow the arrival and departures of children. This suggests that there might be something about having children around that makes a satisfying relationship between the couple more difficult to sustain.

In spite of the wide spread belief that spouses with children experience low marital satisfaction, there are also investigations that haven't revealed an inverse relationship between the presence of children and marital happiness. A few studies suggest that the decline in marital satisfaction is not only associated to the arrival of children, while some believes that the results of investigation on the relationship between the presence of children and marital satisfaction is misleading and some showing no significant association between the presence of children and decline in marital happiness of couples.

In comparing couples who become parents with those who remained childless for similar length of time, McHale and Huston, (1985) reported that both groups have shown a similar decline in satisfaction with their marriage. From their longitudinal study of newly-weds, White and Booth, (1985) cited in Adams, (1986)

concluded that marital quality may decline in the early years of marriage whether or not one has a child. Ryder (1973) interviewed 112 childless couples and then reinterviewed them one or two years later. Approximately, two thirds of the couples had a child in the interim, about half of the new parents having reported pregnancy and the rest remained childless. His findings have shown that marital satisfaction declined in all categories for both husbands and wives.

These research results may show that some of the decline in marital happiness of couples with children indicated in other investigation may be a reflection of erosion that occurs overtime in marriage irrespective of the birth of child or children.

There are also some family researchers who believe that the research results on the effect of children on marital satisfaction is spurious. Hochschild, (1989) for example, suggest that marital happiness that declines in the first few years of marriage may be due to the end of honeymoon phase which in many marriages coincides with the advent of children. According to Houseknecht, (1979) high marital satisfaction among childless couples is reported because childless partners are disproportionately those with high education and incomes, a group that also report high

marital satisfaction. White et al. (1986) cited in Tsang et al. (2001), mentioned that negative correlations, found between the presence of children and marital satisfaction appear because among the couples with children those who seriously consider divorce are included. That is many couples with children who have experienced dissatisfaction with their marriage stay together for the sake of their children. On the other hand, childless couples those who considered getting divorced take action quickly to end marriage. By doing so, they are excluded from the sample of childless couples who remain childless and report marital dissatisfaction. Marini, (1989) as cited in Glenn and McLanahan, (1982) failed to find any effect of children on parents marriage.

2.2. How do Children Affect Marital Satisfaction?

Marital satisfaction has been found to be the most important factor in determining the over all happiness of individuals. (Glenn and Weaver, 1978). An extensive literature, however, demonstrates a negative correlation between the presence of children in the home and marital quality. Some of these studies have attempted to test the reason for this relationship.

Tsang et al., (2001) proposed that children's effect on marital satisfaction may be due to less time being devoted to spouses; due to increased obligation and increased division of labor and role disequilibrium being disturbed. White et al., (1986) cited in Tsang et al., (2001) found that the presence of children tended to decrease marital happiness through its marital effects on four marital structure factors.

1. Traditionalism in the division of household labour; the belief that household roles for women and external work roles for men.
2. Dissatisfaction with house hold labor; inequality of division of household chores between husbands and wives
3. Dissatisfaction with financial situation; financial resources decrease both through increased expenses and decreased income if one partner quits or reduce times in labor force.
4. Amount of marital interaction; with the arrival of children the marital relationship between partners decline.

Cowan and Cowan, (1992) pointed out that the presence of children is found to be correlated negatively with marital

satisfaction of couples because having a child or children is associated with an increase in marital conflict and decrease in marital interaction, and the marital relationship doesn't recover fully until all children leave the home. Belesky, (1990) cited in White and Booth, (1995) stated that the adverse effects of children on marital satisfaction are most likely to be produced by a reduction in companionship between spouses, disagreements between them over child rearing, the effect of children in establishing a traditional division of labor, and adverse effects of children on parents' psychological well being.

White and Booth, (1995) argued that the presence of children in household have a direct effect on marital satisfaction of spouses because they reduce husband and wives interaction, rigidifies the division of labour, causes role strain and tension among parents that these changes in marital structure and process reduce the perceived quality of marriage. According to Lamanna and Reidman, (1981) cited in Baca and Etizen, (1999) marital happiness of couples with children decline because when spouses become parents, they shift to responding to each other in terms of role obligations rather than as intimate. Interaction patterns decrease as do the communication, patterns of domestic

work, and the distribution of power. According to them, this change reflects that in effect the additional of children changes the social organization of the family which may lead to decline in marital satisfaction among parents. Tsang, et al., (2001) proposed that one possibility in which marital satisfaction decline is that parents give attention to their children than their marriage relationship. According to these researchers, putting children first is sometimes a sign, result, or even a cause of decline in marital happiness. Depending on their research findings, Cowan and Cowan, (1992) commented that a failure to make adjustment with considerable changes that comes as a result of becoming parent may make a couple to be dissatisfied with their marriage.

2.3 Children's Age and Marital Satisfaction

There have been some attempts among researchers and family therapists to determine what age of the children is most likely to be associated with the decline in marital satisfaction of parents. Many writers (Baca and Etizen, 1999; Eshleman, 1991; Adams, 1986) have represented adults' satisfaction with an irregular V-shaped line (usually called the U-shaped curve). As they mentioned, marital satisfaction is higher at the beginning of marriage before children arrive. Then, husbands and wives

satisfaction in their marriage shows a significant decrease starting from the birth of the first child and appears to continue sliding down hill through pre-school and school years to the time when teenage children are at home. At that point in time parents satisfaction with their marriage reaches its lowest point. This shows that couples with adolescents experience lowest marital satisfaction followed by partners with school age children and very young children. Vanalangham et al, (2001) have examined the impact of children on marriage relation by classifying the children in five age categories (infants, preschoolers, school age, adolescents and adult children). Their investigation results indicated children's influence were very significant when preschoolers, teenage and adult children are living in household. Using a national sample of married American couples (age 18 through 59) Glenn and McLanahan (1982) studied what age of children have an effect on marital satisfaction of couples. They found that having a child under 18 at home was associated with significantly lower marital happiness.

Anderson et al., (1983) suggested that satisfaction with marriage among parents reaches its lowest level when oldest child in the family reaches on school age (Between 7 and 12 years old)

and adolescence age (Between 13 and 17 years old). The finding of the study done by Campbell and his colleagues revealed that couples with young children have more tensions and anxieties than spouses whose children are at any stage in the family life cycle, with lack of money and lack of mutual understanding being the main reason given (Campbell et al., 1976). Steinberg and Silverberg (1987) interviewed 129 couples with adolescents twice over a year. They found that an emotionally distant relationship between a parent and a same gender adolescent child at the time of the first interview significantly predicted lower marital satisfaction at the time of the second interview. Kurdek (1991) research results suggest that living with young children is inversely associated with marital satisfaction because young children impose additional house hold and childcare duties on couples and interfere with the quantity and quality of time that couples spend together.

Using a sample of black American couples Borman, (1988) found similar results that is black American parents with minors at home were less satisfied with their marriage than other parents. Glenn and Weaver, (1978) suggested that younger and older children have more negative effect on their parents marital

satisfaction than any other children since younger children requires more care and older children often cause more worry.

In a review of Heaton and his Colleagues research works in (1996) Back and Etizen (1999) pointed out that when parents have very young children, they tend to perceive positive parent-child relationship but these couples spend less time together and have higher marital disagreement. During the early adolescent on the other hand, there is a declining closeness in the parent child relationship and high marital disagreement about children, the marital happiness is reach low point as children reach adolescence. The researchers also found that the greater the behaviour problems of the child, the greater the marital disagreement, the less time together and the lower marital happiness.

2.4 Children's Number and Marital satisfaction

Although children can be source of gratification and satisfaction (Rusell, 1974) numerous researchers and a number of writers demonstrated that husbands and wives with children report lower marital satisfaction than do without children. If children create stress with in marriage, marital satisfaction should decline as the number of children increase. Consistent

with this notion, Clausen and Clausen, (1973) argued that marital satisfaction is lowest for couples with many children spaced closely together than for couples with fewer children (cited in Harford and Markman, 1997).

On his study of factors that affect satisfaction of Michigan residents Broman (2000) indicated that marital satisfaction is strongly affected by the number of children. Accordingly, married couples in Michigan with no children living in the home have the highest level of marital satisfaction compared to those spouse with children, and these couples with two or more children living in the home are much less likely to be satisfied with their marital relationship than those with one child. White, et al., (1986) cited in Eshleman, (1991) suggested that having a large number of children is likely to increase the negative effect on marital satisfaction of parents. Twenge et al., (2003) likewise reported that the more children in the family the lower the parents marital satisfaction will be.

There are also some assumptions and findings that challenges the above ideas. For instance, Hurlock (1980) stated that when husbands and wives agree about an ideal number of children and when they have children of this number, their

marital satisfaction will be far better than when spouses feel that there are too many children or when circumstances prevent them from having the desired number of children. Consistent with this notion, (Christensed cited in Harford and Markaman, 1997) argued that the impact of children's number on marital satisfaction depends on couples view about family size, and is negatively related to marital satisfaction only when it violets this expectation. That means the lowest levels of marital happiness is observed among couples when they have fewer or more children than they desired. The extensive summary of various research works by Glenn and Weaver, (1978) revealed that the effect of children on marital relationship probably varies depending on the value placed on children while their research results show no significant relationship between the number of children and marital happiness of parents.

2.5 Gender Difference of Couples in Marital Satisfaction

Family researcher have completed numerous studies of marital happiness or satisfaction and psychological distress associated with marital roles, and marital stability. The findings of the majority of studies suggest that the presence of child or

children in the family diminishes the marital happiness of parents. Some of the results of these investigations shows the effect is different for men and women.

Rhyme (1981) cited in Tsang, et al., (2001) looked at the difference of marital satisfaction reports among men and women. She investigated various areas of overall marital quality; satisfaction with love, interest, friendship, sexual gratification, time spent at home with children, help at home and the correlation between general evaluation of marital quality and satisfaction with specific marital characteristics, Rhyme found that overall men were more satisfied with their marriage than women, but that the same factors of satisfaction were important in their overall assessments of satisfaction.

The works of Rollins and Feldman, (1970) indicated experiences of childbearing and childrearing have a rather profound and negative effect on marital satisfaction for wives, even in their basic feeling of self worth in relation to their marriage. They further explained that the husbands satisfaction in their marriage vary little from the establishment of marriage thorough the childbearing and childrearing years. However, the wives have a substantial decrease in general marital satisfaction

and a high level of negative feelings from marital interaction during the childbearing and childrearing phases until children are getting ready to leave home.

Some researchers who worked on marital quality and parenting suggested that having children reinforces traditional gender roles in the home placing a disproportionate amount of work and responsibility of parenting on mother (Cowan and Cowan, 1992; Levy Shiff, 1994). In turn this imbalance is associated with increased reports of couple conflict and marital dissatisfaction, particularly among women. Similarly, Broman, (1988) reported that though decrease in marital satisfaction is observed among both women and men through the marital career the decline is twice as large for women as for men and it was attributed to the women's feeling that their partner was not as involved as they were in doing with child care and household tasks. Addressing this issue, Baca and Etizen, (1999) proposed that the duties of parenthood are not shared equally but are left primarily to the mother. Even in egalitarian couples, parenthood tends to segregate males and females into more traditional gender roles, with the husband assuming the bread winner role and the wife being the child nurturer. According to them, this can be an

important source of tension which may lead to low marital satisfaction as one partner (the husband) is freed to pursue his interests while the other (the wife) has forgo hers to the sake of the children.

Scott and Alwin as quoted in Ball, (1993) also expressed that parenting is a different experience for men and women. Their research findings revealed that mothers/wives showed significantly high life strain than did fathers /husbands. According to Belesky et al., (1985) cited in White and Booth (1995) with the arrival of children mother find the change in satisfaction more stressful than do fathers. They added that mothers consistently recognize these changes to be more negative.

2.6 Educational Level of Couples and Marital satisfaction

There are mixed findings on the relationship between level of education and marital satisfaction. Some studies (for example, Blood and Wolfe, as cited in Glenn and McLanahan, 1982) mentioned the amount of formal education is directly related to the marital happiness or satisfaction for husbands and wives. According to the review of relevant literature done by Glenn and Weaver, (1978) formal education have both a direct positive effect

on the success of marriage and an indirect effect via economic and social standing. Any direct effect presumably results from a generally greater flexibility, ability to communicate, and ability to cope with their problems of living of well educated persons.

Ball (1993) suggested that more education is related to greater competence both within the family and in interaction with and in other institutions.

On the other hand, Campbell, et al., (1976) suggest a negative relationship between years of school completed and marital satisfaction. Their research findings indicated that partners varied inversely with the amount of education among both husbands and wives the least satisfied respondents being the college graduates.

Glenn and Weaver's analysis of data from three U.S. national surveys indicated or no positive relationship between years of schooling and marital happiness of partners Glenn and Weaver (1978). Using the data from six US national Surveys conducted from 1973 through 1978 Glenn and McLanahan, (1982) tested whether there is a relationship between educational level and the marital happiness of spouses with children. In their findings the amount of education found to be weakly related to the reported

marital satisfaction of partners but it was appeared that the more education husband and wife had, and the higher the husbands' occupational status, the more companionate activities they shared regardless of the number and age of children.

2.7 Age at Marriage and Marital Satisfaction

Age at marriage has been found to be one of the most important component of marital success and satisfaction in most of the literatures surrounding marital relationship. Lee (1997) reported that persons who marry at early ages may have a substantially higher risk of instability than those how marry in their later life. Lee forwarded some of the multitude factors that explain this relationship. This includes low education, premarital pregnancy, personality maladjustment, low socioeconomic background and little or no religious involvement. Bumpass and Sweet, (1972) stated that marriages of very young persons are less successful on the average than marriages of more mature persons, and indeed persons who have married in their teens have been much more likely to divorce than persons who have married at later ages. Bahr, (1983) found that earlier marriers are

likely to report marital dissatisfaction than older marries. According to him, the reported marital dissatisfaction among younger marriers is attributed to various factors; individuals who marry in their earlier years were not as prepared to perform key marital roles completely. These early marries appear to have shorter acquaintance periods and may not know their partners. They may also be less perspective or skilled than older people at assessing the values and characteristics of their potential mates.

Lee, 1977 collected and analyzed data from participants on the basis of the age at first marriage and their corresponding score on how satisfied they were in their marriage. He found a positive correlation between age at marriage and overall scored marital satisfaction. i.e participants in the older age group are found to be more satisfied in their marriage than respondents/subjects in the younger age group. Glenn and Weaver, (1978) have assessed the direct effect of ten independent variables (age at marriage, presence of children, level of education, socioeconomic status, frequency of church attendance, occupational status, duration of marriage, family income and wives employment) on marital happiness of males and females of

whites in USA. They found that the relationship of age at marriage to marital happiness is virtually nil.

2.8 Family Income and Marital Satisfaction

Family income is an important variable for family functioning and the perceived well being of family members. Numerous studies have found it related to marital satisfaction of partners. Borman, (2000) examined the effect of family income on marital satisfaction of Michigan residents. His finding indicated that higher income respondents were more likely strongly satisfied with their marriage than people with low income. The same result was reported by Spanier and Lewis, (1980) who worked on the relation of family income of black American couples to their marital satisfaction. According to them, family income is positively associated with the marital, life and family satisfaction of partners.

In their study of rural Iowans Conger et al., (2000) cited in Mantler and Davis (2004) found that financial pressure was associated with lower marital satisfaction and greater instability. They further explained that as financial pressure increase couples become occupied with financial issues, and their perceived lack of control over the situation often leads to frustration, anger and

general demoralization. As individuals become depressed, they withdraw more from their spouse, offering less emotional support and spent more time arguing and blaming each other which leads partners to experience low marital satisfaction.

On the otherhand, the study performed by Vanlanighm etal., (2001)revealed that there is no significant relationship between family income and marital satisfaction of couples. Glenn and Weaver's studies on three us national surveys attempted to estimate the direct effect of family income on husbands and wives. They found that the effect of family income on husbands and wives marital satisfaction is not significant (Glenn and Weaver, 1978).

2.9 Theoretical Models

Previous researchers on the effect of children on marital satisfaction noted that children seems to exert multiple influences on marital satisfaction of partners. Twenge, etal., (2003) have summarized these influences in four theories explaining the negative correlation between parenthood and marital satisfaction found in various studies. Each of these theoretical models make some what different prediction or explanations about the relationship between children and marital happiness. The present

study uses these theoretical models to elaborate and understand the impact of children on marital happiness.

2.9.1 The Role Conflict Model

The role conflict model explains how the reorganization of social roles towards the traditional family pattern, when children are born, may lead to marital dissatisfaction. The model demonstrates that the addition of children to family causes role stress and tensions because of a division of labor and in turn, these changes in family roles and structures may result in parents' feeling of marital dissatisfaction. Support for this model come from various studies. From his research result Adams (1986) for example, concluded that many couples move toward a more traditional division of labor in the home when they become parents, increasing the potential for conflict about roles and responsibilities.

Similarly, Cowan and his colleges found that conflict between spouse may be increased by the disruption of the division of labor in the family. Their studies indicated that in as much as the addition of children initiates new role responsibilities, the equilibrium of obligation may be disturbed. This appear to cause real problems in the relationship of parents. Levy Shiff, (1994)

found that parents involvement with children especially care giving activities was the strongest prediction for the decline in marital satisfaction after the birth of children.

The role conflict model addresses that women should experience greater dissatisfaction compared to men since women are the primary care takers and their roles changes when children arrive. Consistent with this notion, Levy-Shiff, (1994) commented that after the arrival of children, household division of labor become more traditional with wives doing the major share of the household maintenance and children care even for dual earner couples. According to the research findings of Belesky, (1986) cited in Eshelman, (1991) women experience some psychological stress as they perceive themselves primarily in a care giving role especially if they are accustomed to a professional role. In addition many women are overburdened and feel that they are not receiving enough help from their partners (Hochschild, 1989). Finally, becoming a parent adds another social role, and having more role may lead to stress and conflict (Rollins and Gilligan, 1978 cited in Kolter, 1985).

2.9.2 The Restriction of Freedom Model

The restriction of freedom model predicts that the presence of children in the household limits the freedom of parents and hence dissatisfaction may occur. It suggests that as joyful as becoming a parent can be, it also brings numerous stressful changes that can strain parents' relationship with each other with the advent of children, there is substantial increase in responsibilities and expenses, and a corresponding decrease in time for the spouses to be alone as couple and as individual that increases parents feeling of stress and strain. In support of this idea, Lawson (1988) cited in Eshleman (1991) reported that couples have the lowest marital satisfaction during the child rearing years, which may be due to spouses spending more time and energy on caring for their children than on themselves. Glenn and Weaver's research results addressed that taking care of children requires time and energy which the husband and wives could otherwise use to sustain their own relationship as a result leisure is a common source of disagreement among parents (Glenn and Weaver, 1978).

The advent of children not only affect time for couples relationships but also time with friends and recreational activities. In line in this idea, Belesky, (1986) cited in White and Booth,

(1995) reported that with the arrival of children time to be with other people and to do other thing is a very difficult task. Husbands and wives often feel that having less time for friends and recreation adds an extra strain on their marital relationship.

The restriction of freedom model also predicts that women experience greater dissatisfaction than men, as they generally experience greater restriction of freedom. Addressing this view, Hoschild, (1989) argued that mothers (Women) have less leisure time available to them compared to fathers (men) since the greater responsibility they take for organizing home life in the family and taking care of children may limit their ability to take time for themselves. Therefore, having less free time may be a cause for women to be dissatisfied with marriage as well as being parent rather than men (Fathers).

2.9.3 The Financial Cost Model

The financial cost model suggests that children are expensive and creates a financial pressure on couple. This financial pressure has an adverse effect on marital relationship. Supporting this view (Lemaster cited in Tweenge etal., 2003) expressed that because children are expensive they can place a significant stress on family's finance which may lead to

dissatisfaction with marriage. White, et al., (1986) cited in Tsang et al., (2001) concluded that financial dissatisfaction after the birth of children is one of the factor that make couples to be dissatisfied with their marital relationship. As they mentioned financial resources affect a marriage relation of couple through increase in expenses and decrease in income particularly if one partner quits or reduce time in the labor force. Baca and Etizen, (1999) also demonstrated that arrival of children which may lead to greater financial stress among couples. The financial cost model also suggests that men experiences greater dissatisfaction than woman because husbands are the traditional breadwinners. It also generates that children are generally expensive as they age, so the effect should be greater for older children. There should also be a large effect for low income families who will struggle to make ends meet with the addition of children.

2.9.4 The Sexual Dissatisfaction Model

The sexual dissatisfaction model explain how children's interference with parent's sex lives increase the marital dissatisfaction. Concerning this issues, researchers (eg. Bumestain and Shwarz cited in Twenge et al., 2003) reported that it is more difficult to have a sexual relationship with children in

the home and the decrease in sexual intimacy may have negative consequence for marital satisfaction of both husband and wife. Similarly, Glenn and McLanahan (1982) inferred from their research results that children tend to interfere with marital companionship and lessen the spontaneity of sexual relationships and their presence in the family creates the potential for jealousy and competition of affection, time and attention.

The sexual dissatisfaction model generates different specific predictions. According to this model, because men report greater sexual dissatisfaction with the marriage men should experience the greater dissatisfaction (Twenge, et al. 2003). Next the effect of children on sexual satisfaction might be largest for parents with infants since infants demand attention through out the evening and night.

CHAPTER THREE

3. Design of the Study

3.1 Subject

The sample of this study includes 200 (two hundred) married intact inhabitants: 100 (one hundred) male (50%) and 100 (One hundred) females (50%). The mean age of the participants was 37. with a range of 18 through 56 years. Although marital satisfaction is related to all types of family structures, the present study focused only on nuclear family. This was done to avoid variations among family groups since the presence of additional family members (such as relatives and friends from both sides of partners) may affect the result of the study. Thus, participants were included in this study if they are intact and had their own biological children in house or being married and childless.

3.2 Sampling techniques

In order to identify the Kefleketma and Kebeles in which the study was conducted, multistage random sampling method was employed. To obtain the possible subjects of the study two types of sampling techniques were used. The first method was

purposive sampling technique. In this case, those married individuals that fulfill the characteristics of the study were selected from the whole population. Then, simple random sampling technique was employed to select the final subjects that were included in the study.

3.3 Instrument

Snyder's Marital Satisfaction Inventory Revised (MSI-R) (Snyders, 1997) was used to assess marital satisfaction of respondents. The instrument consisted of 150 self reported items rated with True/False response. Due to the length of this scale and the irrelevance of sum items in our context 16 items were selected. Also the response options were changed to four point likert scale. In addition, a slight modification in terminology was made so that the items would be clear for respondents.

The scale requires respondents to rate their satisfaction with the following aspects of their marriage. The extent of understanding received from their spouse, the amount of love and affection received, the extent to which they and their spouse agree about things such as financial handling, their sexual relationship, who take care of children and things around the house, strength of love to spouses, rating of own marriage compared to other,

happiness of own marriage compared to others and over all happiness of marriage.

Response to these items ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) with all items coded so that a high score indicated greater marital satisfaction. For negatively worded items reverse coding was used. The alpha coefficient for the present study was 0.74.

3.4 Procedure of Data Collection

The questionnaire/scale was translated to Amharic to avoid language difficulties. Then, the questions were pre-tested on 40 (forty) respondents in another district (area) in which the main research was not conducted. Four research assistants/facilitators were given a group orientation on how to interact with respondents and objectives of the study. The research assistants were provided with address and marital status of those drawn in the sample and instructed to contact the person so identified. If the required person was not present to the given address or not volunteer to give response the research assistants as well as the researchers were to go to the next door.

3.5 Data Analysis Techniques

In analysis of the data

- i. t-test was employed to examine if there is significant differences between two groups.
- ii. One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the variation across the groups with respect to their marital satisfaction.
- iii. Post hoc comparison, i.e Tukey Kramer procedure was performed to examine the pair wise differences.

CHAPTER FOUR

4 Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

This study examined mainly three research questions related to marital relationship/satisfaction of married individuals and the presence of children at home in Addis Ababa. The first question called for comparison of marital satisfaction of males and females. The second question deals with the difference between respondents having different number of children in terms of marital satisfaction. The third question deals with the relationship between age of children and marital satisfaction. In addition, other variables such as age at marriage, family income and educational status were also tested since it was forwarded by most writers and family researchers that these variables may also affect marital satisfaction of partners.

The result of the analysis is presented in summarized forms using statistical methods; descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation), a univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA), Independent sample t-test and the post hoc comparison (Tukey/Kramer).

4.1.1 Sex Difference in Marital Satisfaction

One of the objectives of this study was to determine if there is gender difference in level of marital satisfaction among married persons in Addis Ababa. To answer this question, Independent samples t-test was employed. The result is presented in Table I below.

Table I: t-test for Sex Differences in Marital satisfaction

Variable	Sex	No	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	T- Obtained
Marital satisfaction	Male	100	48.92	7.13	2.45*
	Female	100	46.27	8.10	

* $P < 0.05$

An examination of the t-test results in table above indicates there is a statistically significant difference between married male and female participants. This table depicts, the mean score differences between male ($M=48.92$) and females ($M=46.27$). This difference between the mean scores of the two groups is statistically significant at 0.05 alpha level by t-test. So we can say that male respondents in this study have reported higher level of satisfaction in their marriage than female respondents.

4.1.2 The Relationship Between Children Number and Marital Satisfaction.

In order to determine whether there is or no marital happiness difference between married individuals in irrespective of the number of children living at home, the subjects were classified into three categories (i.e those participants having no children, those having one to four children and those parents who have five or more children in household). Descriptive statistics, a one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and post hoc comparison were conducted with the number of children as the independent variable and marital satisfaction as the dependent variable. Table II below provides the descriptive statistics and Table III Provides the analysis of variance for level of marital satisfaction of individuals with various number of children at home.

Table II: Descriptive Statistics for the Marital Satisfaction of Participants in Relation to the Number of Children

Number of Children	N	Mean	St. Deva.
No children	26	46.75	7.80
1-4 children	94	48.73	8.50
5 and above children	80	51.29	4.65
Total	200	47.59	7.73

The result from the examination of descriptive statistics revealed that the mean marital satisfaction score for those married persons who have no children at home is 46.75 with a standard deviation of 7.80 and those who have one to four children scored a mean value of 48.73 with a standard deviation of 8.50. Parents with five and above children scored mean value of 51.29 and a standard deviation of 4.65. This indicates that number of children in household was a significant predictor of marital satisfaction. Following an examination of descriptive statistics, a univariate analysis was conducted to see the significance of the variation among the three groups.

Accordingly, the one way ANOVA results displayed in Table III below have shown that there is a statistically significant difference among the three categories with regard to their marital satisfaction ($F_{2,197} = 3.37, P < 0.05$).

Table III: Analysis of Variance for the Relation of Children's Number to Marital Satisfaction.

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean squares	F
Between groups	407.25	2	235.12	4.06*
Within groups	11415.96	197	57.95	
Total	11886.195	199		

* $P < 0.05$

Because participants here were classified into three groups and the results obtained after a one way ANOVA analysis has shown a statistically significant difference among the three groups, post hoc comparison was undertaken using Tukey/Kramer. The result of a summary table for the Tukey Kramer procedure is presented below.

Table IV: GroupWise Comparison on Marital Satisfaction Score of Participants with Various Number of Children (Tukey /Kramer Procedure).

Groups	1	2	3
1. (Having 1-4 children)	-	2.7593	4.0195*
2. (Having 5 and above children)		-	4.0950*
3. (Having no children)			-

* P<.05

Tukey Kramer = 3.36

Pairs of groups showing significant differences.

The result from Tukey Kramer procedure applied indicated that married individuals with no children appeared to have a statistically lower level of marital satisfaction than the rest two groups. The later groups namely, those who have 1-4 children and 5 and above children at home do not differ in their level of marital satisfaction.

4.1.3 The Relationship between Age of Children and Marital Satisfaction.

To test the relation of children's age to reported marital satisfaction subjects were divided into three groups namely, subjects having children in age range of 0-6 years, 7-12 years and those parents who have children of age 13 and above. Because dividing the sample according to their children's age limited the sample size, in this analysis only 121 participants were included. The rest 53 respondents with children which were impossible to include in any of the three categories and 26 subjects without children that were apparently unimportant were dropped.

Table V: Descriptive Statistics for Relation of Age of Children to Marital Satisfaction

No	Age of children	N	Mean	Std Deviation
1	0-6 years	55	48.33	9.03
2	7-12	32	53.44	8.81
3	13 and above years	34	44.29	9.52
	Total	121	48.55	9.02

The descriptive statistics for the relationship of children's age to marital satisfaction of parents is shown in Table V above.

Inspection of the mean and standard deviation of results show differences among the three groups. Accordingly parents having children with age of 0-6 years scored mean of 48.33 with a standard deviation of 9.03. Parents having school age children got a mean score of 53.44 with standard deviation 8.81 and the other groups namely, parents who have teenage or adolescent children at home got mean score of 44.29 with standard deviation 9.52.

As one can observe from the result obtained parents with adolescent children have the lowest mean score while those with school age children got the highest mean score of marital satisfaction.

Although the inspection of descriptive statistics between the categories show differences among the three groups, it doesn't indicate whether the differences are statistically significant or not. Hence, a univariate analysis of variance F-test (ANOVA) was utilized to test the significance of the variation among the three groups of parents in their level of marital satisfaction. The summary of the ANOVA test is given below in Table VI.

Table VI: Analysis of Variance for the Relation of Age of children to Marital satisfaction.

Source	Sum of squares	df.	Mean squares	F
Between groups	1382.957	2	691.48	8.593
Within groups	9495.043	118	80.47	
Total	10878.00	120		

* P < 0.05

The results obtained from the examination of a one way analysis of variance have demonstrated that there is a statistically significant differences among the three groups in relation with their marital satisfaction, (F 2, 118 = 4.78, P<0.05).

Based on the result of univariate test which have shown a significant difference among the three categories, Tukey Kramer procedure was employed to identify the significance among the pairs of levels.

Table VII: Tukey Kramer Pair Wise Comparison of Samples with Three Age Groups of Children.

Groups	2	1	3
2. Having children with age 0-6 years		4.7385*	4.6489*
1. Having children with age 7-12 years			5.2488*
3 Having children with age 13 and above			

* P < 0.05

Tukey Kramer = 3.36

* Pairs of groups showing significant difference

According to the result, significant variances exist between the three pairs of levels. So, we can conclude that parents with children of 6-12 years (school age children) have reported higher level of marital satisfaction than the rest two groups. Comparing the later two groups parents with very young children are found to experience higher marital satisfaction than those parents who live with their teenage or adolescents children. In other words, parents who have teenage or adolescent children have experienced the lowest marital satisfaction in this study.

4.1.4 Educational Level and Marital Satisfaction

The question whether there is or no significant difference in marital satisfaction among married persons in Addis Ababa due to variations in educational status/years of school completed was one of the inquiry that was assessed in this investigation. Here, participants were grouped into there

- i) those who attend grade 1-8,
- ii) those who attend grade 9-12 and,
- iii) those who were college /university graduates.

This variations in educational status were examined using descriptive statistics and a univariate analysis of variance for its

effect on marital satisfaction. A summary results of both analysis are found in Table VIII and XI respectively.

Table VIII: Descriptive Statistics for Martial Satisfaction of Participants in Relation to Educational Levels

Educational level	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Grade 1-8	43	46.40	7.94
Grade 9-12	100	47.68	7.51
College/University graduates	57	48.35	7.97
Total	200	47.60	7.73

The table depicts that those groups who attend grade 1-8 have scored mean of (M=46.40), those who attend grade 9-12 have got a mean score (M=47.68) and college or university graduates have an average score of 48.35. This implies that the last group namely those who graduate from collage/university are superior in their mean score of marital satisfaction.

Table IX: Results of Analysis of Variance for Marital Satisfaction of Participants with Different Educational Level.

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F
Between groups	95.173	2	47.59	.792
Within groups	11791.022	197	59.88	
Total	11886.195	199		

P > 0.05

When we see the obtained results from the test of one way ANOVA regarding the possible effect of education level on marital satisfaction, it was found that there is no significant difference among the three groups in terms of marital satisfaction which was caused by variation in educational status, ($F_{2,197} = 3.04$ $P > 0.05$).

In other words, variations in educational level have no relation to marital satisfaction of respondents in this study.

4.1.5 Age at Marriage and Marital Satisfaction

The relation of age at time of marriage to marital satisfaction was investigated. To do this, the collected data was analyzed on the basis of two subject groups and the corresponding scores on their marital satisfaction. Hence, those who married before the age of 25 were compared with those who married after the age of 25 using the independent sample t-test.

Table X: Independent Samples t-test for the Relation of Age at Marriage to Marital Satisfaction.

Age at marriage	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-obtained
Below 25 years	87	44.45	8.09	3.39*
Above 25 years	113	48.12	6.87	
Total	200	46.12	7.08	

* $P < 0.05$

The age at marriage show a statistically significant differences among the two sample groups. The computed t value (3.39) is greater than the critical t-table value (1.98). According to this result, participants in their older age (those who married after the age of 25) have shown higher mean scores of marital satisfaction than their younger counterparts (those who married before age 25).

4.1.6 Family Income and Marital Satisfaction

To examine the difference among married individual in marital satisfaction according to their family income, the subjects were grouped into three categories depending on their family income per month (participants who earn \leq 600 Birr per month, those who earn 601-1000 Birr and respondents who earn above 1000 Birr). The descriptive statistics, the result of univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the examination of the post hoc comparison are given below in Table XI, XII and XIII respectively.

Table XI: Mean and Standard Deviation Score of Participants with Various Family Income.

Family Income	No	Mean	Std. Deviation
\leq 600 Birr Per month	66	42.58	6.42
601-1000 Birr Per month	77	47.18	6.62
\geq 1000 Birr Per month	57	50.63	8.23
Total	200	46.65	7.71

Looking at the marital satisfaction of participants according to their family income we observe the average score difference between the three categories indicating an increase in mean score with an increase in family income. Accordingly, respondents with relatively high income reported higher mean score (M=50.63) than did respondents with relatively medium income M=47.18). In addition, respondents with relatively low income got the lower mean score (M=42.58) compared to the rest two groups.

Table XII: Analysis of Variance for the Relation of Family Income of Participants to Reported Marital Satisfaction.

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean squares	F
Between groups	2020.96	2	1010.478	8.29*
Within Groups	9810.84	197	149.801	
Total	11831.80	199		

* P < 0.05

Looking into the result of the one way analysis of variance run for the effect of family income on marital satisfaction of married persons a statistically significant difference was obtained (F 2, 197 = 3.04 P< 0.05) between the categories.

Since there is a statistically significant difference among the group a further analysis of the study was carried out using Tukey Kramer procedure to identify the source of variation. Accordingly,

the three groups namely, those who earn monthly income of \leq 600, Birr, 601-1000 Birr and those who earn >1000 Birr) have demonstrated statistically significant difference among each other.

Table XIII: Pair wise Differences of Means on Marital Satisfaction for the Three Groups in terms of Their Family Income.

Groups	3	2	1
3 family income of \leq 600 Birr per month.	-	4.8927*	5.2734*
2 family income of 601-1000 Birr per month		-	5.0962*
1 family income of $>$ 1000 Birr per month			-

* $P < 0.05$

Tukey Kramer = 3.37

* Pairs of groups showing significant differences

According to the result from the Tukey/Kramer procedure all groups differ from each other indicating an increase in level of marital satisfaction of respondents with an increase in family income.

4.2 Discussion

At a very start of this study, certain basic questions were raised depending on the arguments and views of various family researchers and authorities regarding the relation of the presence of children in household to the marital satisfaction of married persons. In this section this idea is discussed based on the

finding of the current study concerning the extent and the association of the variable. In addition, the researcher of this study attempted to deal with age at marriage, educational status and family income of the participants with respect to the level of marital satisfaction.

4.2.1 Gender Vs Marital Satisfaction

Sex difference was studied for its possible effect on level of marital satisfaction of married men and women. The t-test performed revealed a statistically significant difference between the two groups favoring male participants. In other words, the finding of the present investigation indicated that men had experienced higher satisfaction with their marriage than women.

The result agrees with the earlier findings (Feldman, 1970; Rhyne, 1981; cited in Tsang, 2001; Cowan and Cowan, 1992; Levy Shiff, 1994) who found higher level of marital satisfaction report among men than women. The same result was also reported by Broman (1988) whose research findings revealed though decrease in marital satisfaction was observed among both men and women through the marital career, the decline is twice as large for women as for men.

Regarding the reason, it seems that parenthood reinforces more traditional gender role in the home placing a disproportionate amount of work and responsibilities of parenting on mother (Cowan and Cowan, 1992; Levy Shiff, 1994); this implies that women have less free time compared to men since the greater responsibility they take for organizing home life in the family and taking care of children may limit their ability to take time for themselves (Hoschild, 1989). Therefore, having less free time may be a cause for women to be less satisfied with marriage than men.

However, the research results failed to support the findings of Broman, (2000) which indicated there is no significant difference between men and women in terms of their level of marital satisfaction.

4.2.2 Children's Number Vs Marital Satisfaction

When we look at the relationship of children's number to marital satisfaction of married persons, the univariate test employed has shown there was a statistically significant relationship between the two variables indicating that marital satisfaction was affected by the number of children in a household. When the Tukey Kramer procedure was utilized, the

pair wise comparison of groups demonstrated significant differences has been identified. Accordingly, married person with no children living in the home have the lowest level of marital satisfaction compared to those person having one to four children as well as those parents having five and above children. The later groups namely, parents having one to four children and those who have five and more children were found to be similar (experienced higher level of marital satisfaction. It appears therefore, that children have a positive impact on marital satisfaction.

There was no finding in the literature which coincides with the present study. This appeared possibly because of the difference in cultural perspectives between the societies in which the previous research has been carried out (i.e Western countries) and Ethiopian societies in value of having children. As it is known, in Ethiopia, the traditional value places a great emphasis in bearing large number of children and the status of married individuals is evaluated with the number of children couples have. Further more, because in Ethiopia children viewed as important to care for parents in their older age and provide

inexpensive labor, parents may not evaluate /consider the children as harmful to their marriage.

This result is inconsistent with the previous research evidences and the views of most authors (Renne, 1970: Cowan et al., 1986; Orbuch et al., 1996; Hoffman and Manis cited in Vanlaningham et al, 2001) whose research results suggested partners with out children had higher marital satisfaction than couples with children.

It also contradicts with the findings of Broman, (2000): Claussen and Clausen, (1997) cited in Harford and Markman (1997) whose research results have shown couples with many children experienced lower marital satisfaction than those with fewer children and (Twenge et al., 2003; White, et al, 1986) who suggested the more children in the family the lower the marital satisfaction will be.

4.2.3 Children Age Vs Marital Satisfaction

As indicated in previous section the relation of children's age to marital satisfaction were studied at three levels (i.e. those parents having very young children (0-6 years), those having school age children (7-12 years) and those parents who have teenage or adolescent children (13 and above years)). The

univariate analysis undertaken addressed that there were a statistically significant relationship between children's age and marital satisfaction of parents. And the further analysis of the differences among the three categories using Tukey Kramer procedure has shown that significant differences exist between the number of pair groups. So, one can say from the findings that those parents who have teenage or adolescent children at home do have significantly lower marital satisfaction compared to those parents having school age and very young children.

The present result is in line with much previous research works and views of authors (Baca and Etizen, 1999; Eshleman, 1991) in that they also pointed out that parents satisfaction in their marriage reaches its lowest point when children reaches teenage/ adolescent years.

The reason here may be due to adolescent year is a time of increased distance between parents and children (Steinberg, 1987) changes in patterns of marital interaction among parents and high marital disagreements about their children at this time (Heaton et al.; cited in Baca and Etizen, 1999).

On the other hand this study contradicts with the findings of (Campbell et al; 1976; Kurdek 1991; Broman, 2000) who found

parents with very young children experienced the lowest marital satisfaction than those parents whose children are at any stage.

Concerning parents who have very young children, they appeared to fall behind those parents whose children are found at the stage of school age in their level of marital satisfaction. This finding confirms with the findings of some researchers (Campbell, etal., 1976; Kurdek, 1991).

The reason here seems that parents who live with young children may experience lack of mutual understanding (Campbell, etal., 1976). It may also be so because young children impose additional household tasks, childcare duties on parents, interfere with the quantity and quality of time that parents spend together (Kurdek, 1991) as well as the time, effort, worry and economic costs associated with raising very young children compared to school age children.

4.2.4 Educational Status Vs Marital Satisfaction.

Regarding the relation of educational status to marital satisfaction of individual, mean marital satisfaction score for those who were graduated from college/university is 48.35 while for those who attend grade 1-8 and grade 9-12 is (M=46.40) and

(M=47.68) respectively showing a superiority in mean marital satisfaction score of those who graduate from College/University.

The result obtained from a one way analysis of variance in this study has shown there is no significant difference among the three groups with respect to their marital satisfaction that came due to variation in educational level. In other words, the current study revealed that the relation of educational status to marital satisfaction is not strong.

The lack of variation in marital satisfaction with respect to educational level in the present study is unclear but it could possibly be explained in terms of the presence of overlap between the three groups. This may be attributed to the greater range of years of schooling used in the classification, which might have compromised the possible mean difference.

On the other hand, results of this investigation contrasts with study of earlier researchers (Blood and Wolfe cited in Glenn and McLanahan, 1982) which expressed there is a strong relation between the amount of formal education and marital satisfaction of partners and Campbell, et al., (1976) findings whose research result has shown a negative relation of educational level/years of school completed to marital satisfaction.

4.2.5 Age at Marriage Vs Marital Satisfaction

In this study age at marriage was another variable studied in terms of its association with marital satisfaction. Here, as it was expressed in earlier section the subjects were classified into two groups (those who married before age of 25 and those who married after age of twenty five). The t-test employed revealed a statistically significant difference between these categories indicating that those who married before age 25 were significantly less likely to be satisfied with their marriage than were their older counterparts.

The finding is consistent with the research investigation of (Lee, 1997, Bumpsass and Sweet, 1972) which found marriage of mature person is more successful than marriages of very young persons. And Broman, (2000) who found the earlier marries are more likely to report marital dissatisfaction compared to their older counterparts.

This result appeared, probably due to the fact that individuals who marry, in their earlier age are not as prepared to perform key marital roles completely Bahr, (1983). It may also attributed to low education, pre marital pregnancy, personality

maladjustment and low socio economic background among earlier marries.

However, this study contradicts with Glean and Weaver, (1978) research results which indicated the relationship of age at time of marriage and marital happiness is virtually nil.

4.2.6 Family Income Vs Marital Satisfaction

Family income was the other factor studied in terms of its effect on marital satisfaction of married persons. a univarite tests for an over all significant difference among the group has shown that family income has been found to cause a significant effect on marital satisfaction of married individuals The Tukey/Kramer procedure performed up on a univarite test appeared to show significant difference among the three pairs of levels indicating patterns of diminishing in marital satisfaction among the groups with decline of family income per month. Accordingly, a group with relatively high family income (these who earn 1000 Birr and above per moth) has been found to experience highest level of marital satisfaction than the other two groups.

Again, when we compare those married individuals who earn monthly family income of 601-1000 Birr to those who earn ≤ 600

Birr per month, the former group has been found to be a-head of the later groups in their level of marital satisfaction.

This finding is inline with the works of Broman (2000) Spanier and Lewis (1980) in that they pointed out family with high income were more satisfied with their marriage than those with low income.

It was suggested that financial pressure can affect marital satisfaction of couple negatively (Conger-etal., cited in Mantler and Davis, 2004). So the reason for the above results may be explained as because children places a significant stress on family finance White, etal., (1986) cited in Eshleman, (1991) and imposes greater costs on parents, those families with low income may experience a greater financial stress which may contribute to less satisfaction in their marriage among those couples compared to those with high income.

However, the current finding contrasts with the findings of Glenn and Weaver (1978) and Vanlanigham et al; (2001) in that they found no significant relation ship between family in come and marital satisfaction.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Summary, Implication and Suggestions

5.1 Summary

The main objective of this study was to investigate the relationships between the presence of children in the household and marital satisfaction of parents. In additions, other demographic variable (age at marriage, level of education and family income, were considered). Based on these objectives of the study certain basic questions were addressed.

1. Is the presence of children related to marital satisfaction?
2. Do males and females differ in their level of marital satisfaction?
3. Do the number of children living at home cause variations among subjects in their level of marital satisfaction?
4. Do ages of children affect the marital satisfaction of parents?
5. Do demographic variables such as age at marriage, level of education and family income influence the marital satisfaction of married individuals?

To select the possible sample of the study Yeka kefeleKetema from the 10 kefleketemas in Addis Ababa was

randomly selected. From this kefleketema two kebeles were picked. Then, married persons who are intact and either live only with their biological children or no children at home were selected.

Concerning the instrument, Snyder's marital satisfaction scale (Snyder, 1997) was adapted. Here, only 16 questions were taken from 150 questions. In addition, certain modification in terminology and changing the option from True/False to four likert type scale was made. The instrument was tested in a pilot study on a sample of 40 married individuals before the main investigation was employed. The reliability coefficient of 0.74 was obtained.

As far as the data collection procedure is concerned the questionnaires was administered for the selected samples in their house with the help of assistant researchers and were then collected immediately after they finished filling them.

To analyze the data collected descriptive statistics, one way analysis of variance, t-test and, Tukey Kramer procedure were employed and the level of significance was set at 0.05 alpha.

When we come to the findings the t-test employed for the sex difference in marital satisfaction revealed male had higher level of satisfaction than females.

The univariate test done for the possible effect of number of children living at home on marital satisfaction suggested there is an overall significant variation among the groups in terms of their marital satisfaction. Based on their overall significant differences, Tukey Kramer carried out to find the specific area of variation indicated married persons with no children at home appeared to have the lowest level of marital satisfaction while the rest two groups do not differ in their level of satisfaction. So, the presence of children seems to be positively related to marital satisfaction of parents.

An examination of univariate analysis for the effect of children's age on marital satisfaction has shown a significant differences among the three categories namely, those parents with adolescent children, those having school age children and parents who have very young children. The Tukey Kramer done following the result of an overall significant differences between the three groups have shown parents with school age children have

appeared to experience the highest marital satisfaction followed by parents with very young children and parents having adolescents, who reported the lowest level of marital satisfaction.

Educational level was the other variable that was assessed for its relation to marital satisfaction. The univariate analysis used found to show a slight significant difference in terms of their marital satisfaction that came as a result of variation in educational level among married persons.

An examination of independent sample t-test for the possible variation in level of marital satisfaction among individuals who married before age 25 and after age 25 revealed earlier marriers failed behind their older counter parts in level of satisfaction with their marriage.

Variation in family income for its effect on marital satisfaction of individuals treated using a univariate test. The result indicated the variation in family income found to cause significant differences between the groups. When this significant difference was examined in group wise, using Tukey Kramer procedure, we found that married individuals with monthly income of above 1000 Birr were ahead of the rest two groups in their marital satisfaction. When we see the rest two groups (those

who earn 601-1000 Birr per month and those individuals who earn 600 and below per month), the former group was found to experience higher level of marital satisfaction than the later.

Generally, this finding shows that family income of married individuals is directly related to their level of marital satisfaction indicating an increase in level of marital satisfaction with an increase of family income per month.

5.2 Implications and Suggestions

- The findings of this study suggest that the way to achieve marital satisfaction for a given individual is influenced by several variables including gender, age at marriage, family income, age of children and number of children.
- Although additional research is needed to fully evaluate the effect of children and other demographic variables on marital satisfaction of partners, it is useful to hypostasize and explore the importance of these variables.
- This study may be useful in helping marriage counselors and their clients to recognize the various variables that are likely to affect spouse's level of marital satisfaction.

- Further research should include consideration of variables such as duration of marriage, the presence of other family member in household, family background and premarital relation of married individuals.
- Further research should also be conducted to overcome the limitation to generalization of the present study by examining samples of the population in different kifle ketemas of Addis Ababa.

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Appendices

Questionnaire

Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate Studies
College of Education
Department of Psychology

The main objective of this questionnaire is to collect information/ data from married individuals about the marital relationship of spouses. Therefore, you are kindly requested to read each item carefully and provide your authentic response.

The questionnaire has two parts:

Part I- deals with background profile

Part II- consists of the pattern of couples relationship items.

N.B: Directions are provided in each parts of the questionnaire.

Read each of the items and provide your own response.

Your genuine response contributes highly for the success of this study at large. The responses will be kept confidentially at all times.

Thank you.

Part I

General Background

Please answer the following questions:

1. Age _____
2. Gender _____
3. Please mark the item that describes your educational level.
 - i. 1-8 (Junior school) _____
 - ii. 9-12 (Secondary School) _____
 - iii. College/ University graduate _____
 - iv. Please specify if any _____
4. Family income per month _____
5. Occupation _____ Full time
_____ Half day
6. Age at marriage _____
7. Age at first birth _____
8. Number of children living with you Male _____
Female _____
9. Please mark age and number of children living with you.

Age	Number
0-2 Years	_____
3-6 Years	_____
7-12 Years	_____
13 and above years	_____

Part II

Patterns of Couples relationships Items

Direction

This inventory consists of statements about you and your partner relationship. Read each statement put a tick (✓) mark on the box

that you think best describes the relationship between you and your partner.

No	Questions	Responses			
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	My partner share his/her leisure time with me.				
2	My partner and I decide together the manner in which our income is to be spent				
3	Our sexual relationship is satisfying and fulfilling				
4	I am satisfied with the amount of affection from my partner.				
5	Our relationship is very satisfying in several ways.				
6	My partner and I spend a good deal of time together in different kinds of play and recreation.				
7	It is often hard for us to discuss our finances without getting upset with each other.				
8	I am satisfied with the division of house work.				
9	My partner and I are happier than most couples I know.				

10	My partner often complains that I don't understand him/her				
11	My partner has too little regard sometimes for my sexual satisfaction.				
12	I might be happier if I weren't in this relationship				
13	My partner and I share household tasks based on our preference.				
14	We have a good balance of leisure time spent together and separately				
15	Our relationship has never been in difficulty because of financial concerns.				
16	My partner and I understand each other completely				

በአዲስ አበባ ዩንቨርሲቲ
የድህረ ምረቃ ኘሮግራም
የሳይኮሎጂ ትምህርት ክፍል

መግቢያ

የዚህ መጠይቅ ዋና ዓላማ በባለትዳሮች መካከል ያለው ግንኙነት ምን እንደሚመስል ጥናታዊ ጽሁፍ ለማቅረብ ሲሆን መጠይቁ ሁለት የተለያዩ ክፍሎችን የያዘ ነው። የመጀመሪያው ክፍል ስለ መላሾች ጠቅላላ መረጃ ሲሆን ሁለተኛው ክፍል በጥንዶች መካከል ያለውን ግንኙነት ለመዳሰስ የተዘጋጁ መጠይቆችን ያካተተ ነው።

መጠይቁን ለመሙላት የሚያስችሉ መምሪያዎች በእያንዳንዱ መጠይቅ ክፍል ላይ ተገልጾታል። ስለዚህ መምሪያዎቹን በማንበብ መጠይቆቹን እንዲሞሉ በትህትና እጠይቃለሁ።

የእርሶዎ ትክክለኛ መልስ መስጠት ለጥናቱ መሳካት ከፍተኛ አስተዋጽኦ አለው። ስም፣ ክፍል ከተማንም ሆነ የቤት ቁጥር መጻፍ አያስፈልግም።

ስለትብብርዎ በቅድሚያ አመሰግናለሁ።

ክፍል አንድ

ለሚቀጥሉት ጥያቄዎች መልስ ይስጡ

1. ዕድሜ _____
2. ያታ _____
3. የትምህርት ደረጃውን በባደው በታ ላይ ምልክት ያድርጉ
ምንም ያልተማረ

1-8 (1ኛ እና መለስተኛ ደረጃ ትምህርት)

9-12 (ሁለተኛ ደረጃ)

ከኮሌጅ ወይም ከዩንቨርሲቲ ያጠናቀቁ ከሆኑ ከሚከተሉት የትኛው እንደሆነ ያመልክቱ።

ሀ. ዲፕሎማ

ለ. የመጀመሪያ ዲግሪ

ሐ. 2ኛ ዲግሪና ከዚያም በላይ

መ. ሌላ ካለ ይጥቀሱ _____

4. የወር ገቢዎን በግምት ያስቀምጡ

5. ሥራ _____

5.1 የሥራው ሁኔታ

ሀ. ሙሉ ቀን

ለ. ግማሽ ቀን

6. ባለቤትዎን ያገቡበት እድሜ _____

7. የመጀመሪያ ልጅዎን የወለዱበት ዕድሜ _____

8. በአሁኑ ወቅት ከእርስዎ ጋር የሚኖሩት የልጆችዎ ብዛት

ሀ. ሴት _____

ለ. ወንድ _____

9. ከእርስዎ ጋር የሚኖሩትን የልጆች ብዛት እንደየዕድሜያቸው ያስቀምጡ

ዕድሜ

ብዛት

0-2 ዓመት _____

3-6 ዓመት _____

7-12 ዓመት _____

13 ዓመት እና ከዚያ በላይ _____

ክፍል ሁለት

መምሪያ:- ቀጥሎ ያሉት መጠይቆች በእርስዎና በባለቤትዎ መካከል ያለውን የትዳር ግንኙነት / የኑሮ ሁኔታ የሚጻጸሱ ናቸው። እያንዳንዱን ዐ.ነገር ከንባቡ በኋላ ለርስዎ የሚስማማዎን ምርጫ በሳጥኑ ውስጥ ባለው ባዶ ቦታ ይህን ምልክት (✓) ያድርጉ

ጥያቄ ቁጥር	መጠይቅ	ተመለሽ ምርጫዎች			
		በጣም አልስማማም	አልስማማም	እስማማለሁ	በጣም እስማማለሁ
1	እኔና ባለቤቴ የመዝናኛ ጊዜያችንን የምናሳልፍበት ሁኔታ ያረካኛል።				
2	እኔና ባለቤቴ ገቢያችንን እንዴት መጠቀም እንዳለብን የምንወስነው አብረን ነው።				
3	የወሊባዊ ግንኙነታችን አርኪና ፍላጎታችንን ያሟላ ነው።				
4	የትዳር ጓደኛዬ ለኔ ባለው ወይም ባላት ክፍተኛ የሆነ ፍቅር ደስተኛ ነኝ።				
5	የትዳር ኑሮአችን በብዙ መልኩ አስደሳች ነው።				
6	እኔና ባለቤቴ በተለያዩ ጨዋታዎች እና በመዝናኛ ጥሩ ጊዜያችንን አብረን እናሳልፋለን።				
7	ብዙ ጊዜ አኔና የትዳር ጓደኛዬ አንዳችን ሌላችንን ሳናስከፋ ስለ ገንዘብ አጠቃቀማችን መወያየት አይሆንልንም።				
8	ባለን የቤት ውስጥ የስራ ክፍፍል ደስተኛ ነኝ				
9	እኔና ባለቤቴ ከማውቃቸው አብዛኞቹ ጥንዶች የበለጠ ደስተኞች ነን።				
10	ባለቤቴ ብዙ ጊዜ እንደማልረዳው/ት ቅሬታዋ/ውን ያቀርብለኛል /ታቀርብለኛለች።				

		በጣም አልስማማም	አልስማማም	እስማማለሁ	በጣም እስማማለሁ
11	አንዳንዴ ባለቤቱ ለኔ የወሲብ እርካታ የሚሰጠው /የምትሰጠው ትኩረት ዝቅተኛ ነው።				
12	በአሁኑ የትዳር ኑሮ ውስጥ ባልሆን ኖሮ ምናልባትም የበለጠ ደስተኛ እሆን ነበር።				
13	እኔና ባለቤቱ የቤት ውስጥ ስራ ክፍፍል የምናደርገው በባህላዊ ሳይሆን በምርጫችን ነው።				
14	እኔና ባለቤቱ በጋራም ሆነ ለየብቻችን የምናሳልፋቸው ተመጣጣኝ የሆነ የመዝናኛ ጊዜያት አሉን።				
15	እኔና ባለቤቱ በገንዘብ ነክ ጉዳይ የተነሳ ግንኙነታችን ችግር ውስጥ ገብቶ አያውቅም።				
16	እኔና ባለቤቱ አንዳችን ሌላችንን ሙሉ በሙሉ እንረዳለን።				

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of materials used for thesis has been dully acknowledged.

Tsehey Ararsa

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as university advisor.

Ato Tamire Andualem (Asi. Prof)

