

## Predicting the quality of married life based on childhood trauma and socio-economic status of married women

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** The childhood injuries of couples and their socio-economic status as an environmental factor can cause serious damage to the relationship and family and marital quality. The aim of this study was to predict the quality of marital life based on childhood trauma and socio-economic status of married women.

**Method:** The research method was correlational type and the statistical population of the study was the people referred to health centers in Tehran in 2020, of which by random cluster sampling 320 eligible people were included in the study. In the present study in the first phase Districts were selected randomly and participants were selected using online and convenient sampling. Research tools include Childhood Trauma Questionnaire, Socio-Economic Questionnaire and Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale by Busby et al. Research data were analyzed using multivariate regression analysis by SPSS-24 software.

**Results:** In this study, the regression coefficient of physical trauma with marital quality of life was significant at the level of 0.01 ( $\beta=-0.331$ ,  $P=0.001$ ). The regression coefficient of socio-economic status with marital quality of life was significant at the level of 0.01 ( $\beta=0.175$ ,  $P=0.027$ ).

**Conclusion:** Couples therapists are advised to consider the couple's trauma in couple therapy sessions. Based on the findings of the present study, the need to increase the income of individuals in the family, which promotes socio-economic status, is suggested.

**Keywords:** childhood trauma, marital quality, socio-economic status, women

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**Introduction:**

The family, as the only stable foundation of society and the first social institution, has an irreplaceable role in maintaining and ensuring the health of the individual and society. The survival and growth of this holy institution depends on several factors, which are very important to be considered by family members, society and the country's officials. Among the factors that contribute to the survival of the family are marital functions such as the quality of marital life (1).

Marital quality is a multidimensional concept and includes various dimensions of marital relationship such as adjustment, satisfaction, happiness, cohesion and commitment (2) and is not necessarily a concept opposite to marital difference, but consists of positive dimensions (including happiness and positive marital interactions) and negative dimensions (including Conflicts and negative attitudes) that exist in relationships between couples (3).

The Vulnerability-Stress-Adaptation model is one of the proposed models for marital issues. This model of marital development provides a framework for explaining the relationship between vulnerability tolerance, adaptive processes, and quality of marital life (4). Carney and Bradbury (4) believe that marital consequences, such as marital quality and stability, are affected by persistent vulnerabilities, stressful events, and adaptive processes. One of the environmental and social factors that seem to be effective in marital quality is childhood trauma. Childhood experiences have also been associated with various physical and psychological problems in adulthood. Childhood maltreatment is defined as the behavior or neglect of behavior by a parent or other caregiver that results in harm to the child (5). childhood trauma is considered to be the most severe form of violent and irresponsible parenting, which shows serious disturbances in the parent-child relationship. For this reason, child abuse is referred to as an "experience of nature" (6). Nazar et al. (7) in a study examined the role of childhood trauma experiences in predicting the quality of marital relationships of married women. The results showed that there was a negative and significant relationship between childhood trauma and the quality of marital relationships. Childhood trauma also explains 27% of the variance in the quality of marital relationships.

Hard economic times in society have detrimental consequences for families, including the possibility of family breakdown and disorder. Economic deprivation reduces a couple's positive interactions and leads them to divorce. Economic problems among couples whose family interests are not adequate for survival at the standard level destabilize their marital life (8). Weak socio-economic class also increases violence and reduces couples' warm and supportive behaviors, so positive interactions between them decrease when faced with financial problems. The warmth and supportive role of marital interactions affect marital happiness and satisfaction and thereby reduce marital quality (9). It seems that when physiological and safety needs are almost adequately met, then the need for community affiliation or connection will become apparent as the dominant need. Like the needs of belonging to a group and being accepted by the group. Once social needs prevail, man will strive to establish meaningful relationships with others. Once people's need for belonging begins to be satisfied, people usually want to be more than just a member of their group, and then feel that they need respect, both self-respect and gaining respect from others. Satisfying these needs

creates a sense of self-confidence, dignity, power, and self-control (10). In this regard, Bani Fatemeh and Taheri Teymurloui (11) suggested that a person with a high socio-economic status to find economics will gain respect and status in social relations, which in turn will lead to satisfaction.

Based on what was reviewed, the childhood traumas of couples, as well as their socio-economic status as an environmental factor, can cause serious damage to the relationship and family and marital quality, and therefore the study of effective variables. It adds to the present importance and necessity of the marital quality of the married. Therefore, the aim of this study was to predict the quality of marital life based on childhood trauma and socio-economic status of married women.

### **Research method:**

The method of the present study was correlational and the statistical population included married women who referred to health centers in Tehran in 1399. In the present study, since the minimum sample size for regression studies is 200 people (12) and considering the probability of sample loss, finally 320 qualified people entered the study. In the present study, in the first step, the areas were selected randomly and in the last step, individuals were selected by accessibility and online. In order to select health houses in the first step, first, they were randomly selected in 5 directions: north of regions 2 and 3, south of regions 18 and 19, center of regions 11 and 12, east of regions 8 and 13 and west of regions 9 and 10. It was not possible to continue the randomness of the specimens due to the corona. Therefore, people in health centers administered the questionnaires in an accessible and online manner. The criterion was to settle in Tehran and spend a year together. Ethical considerations included the informed consent of the participants, observance of the principle of confidentiality and confidentiality of personal information and characteristics. In the present study, Pearson correlation coefficient and multivariate regression analysis were used to analyze the data to determine the share of predictor variables in predicting criterion variables. The assumptions of the multivariate regression analysis method include the normality and linearity of the relationships between the variables. The following tools were used to collect data:

Revised Dyadic adjustment scale, revised form. The Marital Quality Scale, a revised form by Basby et al. (13), includes 14 items that evaluate the three subscales of marital agreement, satisfaction, and cohesion in a 6-point Likert of always difference = 0 to permanent agreement = 6. Higher scores on this scale indicate higher marital quality. Busby et al. Reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients for this instrument in the range of 0.80 to 0.91 as an indicator of internal consistency of the instrument. The distinguishing power of compatible and incompatible couples was reported as an indicator of instrument validity (13). Yousefi (2) Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the subscales of this instrument in the range from 0.82 to 0.92 and the correlation of this instrument with the Enrich Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire equal to 0.39 as an indicator of concurrent validity of the instrument has reported.

Childhood trauma Questionnaire. The Childhood trauma Questionnaire of Bernstein et al. (14) consists of 28 items and 5 subscales of sexual harassment, physical abuse, emotional abuse,

physical neglect and emotional neglect on a 5-point Likert scale from "never = 1" to "always = 5" evaluates. Bernstein et al. (14) Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the whole scale of 0.95 and the internal correlation between the factors of the Childhood trauma Questionnaire in the range of 0.25 to 0.58 and the high correlation of the Childhood trauma Questionnaire with clinical interviews. Adults reported Childhood abuse and neglect as indicators of convergent validity. Asgarpour et al. (15) obtained Cronbach's alpha coefficient for physical abuse, emotional abuse, physical negligence and emotional negligence 0.74, 0.74, 0.70 and 0.83, respectively, and the factor of sexual abuse due to internal consistency the bottom was removed from the answers in the research. In the study of Asgarpour et al. (15), the theoretical structure of the Childhood trauma Questionnaire consisted of four factors: physical abuse, emotional abuse, physical neglect and emotional negligence with higher factor loadings of 0.32.

Socio-economic status questionnaire. The Socio-Economic Status Questionnaire of Ghodrathnama et al. (16) consists of 7 items that assess the 4 components of income, economic class, education and housing status in a 5-point Likert scale from 1 to 5. A higher score means more appropriate and better socio-economic status. Ghodrathnama et al. (16) reported the construct validity of this questionnaire through factor analysis, KMO coefficient equal to 0.752 and the reliability of the questionnaire by Cronbach's alpha method 0.726.

## Results:

In the present study, the mean  $\pm$  standard deviation of participants was 10.33  $\pm$  41 41.36. 16 (5%) of women participating in the study in the age group of 20 to 25 years, 25 (7.81%) in the age group of 26 to 30 years, 60 (18.75%) in the age group of 31 to 35 years, 101 people (31.56%) in the age group of 36 to 40 years, 30 people (9.38%) in the age group of 41 to 45 years, 28 people (8.75%) in the age group of 46 to 50 years and 59 people (18.44%) were in the age group of 51 to 55 years. 102 (31.88%) of women participating in diploma education, 80 (25.00%) in postgraduate education, 104 (32.50%) in bachelor education and 34 (10.62%) in postgraduate education and had higher. 159 (48.68%) of the women participating in the present study were employed and 161 (51.32%) were unemployed.

**Table 1. Mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis and tolerance coefficient and inflation variance of research variables**

| research variables           | inflation variance | tolerance coefficient | kurtosis | Skewness | standard deviation | $\pm$ | Mean         |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|----------|----------|--------------------|-------|--------------|
| 1. Socio-economic class      | 1/19               | 0.858                 | 0.125    | -0.286   | 3/43               | $\pm$ | <b>17/47</b> |
| 2. Physical trauma           | 1.34               | 0.754                 | 0.731    | -0.69    | 2.51               | $\pm$ | <b>13.09</b> |
| 3. Sexual trauma             | 1/47               | 0.68                  | 1/19     | -0.943   | 2.04               | $\pm$ | <b>11.06</b> |
| 4. Emotional / verbal trauma | 1.40               | 0.716                 | 1.75     | 1/00     | 1.38               | $\pm$ | <b>8.66</b>  |

|                 |      |       |        |        |      |   |              |
|-----------------|------|-------|--------|--------|------|---|--------------|
| 5. Neglect      | 1.43 | 0.699 | 1.14   | 1.03   | 1.87 | ± | <b>8.63</b>  |
| 7. Agreement    | -    | -     | -0.896 | -0.341 | 7.20 | ± | <b>23.98</b> |
| 8. Satisfaction | -    | -     | 0.015  | 0.028  | 5.05 | ± | <b>11.71</b> |
| 9. Cohesion     | -    | -     | -0.623 | -0.56  | 3.83 | ± | <b>12.04</b> |

Table 1 shows the elongation and skew values of each of the research variables and as can be seen, the elongation and skew values of any of the variables are not more than  $\pm 2$ . This means that the data distribution was probably normal for each of the research variables. This indicates that one of the basic assumptions of regression analysis is established.

The use of scatter plot diagrams (one of the most common methods for examining the assumption of linearity of relationships between variables) showed that the variables of the present study have created two-by-two scatter plots that are elliptical. Accordingly, none of the relationships between the markers show a clear deviation from linearity. This suggests that the relationships between the variables are linear among the research variables.

**Table 2. Correlation matrix of research variables**

| Variables                 | 1       | 2       | 3       | 4       | 5       | 6     | 7       | 8       |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|---------|---------|
| 1. Socio-economic class   | -       |         |         |         |         |       |         |         |
| 2. Physical trauma        | ** .240 | -       |         |         |         |       |         |         |
| 3. Sexual trauma          | ** .163 | ** .229 | -       |         |         |       |         |         |
| Emotional / verbal trauma | .030    | ** .215 | ** .405 | -       |         |       |         |         |
| 5. Physical Neglect       | -.022   | ** .143 | -.101   | ** .227 | -       |       |         |         |
| 6. Emotional Neglect      | -.059   | ** .186 | .068    | ** .177 | ** .469 | -     |         |         |
| 7. Agreement              | ** .244 | ** .236 | ** .191 | -.0002  | * -.137 | -.019 | -       |         |
| 8. Satisfaction           | ** .246 | ** .175 | ** .274 | .047    | -.082   | -.021 | ** .676 | -       |
| 9. Cohesion               | ** .304 | ** .211 | ** .187 | -.053   | * -.116 | -.064 | ** .736 | ** .673 |

01/0> P \*\*, 05/0> P \*

**Table 3. Hierarchical multivariate regression in predicting marital quality of life**

| Research variables           | B     | SE   | $\beta$ | R <sup>2</sup> $\Delta$ | R <sup>2</sup> |
|------------------------------|-------|------|---------|-------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Childhood trauma</b>      |       |      |         |                         |                |
| Physical                     | -.221 | .062 | **-.331 |                         |                |
| Emotional                    | -.086 | .087 | -.095   |                         |                |
| Sexual                       | -.054 | .081 | -.054   |                         |                |
| Neglect                      | -.078 | .059 | -.018   |                         |                |
|                              |       |      |         | -                       | <b>** .082</b> |
| <b>Socio-economic status</b> |       |      |         |                         |                |
| Socio-economic status        | .293  | .123 | *.175   |                         |                |
|                              |       |      |         | <b>*.037</b>            |                |

Table 3 shows that the regression coefficient of physical trauma with marital quality of life was significant at the level of 0.01 ( $\beta = -0.331$ ,  $P = 0.001$ ). The regression coefficient of socio-economic status with marital quality of life was significant at the level of 0.01 ( $\beta = 0.175$ ,  $P = 0.027$ ). In total, the variables of Childhood trauma and socio-economic status explain 11.9% of the variance in marital quality of life.

### Discussion and conclusion:

The aim of this study was to predict the quality of marital life based on Childhood trauma and socio-economic status of married women. The results of the present study showed that the quality of marital life is predicted based on Childhood trauma and socio-economic status of married women.

In the present explanation, it can be said that childhood trauma affects the emotional-social development of adulthood, including the development of negative cognitions about oneself and others. Children who have been neglected during their childhood often have to endure a lot of emotional pain, which prevents them from feeling safe. Therefore, these children are less likely to develop coping skills with negative cognitions or emotions (17), which also negatively affects interpersonal relationships and marital quality. In addition, people who have experienced harm and abuse as children will not be able to develop a supportive and empathetic relationship in their marriage. Emotional empathy can predict that a person will be more satisfied with the outcome of the conflict, while making the person perceive the outcome of the conflict less fairly. In fact, in people who have more emotional empathy, the level of satisfaction after the conflict is also higher,



because empathy increases compromising conflict resolution behaviors and leads to more friendly discussions (18) and thus increases the quality of married life. In the present explanation, it can be said that the health of the individual as an important issue is the result of socio-economic conditions. People who are in a better socio-economic situation are in a better position due to their ability to access better health facilities, and in contrast to people from the lower classes of society, they suffer from poor health, factors that cause changes in the economic situation. - Socially affect the health of individuals (19) and in the meantime the quality of married life will also be affected. Economic problems may directly affect couples, leading to increased conflict and, ultimately, separation and divorce. Therefore, it can be said that economic factors may affect the quality of marriage (20). According to the Vulnerability-Stress-Adaptation model of the development of married life, its adaptive processes are aspects of the marital relationship that help spouses to adequately and effectively deal with stressors that seem to be the situation. Socio-economic are also in this area. According to Carney and Bradbury (4), these are behaviors that spouses use to solve marital problems.

The emergence and persistence of financial problems and the weakness of financial support systems is one of the important factors affecting the marriage of couples. Lack of financial strength, poverty and unemployment, along with insufficient support from the family, make life difficult for the couple. Financial disputes among the predictors of marital conflict led to more angry debates than calm debates (21). A couple who are under psychological and economic pressure are struggling with a variety of issues. This factor reveals marital conflicts and problems. Over time, financial stress significantly affects the relationship between husband and wife, and having a minimum of financial means is one of the factors that play an important role in the continuity and stability of cohabitation. Financial and economic issues cannot be ignored and how many conflicts and disputes arise as a result of financial issues (9). Satisfaction of physiological needs (housing, food, and clothing) is usually possible with money. What money can buy satisfies physiological needs, not money itself can satisfy physiological, safety, and even social needs. Also, according to Maslow's theory, it can be said that people's satisfaction depends on meeting their financial and material needs (10). Economic security and economic adequacy have been viewed as the main determinants of marital satisfaction and divorce (22). Ali Mandgari and Bibi Razeghi Nasrabad (23) concluded that couples seeking divorce strongly suggest financial problems and grievances as a major issue. Amato and Bayati (24) found that family income is a strong predictor of economic hardship, and economic and social hardship in turn is associated with lower marital happiness, less marital interaction, more conflict and more marital issues, and prevailing thinking about divorce.

As the level of education and the level of education of the spouse increase, marital satisfaction also increases. This relationship is stronger for women than men (25). Why this should be sought in the fact that education and learning due to scientific learning in various fields and gaining more knowledge to identify issues in preventing a person from doing or causing inappropriate behaviors is effective. One of these issues is marriage and married life. Couples who have a high level of

knowledge and information about married life and its details, can establish a desirable and healthy relationship with each other in all respects, which can lead to satisfaction and satisfaction of the couple. On the other hand, education determines the position of the individual in society.

Differences in education levels also cause a lack of proper understanding between the parties, differences in views and reactions to different issues, creating a sense of inferiority, lack, and all of the above affect the level of marital satisfaction.

Consistent with these results, Zare and Safiari Jafarabad (22) suggested that with the level of education and social status, people's awareness also increases and information increases, information and awareness to the person to know more about problems and how to better deal with problems and Helping issues, one of these issues is the issue of marriage and married life, couples who have a high level of knowledge and information about married life and its details, can establish a desirable and healthy relationship with each other in all respects, with conflicts and Deal with logical and reasonable problems and take more and higher steps towards cognition and development, which can lead to happiness and satisfaction of couples. Tavassoli and Taheri (9). They concluded that in the case of available resources, including the level of education and family income, the degree of economic disparities decreases with increasing levels of education. Thus, it seems that the higher socio-economic status, which includes higher education, is related to the tendency of couples to resolve constructive conflict, including compromise and solidarity, to identify issues and problems and how to resolve them. Since having the minimum financial means as an economic base is one of the factors that play an important role in the continuity and stability of family life, families without such conditions are at serious risk. Economic issues and finances cannot be ignored how many conflicts and conflicts arise as a result of financial issues (9). Zare and Safiari Jafarabad (22) suggested that people who have a higher base, have more access to a number of resources and facilities. Higher education of these people increases their information and knowledge about issues and due to their suitable financial and economic situation, they have better access to some facilities such as books and magazines, classes and marriage and family counseling, etc. Using these facilities can be very effective in informing people about marriage and family issues and resolving issues and problems.

Every research, however, in nature seeks the relationship between factors and the extent of its impact. However, it will have a set of limitations within itself. Generalization should be done with caution because the last step was available and online due to corona sampling. People may have consciously and unconsciously tried to appear desirable while collecting information through a questionnaire.

In the present study, only women were studied and thus researchers are suggested to do similar research on married men.

For more accurate and generalizable results, it is recommended that similar research be conducted in other parts of the country.



**Limitation:**

It is also suggested that similar studies be conducted considering the moderating role of socio-economic status and gender.

Since Childhood trauma stems from the interaction of important people in life during childhood, it is recommended to hold workshops to prevent the formation of Childhood trauma for married people to change their lifestyle, and to heal and heal their wounds and emotional pain.

Couples' therapists are also advised to consider traumas in couple therapy sessions and measure them to provide appropriate treatments to improve their quality of married life.

Based on the findings of the present study, the need to increase the income of individuals in the family and exit from low incomes in individuals and related policies, the need to earn income for women and the need to combine education with income that promotes socio-economic status. It is suggested.

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