
The Role of Social Support and Marital Adjustment to Marital Quality of Married Student

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Abstract

Social support and marital adjustment play an essential role in the realization of good marital quality. The purpose of this study was to analyze the characteristics of students and families, social support, marital adjustment along with the relationship and its effect on the marriage quality of married students. The samples of this study are 30 female students from various public and private universities around Bogor city taken with convenience sampling technique. The determination of research location was chosen purposively. Data collection was obtained from the interview using the questionnaires. The questionnaires that had been used were social support (Cronbach's alpha 0.683), marital adjustment (Cronbach's alpha 0.890) and marital quality (Cronbach's alpha 0.866). Data were analyzed descriptively and inferential. The results showed that social support had a significant positive relationship with marital adjustment, moreover marital adjustment was positively correlated with marital quality. Social support and marital adjustment affect the quality of marriage.

Keywords: marital quality, marital adjustment, social support

Abstrak

Dukungan sosial dan penyesuaian perkawinan berperan penting dalam terwujudnya kualitas perkawinan yang baik. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah menganalisis karakteristik mahasiswa dan keluarga, dukungan sosial, penyesuaian perkawinan serta hubungan dan pengaruhnya terhadap kualitas perkawinan pada mahasiswi aktif berstatus menikah. Contoh penelitian ini adalah 30 mahasiswi dari berbagai perguruan tinggi negeri maupun swasta di kota Bogor yang diambil dengan teknik *convenience sampling*. Penentuan lokasi penelitian dipilih secara *purposive*. Pengumpulan data diperoleh dari hasil wawancara menggunakan kuesioner. Kuesioner yang digunakan adalah kuesioner dukungan sosial dengan Cronbach's alpha 0.683, kuesioner penyesuaian perkawinan (Cronbach's alpha 0.890) dan kuesioner kualitas perkawinan (Cronbach's alpha 0.866). Data dianalisis secara deskriptif dan inferensia. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dukungan sosial memiliki hubungan positif signifikan dengan penyesuaian perkawinan, selain itu penyesuaian perkawinan berhubungan positif signifikan dengan kualitas perkawinan. Dukungan sosial dan penyesuaian perkawinan memengaruhi kualitas perkawinan.

Kata kunci: dukungan sosial, kualitas perkawinan, penyesuaian perkawinan

Introduction

The rights and opportunities to pursue higher education are guaranteed in Act No.20 of 2003, which states that every citizen has the right to improve lifelong education. This has led to an increase in the number of female participation in higher education. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2015, the number of women entering higher education has increased from year to year, namely as much as 6.13 percent in 2009 and 6.62 percent in 2010. Also, based on data from the Ministry of Research and Higher Education (Kemenristekdikti) in 2015, in the 2014/2015 odd semester, the number of female students (51.92%) was more than the number of male students (48.08%).

Students, according to developmental psychology in general are categorized in the early adult period. Santrock (2002) states, early adulthood is the period to work, have a relationship with the opposite gender and tends to spend time to do other activities. One of the development tasks of the early adult is to choose a partner of life (Hurlock, 1980). In fulfilling the development task of an adult, many students decide to commit to marriage. Marriage is a bond that unites men and women to live together and try to obtain benefits such as love, sexual satisfaction, friendship and others and using unification as a legitimate way have descents (Abra, 2001). Young married women must confront many environmental and social issues, thus they must be able to adjust themselves in every situation (Shabbir, Nisar, & Fatima, 2015). While undergoing the lecture process, a student will deal with various things which can be the source of stress especially when the student already get married. Lack of preparation of the young couple will lead to dysfunction in fulfilling the family's development tasks and marriage satisfaction barely manifested. Therefore, an unprepared couple for marriage can lead to the collapse of one's household namely divorce. The broken family which caused by a divorce can affect many aspects in the family and one's life either for the parents or the children. Amato (2014) found that divorce adults and children with divorced parents experience more mental and physical health problems.

Stress can be minimized by the existence of social support, namely assistance and support obtained from the surrounding environment. Chao (2012) found that students who received low social support were more susceptible to stress. Social support is physical and non-physical assistance from extended families, neighbors or friends that give positive value to the couple's family in carrying out their functions and roles (Sunarti et al., 2005). The social support from couples and families influences the quality of marriage (Primomo, Yates, & Woods, 1990).

The family as the smallest institution in society certainly requires adjustments and adaptations related to changes in the role of husband and wife. Marital adjustment is defined as the feelings of mutual pleasure and satisfaction in a marital relationship (Hashmi, Khurshid & Hassan, 2007). According to Clinebell and Clinebell (2005) in (Anjani & Suryanto 2006), the initial period of marriage is the epoch of self-adjustment and a crisis arises when first get into the marriage stage. A good marriage adjustment determines the attainment of the household, those successes would create satisfaction, prevents disappointment and establish the easiness for someone to adjust to their new life (Hurlock, 2002).

Marital quality is the presence of a close and harmonious relationship and the existence of the principle is upheld between husband and wife in which reflected in the happiness and satisfaction of marriage. The quality of marriage has two dimensions, i.e.

marriage happiness and marital satisfaction (Conger et al., 1994). Both of these measurements of marital quality based on marital commitment, communication with the partners, economic aspects, childcare and intimate relationships. The poor quality of marriage will give the effect to how the parents do their parenting also would erroneous experience for the children (Sunarti et al., 2005). Hence, this study aims to analyze the relationship and influence of respondents' characteristics, social support and marital adjustment on the quality of marriages of married students.

Methods

This study used a cross-sectional study design. The research was conducted in several public and private universities in the city of Bogor, West Java, which were selected purposively. Retrieval of data in this study was conducted in mid of April 2018 until end of May 2018. The samples in this study were 30 married students (wives) who were taken using convenience sampling techniques.

The type of data used in this study is primary data. Primary data were obtained from interviews with questionnaire tools, including student/wife's characteristics (age, age at marriage, period of time marriage, length of education), family characteristics (age of husband, husband's age at marriage, length of education, per capita income), social support, marital adjustment, and marital quality.

On family characteristics, the duration of education of the wife and the respondent's spouse are distinguished based on the duration of completing education, namely; 0 = not attending school; 1 = elementary school (6 years); 2 = middle School (9 years); 3 = high school (12 years); 4 = diploma (13-15 years); 5 = bachelor (16 years); and 6 = post-graduate (> 16 years). Per capita income is grouped into two categories those are above the poverty line and below the poverty line, based on the 2015 Bogor City poverty line Rp 290.874 (BPS, 2017).

The definition of social support is the assistance provided by others to someone. Social support was measured using instruments developed by Sarafino (1990) and Cubbbin (1987) in Kumalasari (2017) which consisted of three dimensions, namely extended family social support, social support of friends and social support from neighbor which were then modified by the authors with the total statements 36 items and the value of Cronbach's alpha 0.683 with the alternative answers are; "1 = never, 2 = rare, 3 = often, 4 = very often". The extended family social support is a set of people who have blood ties, marital ties, or adoption such as step-father, step-mother, step-child, step-grandmother and step-grandfather. Friend social support defined as someone or a group of people who do not have blood ties but have physical and emotional closeness. Social support of the neighbors are people who live in the neighborhood near the family.

Marital adjustments use the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) developed by Spanier (1982) which is then modified by the authors with the total of statements are 28 items and Cronbach's alpha valued 0.890 with the options of "1 = never, 2 = rare, 3 = often, 4 = very often". Marital adjustment is the adaptation of wife and husband to differences in marriage.

The last variable is the marital quality which measured according to the perception of the wife's happiness or satisfaction towards the husband. The quality of marriage used an instrument compiled by Conger et al. (1994) consists of two dimensions, namely satisfaction and happiness of marriage. This questionnaire was

developed by Kumalasari (2017) by which was later modified by the authors with a total of 33 items statements and Cronbach's alpha values 0.866 with the answer's options are "1 = never, 2 = rare, 3 = often, 4 = very often".

Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive analysis included mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum value, and percentage to identify family characteristics of the student, social support, marital adjustment, and quality. The inferential analysis used is a multiple linear regression test which is used to determine the effect of the characteristics of female students, family characteristics, social support, marital adjustment towards marital quality.

The research variables were then given an assessment score on each questionnaire's statements. Afterward, the total score of each variable was transformed into an index score. This aim was to equalize the units, thus the data comparison of each variable is unified. Scores were categorized into three categories, namely low, medium, and high. Low, medium, and high were categorized based on the cut-off categorization by Sunarti et al. (2005) by explanation <60 categorized as low, 60-79 categorized as a medium, and ≥ 80 categorized as high.

Findings

Student and Family Characteristics

The average of wife's age is 21 years old and the average age of the husband is 25 years old, apparently, at that age, the husband and wife are in their early adulthood (Hurlock, 1980). The average length of education of a wife and husband is 16 years, equivalent to bachelor studies. The period marriages range from 1 month to 3 years. The average age of the wives at marriage is 21.07 years and the average married husband is 24.63 years, and the youngest married age for a wife is 18 years old and 19 years old for the husband. The percentage of husband's job is the majority as private employees (40%), while the other half are laborers (3.3%); civil employees (6.7%); entrepreneurs (26.7%) and freelance employees (23.3%). Meanwhile, all wives (100%) do not work or focus on completing their studies. The average per capita family income is IDR 2.900.000, this figure is well above the 2015 Bogor City poverty line average of IDR 290.874 (BPS, 2017).

Social Support

Social support is the support provided so that it can help individuals to manage changes that occur in the family including services such as protection, care, and counseling and training assistance (Atirah, 2011). The results showed that the majority of the samples wives (53.3%) felt social support with a moderate category which included broad family social support (53.3%) and neighboring social support (50%). If it is reviewed based on the dimensions of social support, the highest average index achievement is 72.4, which is on broad family social support. This means that the social support felt in the marriage of students comes mostly from extended families.

Extend Family Social Support. The high level of family social support can be proven by the analysis answer distribution of the questionnaires which explained that most of the extended family would listening to the couples when there are problems faced (53.3%), understanding the condition of their wives (70%), providing assistance in the form of

goods (53.3%), providing solutions when wives confront any problems (56.7%), and extended families provide any information relating to married student families (56.7%). However, there are still wives who feel they rarely get financial assistance from their extended families when undergoing difficulties (33.3%) and wives find it difficult to share problems with their extended families (40%).

Friend Social Support. Based on the Table 1, the friends are the lowest social support obtained by the wife. This is explained by the results of interviews that wives feel they rarely get help from their friends both in terms of financial (46.7%) and in terms of goods assistance (53.3%). However, the wife feels that friends often provide emotional support when they are facing problems (76.7%) and the wife feels that her friend often tries to show her feelings of affection and concern for her (80%).

Neighbor Social Support. Based on the dimensions of the neighbor's social support, the wife feels that she has a caring and loving neighbor (66.7%), the wife feels that the environment provides a sense of security (73.3%), the appreciation given by the neighbors is felt by the wife (76.7%), help when the wife needs (66.7%), the wife feels comfortable to exchange ideas with neighbors (80%) and neighbors understand that the wife is busy as they are also living as a student (76.7%). However, there are still wives who feel that neighbors cannot provide advice that helps them in solving problems (56.7%).

Table 1 The descriptive statistic based on social support index.

Social Support Dimension	Categories						Min- Max (Index)	Mean ± SD
	Low		Moderate		High			
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Extended Family Social Support	5	16.7	16	53.3	9	30.0	42.4-93.9	72.4 ± 13.3
Friend Social Support	15	50.0	14	46.7	1	3.3	46.7-88.9	59.9 ± 10.1
Neighbor Social Support	12	40.0	15	50.0	3	10.0	43.3-83.3	61.0 ± 10.5
Total	12	40.0	16	53.3	2	6.7	47.2-86.1	64.0 ± 9.07

Marital Adjustment

Marital adjustment is a condition in which two individuals learn to fulfill the needs, desires, and expectations of each other, this has to be done in order to achieve happiness in the relationship (Laswell & Laswell, 1987). Overall, as many as 63.3 percents of respondents claimed that they have good marital adjustment (Table 2). The good adjustment in marriage is indicated by the number of activities and interactions which remind married couples learn to adapt such as showing affection for each other (96.7%), wives never regret getting married to their partner (83.3%), wives feeling happy (83.3%), relationship between husbands and wives are fine (80%), wives and partner rarely talk about divorce (76.7%), and wives and partner have the same understanding in matters of trust or religion (70%).

However, although the marital adjustment of the respondents quite high there are still plenty of things for a partner to be able to adjust with each other. This can be shown through analysis of the respondents' answer that there are wives who feel the intensity of intercourse with their partners is not routine (20%), there is no agreement in the division of household tasks (26.7%), for instance it is not clear who is going to cook,

clean the room, and so forth. Aside from that, there is still 13.3 percent of respondents who said that they often quarrel with their partner.

Table 2 The minimum-maximum value, mean, and standard deviation of marital adjustment.

Category	Total	
	n	%
Low	1	3.3
Moderate	10	33.3
High	19	63.3
Total	30	100.0
Mean ± SD	82.9 ± 8.8	

Marital Quality

The quality of marriage is similar to the level of marital difficulties over the success of marriage (Nurani, 2004). Based on the average marital quality, the marital satisfaction of the respondents has categorized as high, for around 60 percent of wives claimed so, also around 70 percent of wives stated that they have moderate marital happiness. The study found that the average index of marital satisfaction was 81.3 meaning that the wives are more satisfied in their marriage than feel happy (Table 3).

Marital satisfaction. Almost one third of the wives feel satisfied with their partner (83.3%), the wives and spouse always have confabulated in various ways (63.3%), but apart from that there are wives who have never liked their husband in managing the financial (63.3 %) also more than half of the wives (56.7%)appointed that they are not satisfied with the work accomplishments achieved by the couple.

Marital happiness. The happiness of the wives is high in their marriage were because of both couple steady keep their marriage commitment (66.7%), and as many as 53.3 percents of the wives said that their husband always compliments their wife’s skill. However, the low happiness which gotten by the wives was explained by the attitude of the parents-in-law and siblings-in-law often belittle the wives and the conflict with the husband about the money.

Table 3The minimum-maximum value, mean,and standard deviation of marital quality.

Marital Quality	Category						Min - Max	Mean ± SD
	Low		Moderate		High			
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Marital Satisfaction	1	3.3	11	36.7	18	60.0	59.3-98.1	81.3 ± 10.1
Marital Happiness	0	0.0	21	70.0	9	30.0	64.4-93.3	76.5 ± 7.7
Total	0	0.0	15	50.0	15	50.0	62.6-96.0	79.1 ± 8.4

The Effect of Family Characteristics, Social Support, Marital Adjustment to Marital Quality

The results of the analysis of multiple linear regression models of variables on marital quality in Table 4 show that the Adjusted R Square number is 0.562, which means the model explains 56.2 percent of the variable models that affect the marital quality and other variables influence the remaining 43.8 percent. The results also

showed social support ($\beta = -0.339$; $p = 0.038$) has a negative effect on marital quality meaning each one unit of social support increased, will decrease the marital quality by 0.399 points. So, it can be interpreted that the higher social support would cause a lower quality of marriage. Meanwhile, marital adjustment ($\beta = 0.945$; $p = 0.000$) has a significant positive effect on marital quality, each marital adjustment increase one unit will also increase marital quality by 0.945 points. This can be interpreted that the better the adjustment of one's marriage, the better the quality of their marriage.

Table 4 Predictors of marital quality

Variables	Coefficient			
	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficient (β)	Sig.
Constant	20.183	25.330		0.434
Wife's age	-0.183	2.401	-0.024	0.940
Wife's age at marriage	0.531	1.914	0.082	0.784
Wife's education	-0.231	1.555	-0.033	0.883
Period marriage	0.406	1.950	-0.033	0.837
Per capita income	2.865E-7	0.000	0.062	0.651
Social support	-0.312	0.141	-0.339	0.038*
Marital adjustment	0.894	0.154	0.945	0.000**
R Square				0.667
Adjusted R Square				0.562
F				6.309
Sig.				0.000

Note: *Significant at $p < 0.1$; **Significant at $p < 0.01$

Discussion

The ideal age marriage for women is 21 years and 25 years for men (BKKBN, 2017). The research found that the average age of marriage for wife is 21.1 years and the age of marriage for husband is 24.6 years so it can be assumed that the respondents of this study were married at the ideal age. At this age, it can be called as the ideal age for marriage because fertilization in the female reproductive organs is mature enough according to the age of psychological maturity. Also, the age of 21 where a woman is seen as physically and mentally prepared to be a mother who can accept the presence of the baby with all happiness and ready to confront various issues (Sumbullah & Jannah, 2012).

The majority of wives and husbands have had an education that has reached 16 years or equivalent to a bachelor degree. Qibtiyah (2014) stated that the level of education of someone would influence their behavior to make decisions to get married. The period marriage ranges from 1 month to 3 years which is also categorized as the initial period of the marriage. The initial period of the marriage is a period when couples are learning to know more about the character and personality of their partner and prepare themselves to deal with the conditions (Susilowati, 2008; Sunarti, 2013).

In general, husbands work as private employees and otherwise wives focus on completing their studies so they prefer not to work. The Bogor City poverty line in 2015 is IDR 290.874 (BPS, 2017), the results showed that the average family income per capita was IDR 2.900.000, meaning that the entire family of respondents was above the poverty line. The families of respondents are already able to fulfill their basic needs due

to the education of both partners who were already high enough. Education is one of the factors that increase people's well-being because of an increase in one's education so he will get a job with relatively high rewards (Amnesi, 2012).

Family characteristics and respondents did not significantly influence marital quality. This is contrary to the results of the study of Lee (1977) and Akhani, Rathi, and Mishra (1999) which state that age levels affect satisfaction in a marriage where satisfaction is one of the dimensions measured in marital quality. Besides, the results of this study also contradict the findings of Herawati and Nurajizah (2016) that family income has a positive impact on marital quality.

Sunarti et al. (2005) stated that social support is physical and non-physical assistance from the extended families, friends or neighbors that would bring positive value to the family in carrying out their functions and roles. The study found that more than half of the respondents felt the social support of large families and the other half felt their neighbor's social support. The social support provided by the extended family is always present and will not change, such support includes caring and attention (Friedman, Bowden & Jones, 1999). According to Puspitawati and Herawati (2009), the support provided by extended families in the form of caring and high attention can provide encouragement and verbal support given by the family to maintain good interaction in the family. Meanwhile, the higher the social support provided by neighbors, the higher the bonding bond and interaction between husband and wife (Atirah, 2011). Marriages are states that are affected by social networks. Social support from the closest members of the network-family, friends, neighbors- can affect individuals. Social support is a factor that has been found to benefit individuals' well-being and marital experience (Graham et al., 2000; Yulfa & Herawati, 2017).

Social support can affect a person's marriage life and could help someone adjust themselves in their marriage. A wife needs self-adjustment related to her dual status as a wife and as a student. Marriage adjustment is a process of adaptation between husband and wife where couples can prevent conflicts and resolve conflicts well together, through a process of self-adjustment (Hurlock, 2000). This study found that respondents had a high self-adjustment in marriage. The attainment of high or low marital adjustments is determined by consensus, satisfaction, closeness and emotional expression (Yizengaw et al., 2014). Marital adjustment is also determined by the frequency of harmony that is owned by a married couple because surely each couple has a different way of thinking (Spanier, 1982). Alayi, Ahmadi Gatab, and Khamen (2011) stated that the ability to be well-communicated in the family is vital for the adjustment in marriage. A good marital adjustment will have an impact on one's satisfaction and happiness in undergoing their marriage.

The quality of marriage is characterized by a close and harmonious relationship between couples which is reflected in happiness and marital satisfaction (Sunarti et al., 2005). Marital satisfaction including aspects of love and intimate relationships, economic aspects and aspects of childcare (Conger, 1990). The results showed that half of the respondents had high marital quality. According to Balkanlioglu (2011), marital satisfaction can be achieved by embracing the values that are come from religious teachings. Also, marital happiness can be realized if couples can manage finances according to their needs (Tati, 2004). Kumalasari (2017) stated the quality of marriage is influenced by social support and family interaction.

The multiple regression results show that social support had a significant negative effect on marital quality, this means that the lower the social support the higher

the quality of marriage become. Couples when married tend to decide to learn to live independently by not being too open to their families about their problems and limited asking for assistance from the parents when they are confronting problems. This is supported by the facts which occur in the community when children are married, family social support is even less due to the assumption that children are accustomed to being independent (Puspani & Herdyanto, 2016). In fact, independence supports the realization of better quality marriages.

In addition, the relationship was also found between the adjustment of marriage and the quality of marriage. The results of multiple test regressions indicated that the adjustment of marriage affects the quality of the marriage, where the higher the marriage adjustments, the higher the quality of the marriage. These results are in line with the study conducted by Khairi (2016), the higher the rate of marriage adjustment carried out, the higher the quality of marriage perceived by the couple. This has an impact on increasing the quality of marriage due to marital satisfaction as an indicator of marital quality (Dewi, 2009).

Besides the variables examined in this study, the marital quality is also influenced by other factors such as general health quality, life satisfaction, loneliness, and communication skills (Khazaei et al., 2011; Besharat, 2002). This study has several limitations that can be made an improvement for subsequent studies, namely respondents who fill out questionnaires only wives only so that all responses to variables obtained are perceptions of the wife. In further research, it is better to fill in the questionnaire and also involve the husband to get more detailed information to measure the quality of marriage felt by both parties. The instrument used contains closed questions, in order to obtain a more in-depth analysis you should use several open questions.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

The average age at the time of marriage of the wife and husband is in the group of early adults with the youngest age of 18 years. The average education of a wife and husband is equivalent to a bachelor's degree. Husband's work varies from working as laborers, civil servants, private employees, entrepreneurs and freelancers with the majority of husbands working as private employees. Most wives decide to focus on completing their studies thus in general they do not work. The length of marriage of respondents included in the first years of marriage with a span of between one month and three years. Based on per capita family income, the entire family is above the poverty line with an average of IDR 2.900.000.

Social support, marital quality, and marital adjustment of respondents were categorized well. The study found that wife's age, wife's age at marriage, wife's education, length of marriage and income per capita did not affect the quality of one's marriage. Factors that significantly influence marital quality are social support and marital adjustment. The social support that is too high would make the quality of marriage lower, but on the contrary, good marriage adjustments can improve the quality of marriage.

Recommendation

Based on the results obtained from this study, the suggestions that can be given are as follows: (1) adjustment of marriage and good marriage satisfaction must be maintained or even need to be improved; (2) students are expected to be able to establish good relationships with friends and vice versa. (3) the government, especially those working in the family welfare department, is expected to provide programs for socialization regarding pre-marital preparation and effective and efficient knowledge related to childcare.

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