

THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN MODERATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED INTERPARENTAL CONFLICT AND MARITAL SATISFACTION AMONG MARRIED INDIVIDUALS

Rahelda Defanti*), Fivi Nurwianti, Cantyo A. Dannisworo, Lathifah Hanum

Department of Clinical Psychology, Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Indonesia,
Lkr. Kampus Raya Street, Depok, 16424, Indonesia

*)E-mail: rahelda.defanti@ui.ac.id

Abstract

The experience of growing up in a conflict-ridden family significantly influences individuals' views on marriage, emotion regulation, and the development of certain relationship patterns, which may either reflect or deviate from their parents' conflict-handling behaviors. This study examines the role of emotional intelligence in moderating the relationship between perceived parental conflict and marital satisfaction. This correlational quantitative study included 346 married men and women ($M = 30.7$, $SD = 5.77$), selected through purposive sampling. Marital satisfaction was measured using the Couple Satisfaction Index-16 (CSI-16), perceived parental conflict with the PIC-I/F, and emotional intelligence with the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire Short Form (TEIQUE-SF). Data were analyzed using simple moderation techniques with the PROCESS model. Results showed a significant negative correlation between individual perceptions of parental conflict and marital satisfaction. However, emotional intelligence did not moderate this relationship. This suggests that even individuals with high emotional intelligence continue to experience the negative impact of perceived parental conflict on marital satisfaction, with no significant reduction in its effect.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, family, marital satisfaction, marriage, perceived interparental conflict

Menjaga Keharmonisan Keluarga: Peran Kecerdasan Emosional dalam Memoderasi Hubungan antara Persepsi Konflik Orang Tua dan Kepuasan Pernikahan

Abstrak

Pengalaman tumbuh dalam keluarga yang diwarnai konflik secara signifikan memengaruhi cara pandang individu terhadap pernikahan, regulasi emosi, serta perkembangan pola hubungan tertentu, yang dapat mencerminkan atau justru berbeda dari cara orang tua mereka menangani konflik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji peran kecerdasan emosional dalam memoderasi hubungan antara persepsi individu terhadap konflik orang tua dan kepuasan pernikahan. Studi ini menggunakan metode kuantitatif korelasional dengan partisipan sebanyak 346 pria dan wanita yang sudah menikah ($M = 30,7$, $SD = 5,77$), dipilih melalui teknik *purposive sampling*. Kepuasan pernikahan diukur menggunakan Couple Satisfaction Index-16 (CSI-16), persepsi konflik orang tua dengan PIC-I/F, dan kecerdasan emosional dengan Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire Short Form (TEIQUE-SF). Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan teknik moderasi sederhana dengan model PROCESS. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan korelasi negatif yang signifikan antara persepsi konflik orang tua dan kepuasan pernikahan. Namun, kecerdasan emosional tidak memoderasi hubungan tersebut. Artinya, meskipun individu memiliki kecerdasan emosional yang tinggi, dampak negatif dari persepsi konflik orang tua terhadap kepuasan pernikahan tetap ada dan tidak berkurang secara signifikan.

Kata kunci: kecerdasan emosional, keluarga, kepuasan pernikahan, pernikahan, persepsi konflik orang tua

INTRODUCTION

The family is the fundamental unit in shaping an individual, serving as the cornerstone for emotional and psychological development. A harmonious home environment provides a sense of security that supports children's cognitive,

emotional, and even neurobiological growth (Luby et al., 2021). Parental warmth and emotional support are essential for helping children develop a healthy self-identity, positive attitudes, and self-confidence (Gaur & Gupta, 2024). Positive relationships between fathers and mothers are linked to fewer behavioral problems in children

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(Goldberg & Carlson, 2014). Furthermore, positive family relationships remain crucial during adolescence, a time when individuals face challenges related to relationships, education, and career decisions (Chen & Harris, 2019). Good family relationships also lower the risk of mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and emotional regulation difficulties (Segrin, 2021).

Conflict between parents is a common occurrence in many families. However, its potential impact should not be underestimated, as it can significantly affect children's emotional and psychological development (Lennings & Bussey, 2017). Parental conflict creates a tense and often confusing home environment, one that children may find difficult to understand or process (Fozard & Gubi, 2017). This conflict can either be constructive, characterized by effective problem-solving and mutual support, or destructive, leading to emotional tension (Lee et al., 2021).

Research indicates that witnessing frequent parental disputes can profoundly influence an individual's emotional development, behavior, and future marital satisfaction (Davies et al., 2016). Children exposed to unresolved or frequent parental disputes often internalize negative communication patterns and conflict resolution strategies, such as aggression, avoidance, or passive-aggressive behavior (Harold & Sellers, 2018). These learned behaviors become deeply ingrained in their responses, affecting how they handle disagreements and express emotions in their own relationships. Additionally, such children may develop increased sensitivity to conflict, leading to heightened anxiety and difficulty managing interpersonal tensions.

The impact of parental conflict extends into adult relationships, creating complex patterns of relationship behavior and expectations. Studies by Shanoora et al. (2020) found that individuals who develop negative perceptions of parental conflict are more likely to experience dissatisfaction in their own marriages. This is because exposure to such conflict often fosters a pessimistic view of marital relationships, which leads to the development of unhealthy attitudes toward marriage (Willoughby et al., 2019). These individuals tend to develop maladaptive patterns: they may become hypersensitive to potential signs of conflict, struggle with trust and emotional intimacy, or recreate dysfunctional communication behaviors witnessed in childhood (Saġkal & Özdemir, 2019). Furthermore, early exposure to

parental conflict can affect their ability to select compatible partners and maintain healthy long-term relationships, as their internal model of "normal" relationship dynamics may be distorted by childhood experiences. These patterns and experiences play a significant role in shaping how individuals perceive and experience marital satisfaction in their own relationships.

Marital satisfaction can be understood as an individual's subjective assessment of the overall quality and fulfillment they derive from their marriage (Fahimdanesh et al., 2020). This concept is closely linked to the presence of positive and healthy family dynamics, which provide a stable and supportive home environment (Du et al., 2022). Several key factors shape these personal assessments. First, the expectations, desires, and emotional needs that each person brings to the marriage influence their sense of satisfaction (Ercegovic & Bubić, 2015). Additionally, research has consistently shown that the nature of interactions and communication between partners plays a crucial role in determining marital satisfaction and quality (Aspary et al., 2021; Herawati et al., 2018). In particular, positive, open, and respectful communication has a powerful impact on relationship stability (Tyas & Herawati, 2017). The importance of marital satisfaction extends beyond the relationship itself, as it serves as a protective factor for both mental and physical health (Kiecolt-Glaser & Wilson, 2017). Individuals who feel satisfied and fulfilled in their marriages tend to experience lower levels of stress and emotional strain, ultimately promoting overall life satisfaction and resilience (Kalhor & Olyaie, 2016).

Research has consistently shown that children exposed to frequent parental conflict tend to develop negative attitudes toward marriage and relationships (Cui & Fincham, 2010). These individuals often face challenges in forming and maintaining healthy romantic partnerships, displaying behaviors such as hostile communication patterns, aggressive conflict resolution tactics, and difficulties with emotional intimacy—patterns that mirror the interactions they witnessed between their parents (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Roper et al., 2020).

Bandura's Social Learning Theory helps explain these observed patterns by illustrating how relationship behaviors are transmitted across generations. When children repeatedly observe their parents engaging in hostile arguments, using aggressive language, or withdrawing emotionally

during conflicts, they internalize these as normal relationship behaviors (Feist et al., 2018). This learning process manifests in specific ways: children of high-conflict parents are more likely to raise their voices during disagreements, use criticism as a defense mechanism, and struggle with constructive problem-solving in their own relationships (Sağkal & Özdemir, 2019).

The implications of this phenomenon are far-reaching. Children who witness frequent parental arguments typically develop maladaptive conflict management strategies, such as avoidance, emotional withdrawal, or aggressive confrontation (Braithwaite et al., 2016). These learned behaviors directly affect their marital satisfaction, with studies showing higher divorce rates and lower relationship quality among individuals from high-conflict homes (Shanoora et al., 2020). However, this connection is not deterministic. Research by Lee et al. (2022) found that individuals who actively learn new communication skills, attend couples therapy, or develop secure attachments in other relationships can overcome the negative impact of their childhood experiences. This suggests that early exposure to conflict can be mitigated through intentional intervention and personal growth.

The experience of interparental conflict plays a significant role in the development of marital relationships. It is associated with various negative outcomes, such as aggressive behaviors and difficulties in emotion regulation, which often persist into adulthood (Davies et al., 2016). Interparental conflict is the expression of emotions and differing opinions between parents (Harold & Sellers, 2018). Moreover, destructive conflict—conflict that is pervasive, intense, and lacks resolution—has a particularly detrimental effect on children (Lucas-Thompson et al., 2020). Children frequently exposed to intense parental conflict face challenges in understanding and regulating their emotions (Shimkowski et al., 2017). These emotional difficulties can have long-lasting effects, impacting their ability to manage future conflicts effectively, especially in romantic relationships (Warmuth et al., 2023). Individuals who struggle with emotion regulation due to prolonged exposure to parental conflict are more likely to encounter frequent and intense conflicts in their own relationships and face challenges in resolving these conflicts (Cui & Fincham, 2010; Sağkal & Özdemir, 2019). Consequently, how children perceive parental conflict influences their approach to conflict resolution and the

development of their marital relationships (Du et al., 2022). However, the ability of individuals to confront and navigate the adverse consequences of interparental conflict is also profoundly shaped by their emotional intelligence (Jose et al., 2021). Emotional intelligence enables individuals to overcome difficulties in emotion regulation and to manage conflict constructively within the marital relationship (Kurniawan, 2019).

In addition to the family environment, an individual's level of emotional intelligence can significantly influence marital satisfaction (Tavakol et al., 2017). Emotional intelligence is the capacity of an individual to perceive, comprehend, and effectively manage their own emotions, as well as to recognize and respond appropriately to the emotions of others, involving not only the awareness and understanding of one's feelings but also the ability to regulate and control these emotions in a way that promotes healthy interactions and sound decision-making (Mayer et al., 2000). In Indonesia, numerous studies have consistently shown that emotional intelligence is a key predictor of marital satisfaction (Asak & Wilani, 2019; Mokoginta, 2019). Individuals with high emotional intelligence demonstrate enhanced abilities to empathize with their partners, form supportive relationships, and navigate conflicts constructively (Antonopoulou, 2024). Previous research has also found that emotional intelligence can mitigate the impact of parental conflict on children (Wenling et al., 2023) and promote more effective conflict resolution within marriages by helping partners understand each other's viewpoints (Krishnakumar et al., 2019). This finding is further supported by Heidari and Kumar (2021) that higher emotional intelligence equips individuals with better emotional management and partner understanding, fostering more harmonious marital relationships. As such, this study focuses on the critical role that individual emotional intelligence plays in shaping and maintaining marital satisfaction.

The idea that emotional intelligence can enhance an individual's ability to develop and maintain social relationships, thereby improving marital satisfaction (Roy, 2023), is supported by research indicating that emotional intelligence helps individuals manage their emotions, particularly in situations of conflict with their partner. Specifically, emotional intelligence enables individuals to engage in more effective communication, which facilitates better conflict resolution and contributes to higher satisfaction in romantic relationships

(Goyal & Narayan, 2024). This capacity becomes especially relevant when individuals have experienced or witnessed conflict between their parents. Emotional intelligence plays a critical role in shaping how individuals interpret and respond to such situations, influencing their emotional reactions and coping strategies (Maya et al., 2024).

However, other studies have found no significant relationship between perceptions of parental conflict and the quality of children's later marriages (Shelton, 2004). These contrasting findings highlight that the relationship between perceived parental conflict and marital satisfaction remains unclear, suggesting the possibility that other variables, such as emotional intelligence, may moderate this relationship. Building on this premise, the current study seeks to investigate whether emotional intelligence moderates the relationship between perceived parental conflict and marital satisfaction. The hypothesis posited in this study suggests that emotional intelligence serves as a moderator in this dynamic. To test this hypothesis, an online survey was conducted, utilizing validated and reliable measurement tools tailored to the Indonesian married couple population.

METHODS

Research Design, Participants, Location and Time

This research employs a non-experimental quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design, as data are collected at a single point in time rather than through longitudinal or repeated observations. The study is part of the Marriage Satisfaction Research Umbrella, and the data were collected concurrently. The target population consists of married adults, with specific participant criteria being (1) at least 18 years old and (2) currently in a marital relationship. These criteria were adapted to align with the study's main objectives, which focus on individuals in legally recognized marriages in Indonesia. Based on the required statistical power, a minimum of 277 participants was determined using G*Power. To recruit participants, convenience sampling was employed, with advertisements posted on social media platforms including X, Instagram, Facebook, and Telegram, targeting Indonesian audiences. The research was conducted from October to December 2023. Ethical clearance for the study was granted by the Ethics Committee at the

Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Indonesia (280/FPsi.Komite Etik/PDP.04.00/2023). The study has also been pre-registered on the Open Science Framework (OSF) at [this link](#).

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected using an online questionnaire distributed through a Google Form. Participants were provided with a link to access the survey, which included 110 items covering demographic questions and the main research items. The survey was designed to take approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete. Prior to beginning the survey, participants received a written overview outlining the purpose and objectives of the study, allowing them to consider their participation. If they chose to participate, they were then required to read and sign the informed consent document before proceeding to complete the survey items.

Instruments

Participants in this study completed a series of questionnaires via Google Forms. The first section includes informed consent and demographic questions about the participant's identity and that of their partner. Demographic questions will cover topics such as initials, age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, place of residence, highest level of education, occupation, income, age at marriage, marital status, number of children, whether the participant lives with a partner, the marital status of their parents, and a comparison of both partners' income and financial contributions to household expenses. After completing the informed consent, participants would proceed to three measurement tools: the Couple Satisfaction Index (CSI-16), the Perception of Interparental Conflict Intensity/Frequency Scale (PIC-I/F), and the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form (TEIQue-SF). The total number of items across these questionnaires is 94.

This study utilizes three measurement tools. Emotional intelligence, as defined in this research, refers to the ability to evaluate, interpret, and regulate emotions, and to respond to them with appropriate actions. The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form (TEIQue-SF), developed by Petrides (2013) and adapted to Indonesian by Febriana (2021), is used in this study to assess emotional intelligence. The TEIQue is a self-report questionnaire designed to assess various aspects of emotional intelligence, including interpersonal, intrapersonal, and social

intelligence, as well as personality traits. It consists of 30 items, such as "I have no difficulty expressing my emotions" and "I have no difficulty expressing my emotions in words." The scale uses a Likert format, with responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Febriana (2021) reported a reliability coefficient of 0.981 for this instrument. Scoring on the TEIQue-SF is done by summing the total scores for each item, with higher scores indicating higher levels of emotional intelligence.

In this study, perceived interparental conflict refers to children's perceptions of the intensity and frequency of conflicts between their parents that they observe. To measure this, the Perception of Interparental Conflict Intensity/Frequency Scale (PIC-I/F) developed by Kline et al. (2003) was used. The PIC-I/F is an extension of the Children's Perception of Interparental Conflict Scale (CPIC) created by Grych et al. (1992), originally tested on adults with married and divorced parents. The PIC-I/F is a unidimensional tool consisting of two subscales: intensity and frequency. It focuses on assessing the intensity and frequency of conflict events and behaviors, rather than on the stress individuals may experience from internalizing interparental conflict. The PIC-I/F includes 13 items, six of which measure frequency (e.g., "I often see my parents arguing") and seven assess intensity (e.g., "My parents hardly ever argue"). Responses are rated on a Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The PIC-I/F has been shown to be a valid and reliable tool for measuring perceptions of parental conflict, with a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of 0.93 (Kline et al., 2003). Scoring is done by summing the total score for each item, with higher scores indicating greater conflict between the parents. Since no Indonesian version of the instrument exists, the researchers translated and tested the scale on Indonesian participants who met the study's criteria. The trial resulted in a reliability coefficient of 0.89.

Marital satisfaction in this study refers to an individual's subjective assessment of their marital relationship. It was measured using the Couple Satisfaction Index-16 (CSI-16), developed by Funk and Rogge (2007), and adapted into Indonesian by Ratnasari and Fatheya (2022). The CSI-16 consists of 16 items, including questions about the frequency with which respondents feel their relationship with their partner is going well, rated on a Likert scale from 1 to 5. The Indonesian adaptation has a reliability coefficient of 0.94

(Ratnasari & Fatheya, 2022). Scoring on the CSI-16 involves summing the total scores for all items, with higher scores indicating greater marital satisfaction (Funk & Rogge, 2007).

This study is a small part of a larger research project and includes additional measurement tools. The measurement tools employed in this study include the Communication Pattern Questionnaire Short Form (Futris et al., 2010), comprising 11 items; the Marital Power Index (Bogue et al., 2008), comprising 15 items; and the Gender Ideology scale (IPSPC; Dannisworo & Amalia, 2019), comprising six items. Additionally, the questionnaire contains three items designed to maintain participants' attention.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Version 24. Descriptive analysis was conducted on the demographic variables, employing frequency, mean, and percentage measures. To assess the potential covariates, normality and correlation tests were performed on the demographic and marital satisfaction variables. The normality test, conducted using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method, indicated that the data were not normally distributed ($p = 0.000$, $p < 0.05$). Consequently, non-parametric methods were used for the correlation analysis. For testing the hypothesis, a correlation test and moderation analysis were performed using the PROCESS Model 1 technique for simple moderation. A Spearman correlation test was conducted to examine the relationship between demographic variables and marital satisfaction. The correlation analysis revealed that age ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), highest level of education ($p = 0.009$; $p < 0.05$), age at marriage ($p = 0.000$; $p < 0.05$), and number of children ($p = 0.001$; $p < 0.05$) were significantly associated with marital satisfaction.

RESULTS

A total of 346 individuals participated in the study. The age of the participants ranged from 22 to 62 years old, with the majority being 28 years old ($n = 40$, 11.6%). The largest proportion of participants was observed in the age range of 26-30 years, representing approximately 48.9 percent of the total sample ($M = 30.75$, $SD = 5.77$).

The number of female participants was substantially higher than that of male participants.

Table 1 Sociodemographic characteristics of participants (n = 346)

Sociodemographic Characteristic	n	%
Gender		
Female	255	73.7
Male	91	26.3
Marital status		
First marriage	337	97.4
Married, but not first marriage	9	2.6
Marital status of birth parents		
Married parents	242	69.9
Divorced parents alive	27	7.8
Parents divorced by death	77	22.3
Number of children		
0	140	40.5
1	125	36.1
2	66	19.1
3	14	4.0
4	1	0.3
Education level		
Highschool graduate	15	4.3
Diploma	28	8.1
Bachelor's degree	239	69.1
Master's, doctorate and professional degree	64	18.5

Most participants (approximately 239 individuals) held a bachelor's degree. Regarding parental marital status, 242 participants reported that their parents were married, 77 indicated that their divorced parents had passed away, and 27 reported that their parents were divorced. The complete sociodemographic distribution is presented in Table 1.

Marriage Characteristics of Participants

Among the participants, a total of 337 participants (97.4%) were in their first marital relationship. The duration of marriage ranged from 1 to 33 years, with an average marriage duration of 4 years. Approximately 40.5% of the participants were childless.

Descriptive Analysis of Variables

The results of the descriptive analysis for each variable are presented below, with a comparison

of the range of scores on each measurement instrument and the average score for each variable.

Emotional Intelligence. Overall, participants' emotional intelligence scores were significantly higher than the hypothetical median, suggesting high levels of emotional intelligence. However, a considerable variation (SD = 24.9) indicates that some participants scored lower.

Perceived Interparental Conflict. The mean score for perceived interparental conflict was 39.42 (SD = 14.76), with scores ranging from 13 to 78. Although the average score exceeds the hypothetical median of 32.5, indicating generally higher perceptions of conflict, individual responses varied.

Marital Satisfaction. The cut-off score for marital satisfaction according to Funk and Rogge (2007) is 51.5. Based on this cut-off score, the average score in this study indicates that participants generally report high marital satisfaction.

Moderation Analysis

Moderation analysis was performed to examine the relationship between perceived interparental conflict, emotional intelligence, and marital satisfaction (Table 2). The results revealed that these variables accounted for 15 percent of the variance in marital satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.15$, $p > 0.05$). The results indicated that perceived interparental conflict did not have a statistically significant effect on marital satisfaction ($t = -0.06$, $p > 0.05$). Subsequently, emotional intelligence was identified as a significant predictor of marital satisfaction ($t = 7.74$, $p < 0.01$). Furthermore, the moderation analysis found no statistically significant interaction between emotional intelligence and the association between perceived interparental conflict and marital satisfaction ($b = -0.0005$, $t = -0.2552$, $p > 0.05$). This suggests that emotional intelligence does not moderate the relationship between perceived interparental conflict and marital satisfaction.

Table 2 Result of moderation analysis for perceived interparental conflict, emotional intelligence, and marital satisfaction (n = 346)

Variable	Coeff	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Perceived interparental conflict	-0.0033	0.0505	-0.0660	0.9474	-0.1027	0.0960
Emotional intelligence	0.2320	0.0300	7.7402	0.0000	0.1731	0.2910
Perceived interparental conflict*Emotional intelligence	-0.0005	0.0020	-0.2552	0.7987	-0.0045	0.0034

DISCUSSION

This study examines the role of emotional intelligence as a potential moderating factor in the relationship between perceived interparental conflict and marital satisfaction. The results indicate that emotional intelligence does not significantly moderate this relationship, a finding that merits further examination given the established role of emotional intelligence in marital relationships.

Several theoretical explanations may account for this unexpected finding. First, the perception of parental conflict appears to operate through deeply ingrained psychological mechanisms that may be resistant to moderation. Individuals who experience significant parental conflict often develop traumatic responses and carry forward conflict patterns (Busby & Hsin-Yao Chiu, 2017; Lünemann et al., 2023), suggesting that these early experiences shape fundamental schemas that emotional intelligence alone may not easily alter.

The absence of moderation can also be understood by examining the distinct ways parental conflict and emotional intelligence influence marital satisfaction. Research indicates that parental conflict primarily shapes fundamental beliefs and expectations about marriage, leading children exposed to conflict to develop pessimistic attitudes about marital stability (Willoughby et al., 2019). In contrast, emotional intelligence primarily operates through present-focused mechanisms, such as conflict management and interpersonal communication (Krishnakumar et al., 2019). This divergence—one affecting core beliefs and the other influencing current behavior—may explain why emotional intelligence does not moderate the impact of early conflict experiences.

The socio-cultural context provides an important perspective on these findings. In Asian societies with strong collectivist values, cultural pressures to maintain family harmony may limit the effectiveness of emotional intelligence (Park, 2019). These cultural norms can constrain how individuals express and regulate emotions in their marriages, regardless of their emotional intelligence levels (Ramzan & Amjad, 2017). The prioritization of social harmony over individual emotional expression in collectivist societies may further weaken the potential moderating effect of emotional intelligence (Liddell & Williams, 2019).

Sample characteristics may have also influenced these results. The relatively low intensity of parental conflict in our sample, as evidenced by parents remaining married despite conflicts (Roper et al., 2020), might have reduced the likelihood of emotional intelligence serving as a moderator. Research suggests that positive attachment patterns can sustain high marital satisfaction even when individuals hold negative views of their parents' marriage (Alder et al., 2017). Additionally, variations in attachment patterns among participants may have shaped how emotional intelligence functions in their relationships (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2019).

The results of this study suggest that perceptions of parental conflict did not significantly impact individuals' marital satisfaction in the Indonesian population. This finding contrasts with previous research indicating that perceptions of parental conflict can influence satisfaction in romantic relationships (Braithwaite et al., 2016). The discrepancy may stem from several factors, including the lack of data on the specific age at which individuals were first exposed to parental conflict. Research has shown that individuals exposed to parental conflict during childhood may experience long-term negative effects on emotional well-being and self-regulation, which in turn affect their ability to form and maintain healthy romantic relationships (Tolmacz et al., 2022).

To gain a deeper understanding of parental conflict, it is essential to examine the relationship between parents, the form and frequency of conflict, and the presence of violence (van Eldik et al., 2020). These factors shape how individuals perceive the significance of parental conflict (Harold & Sellers, 2018). In particular, destructive conflict which is characterized by high frequency, intensity, and lack of resolution (Lucas-Thompson et al., 2020), can significantly impact romantic relationships (Sağkal & Özdemir, 2019). Radetzki et al. (2022) found that destructive parental conflict influences how individuals engage in romantic relationships, leading to irrational perceptions and poor emotional regulation. Additionally, parental conflict can result in the loss of a significant family figure, which may subsequently contribute to an imbalanced perspective on relationships (Tolmacz et al., 2021).

The findings of this study further emphasize the crucial role of emotional intelligence in influencing marital satisfaction. This conclusion aligns with previous research demonstrating a clear, positive

relationship between higher emotional intelligence and increased marital satisfaction (Heidari et al., 2017). Specifically, studies suggest that emotional intelligence is a key factor in shaping marital satisfaction within the Indonesian cultural framework (Asak & Wilani, 2019). The overall quality of an individual's emotional intelligence plays a vital role in cultivating and sustaining marital satisfaction, as it directly affects how couples navigate their relationships (Navabinejad et al., 2023). More broadly, individuals with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to manage stress, regulate emotions, and maintain positive emotional states—critical factors in enhancing marital satisfaction (Habib et al., 2023). These abilities contribute to stronger, more supportive relationships, ultimately promoting long-term marital satisfaction (Rachmi et al., 2024).

This study has several limitations. First, it did not account for the temporal aspect of parental conflict, such as when the conflict occurred, which could be crucial for understanding its effects. Additionally, the study did not measure the intensity or severity of the conflict, which may have varied among participants and influenced their marital satisfaction differently. Another limitation is the use of convenience sampling, which may have introduced bias and limited the generalizability of the findings. This method also excluded individuals who had only witnessed parental conflict, potentially overlooking a different perspective on its impact. Furthermore, the participant selection criteria were not specific enough, leading to a broad sample with a wide age range, making it difficult to analyze distinct age-related differences. These uncontrolled factors may have contributed to the lack of significant results regarding the relationship between perceived parental conflict and marital satisfaction.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The findings of this study reveal that emotional intelligence does not moderate the relationship between perceived interparental conflict and marital satisfaction in the Indonesian context. This challenges the assumption of a universal protective role of emotional intelligence in relationship dynamics and suggests that the impact of early family experiences on marital satisfaction may operate through mechanisms beyond emotional capabilities alone. Additionally, cultural factors, particularly in collectivist societies like Indonesia, may shape how individuals process

and respond to parental conflict, emphasizing the need to consider broader family and societal influences.

Given these findings, practitioners, including family therapists and relationship counselors, should develop culturally sensitive interventions that address both individual emotional competencies and collective family dynamics. Organizations focused on relationship education should design integrated programs that incorporate emotional intelligence training alongside cultural awareness while establishing support networks for individuals and families. Future research should explore culture-specific moderating factors, examine the influence of Indonesian cultural values on family experiences, and conduct longitudinal studies with diverse sampling methods. Investigating the role of extended family systems and assessing the need for culturally adapted emotional intelligence training will further enhance understanding and support for marital relationships in collectivist contexts.

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