

Marital Attachment, Conflict Management, and Marital Satisfaction Among Middle-Aged Couples

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Abstract: Marital satisfaction is the primary goal of a marriage and can be influenced by marital attachment and conflict management. This study aims to analyze the influence of marital attachment and family conflict management on marital satisfaction among middle-aged couples. Data were collected using purposive sampling, involving wives from intact families aged 40–59 years, with adolescent children or from empty nest families. The study was conducted in Lowokwaru Subdistrict, Malang City, involving 66 wives with an average age of 45.97 years. More than three-quarters of the wives from families with adolescent children and empty nest families reported having a secure attachment with their husbands. More than three-quarters of wives from families with adolescent children and more than half from empty nest families demonstrated a moderate level of conflict management. In terms of marital satisfaction, nearly half of the wives from families with adolescent children were categorized as having high satisfaction, while more than half of the wives from empty nest families were in the moderate category. Secure attachment and conflict management were found to have a significant positive relationship with marital satisfaction. Regression analysis showed that longer marital duration, being a family with adolescent children, and effective conflict management had a significant positive effect, while the husband's age and the wife's employment status had a significant negative effect on marital satisfaction. Younger husbands, longer marital duration, unemployed wives, effective conflict management, and being a family with adolescent children were associated with increased marital satisfaction. Middle-aged husbands and wives are encouraged to actively express care and affection toward each other. Future studies are expected to further examine marital attachment variables and include husbands as research subjects.

Keywords: conflict management, marital attachment, marital satisfaction, middle-aged adults

1. INTRODUCTION

Middle adulthood (ages 40–60) is a stage of life marked by emotional stability and strong social adaptability (Santrock, 2012; Ferdiansyah & Masfufah, 2022). In Indonesia, this age group comprises 70.6 million people or 25.3% of the total population (BPS, 2024). During this phase, individuals undergo physical, psychological, and interpersonal changes. They also enter the empty nest stage, when children become independent and leave home (Duvall, 1988), which can lead to feelings of loneliness and loss. A lack of emotional support may trigger negative emotions and decrease relationship quality, including marital satisfaction, which is dynamic and influenced by time and circumstances (Lestari, 2016; Veronika & Afdal, 2021). Although the happiness index for married couples in Indonesia is relatively high—72.10 in 2021 (BPS, 2021)—many middle-aged couples experience a decline in satisfaction due to the loss of parenting roles (Sulha et al., 2024), particularly after 10 to 24 years of marriage (Herawati & Widiatoro, 2019; Chandra & Soerjoatmodjo, 2019). This dissatisfaction can lead to conflict and even divorce. In 2024, Indonesia recorded 408,347 divorce cases (BPS, 2024), most of which were caused by unmet emotional needs, changes in partner behavior, violence, lack of communication, and insufficient affection (Azhar et al., 2021; Ramadhani et al., 2024).

During the empty nest stage, married couples need to develop secure attachment, characterized by emotional support and the fulfillment of each other's needs, in order to build a harmonious and stable relationship (Monteoliva & García-Martínez, 2005; Ghafur & Hidayah, 2014). Relationships that are marked by open communication and mutual respect tend to last longer (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2016). However, many couples exhibit insecure attachment styles—such as anxious and

avoidant attachment—which can decrease marital satisfaction (Molero et al., 2016; Mardani et al., 2021). Soraiya et al. (2016) found that avoidant attachment accounted for 31.3 percent and anxious attachment for 10.2 percent of the variance in marital satisfaction. In addition, poorly managed conflict is a major cause of divorce, with 251,828 cases in Indonesia in 2024 attributed to prolonged disputes (BPS, 2024). Effective conflict management strategies are essential for maintaining marital harmony, especially during the empty nest period (Henry et al., 2020; Ratnawati et al., 2024). Research on marital attachment in Indonesia remains limited, as most studies focus on parent-child relationships. Furthermore, studies on marital satisfaction and conflict management among middle-aged couples (ages 40–60) who have been married for more than ten years are still scarce. Prior literature often focuses on newlyweds or couples with less than ten years of marriage. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by integrating the variables of attachment, conflict management, and marital satisfaction within the context of middle-aged couples. The objective of this study is to analyze the influence of family characteristics, marital attachment, and conflict management on marital satisfaction among middle-aged couples.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design to empirically analyze the influence of attachment and conflict management variables on marital satisfaction. The research was conducted in the Lowokwaru Subdistrict, Malang City. The location was selected based on data from BPS Malang City (2024), which reported that the number of middle-aged individuals (aged 40–59) in Lowokwaru Subdistrict reached 47,504 people, making it the largest age group in the area. To narrow the scope of the study, two urban villages (kelurahan) were selected: Summersari and Merjosari. Data collection was carried out from February to March 2025.

2.2 Sampling Technique

The sample in this study was selected using purposive sampling, which involves selecting participants from the population based on specific criteria determined by the researcher due to research limitations or objectives (Kumara, 2018). The sample consisted of 66 intact families, comprising two categories: families with a first child in adolescence (approximately 13–18 years old) and empty nest families (all children are young adults and no longer live at home). This sample size meets the minimum requirement for quantitative research, which is 30 participants (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). The respondents included 66 wives, with 33 from families with adolescent children and 33 from empty nest families. These two groups were selected in accordance with the research objective, which was to analyze differences between empty nest families and those with adolescent children, based on the presence of children in the household..

2.3 Variable Measurement

Table 1. Variables, Operational Definitions, and Indicators

Variables	Operational Definitions	Indicator
Marital Attachment (Wilhelm & Parker, 1988) The instrument yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.703.	A reciprocal emotional bond between husband and wife, characterized by mutual care and control	Care <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I remind my husband to eat at every mealtime. 2. I share all of my feelings with my husband. 3. I express my love verbally to my husband, for example by saying "I love you." 4. I enjoy hugging my husband.

Variables	Operational Definitions	Indicator
		5. I ask for my husband's opinion when buying something, such as household items.
		6. When going out with the nuclear family (husband and children), I try to create a joyful atmosphere with my husband.
		7. I give compliments to my husband.
		8. I ask my husband about his day before he begins to tell me.
		9. My husband and I speak to each other in a gentle tone (not loud or harsh)
		Control
		10. I demand my husband to report his daily activities without needing to be reminded (*)
		11. I sulk if my husband rejects my ideas. (*)
		12. I try to change my husband's habits, such as being preoccupied with his gadget when we are together (*)
		13. I criticize my husband when he does not listen to me. (*)
		14. I demand my husband to do certain household chores even if he disagrees. (*)
		15. My husband must do things exactly the way I tell him. (*)
		16. I judge my husband if he leaves items lying around the house. (*)
Conflict Management (Rahim, 2001) The instrument yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.784.	The way in which a husband and wife manage issues or problems within the family.	<i>Integrating</i>
		1. When a problem arises, my husband and I try to find a solution together.
		2. My husband and I align our thoughts to reach a mutual decision.
		3. I try to cooperate with my husband to find a decision that benefits both parties.
		4. My husband and I share information with each other to solve the ongoing problem.
		5. I am open about all my concerns so they can be addressed properly.
		<i>Obliging</i>
		6. I always make time when my husband needs someone to talk to.
		7. I am able to give compliments in the way my husband expects.
		8. I accept any decision made by my husband. (*)
		9. I am able to agree with my husband's suggestions.
		<i>Dominating</i>
		10. I persuade my husband to accept my ideas, and he agrees.
		11. I force my husband to agree with my opinion.
		12. I use my skills to make decisions that benefit myself. (*)

Variables	Operational Definitions	Indicator
		13. I firmly insist on my opinion regarding a problem. (*)
		14. Sometimes, I use threats to win an argument, such as giving my husband the silent treatment. (*)
		<i>Avoiding</i>
		15. I try to avoid my husband during a conflict. (*)
		16. I do not want to talk about my differences of opinion with my husband. (*)
		17. I try to avoid disagreements with my husband.
		18. I make an effort to avoid seeing my husband. (*)
		19. I keep my disagreements to myself to avoid uncomfortable feelings. (*)
		<i>Compromising</i>
		20. When facing a conflict that is difficult to resolve, I try to offer a compromise (a win-win solution).
		1. I am not satisfied with my husband's personality. (*)
		2. I am satisfied with how we handle roles and responsibilities in our marriage.
		3. I am not satisfied with our communication because
		4. I feel my husband does not understand me. (*)
		5. I am very satisfied with the way we make decisions to solve problems.
		6. I am not satisfied with our family's financial situation. (*)
		7. I am very satisfied with how we plan and spend our leisure time together.
		8. I am very dissatisfied with how we express affection. (*)
		9. I am not satisfied with how we carry out our responsibilities as parents. (*)
		10. I am not satisfied with our relationships with parents, in-laws, and friends. (*)
		11. I am very satisfied with how we practice our religious beliefs and values in life.
Marital Satisfaction (Fowers & Olson, 1993) The instrument yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.867.	A subjective feeling held by the respondent regarding the quality and overall experience of their marital life	

Notes: *= The statement is inverted

2.4 Data Collection Techniques

Primary data were collected through questionnaires and in-depth interviews with respondents. The instruments included a family characteristics questionnaire (covering age, length of marriage, monthly family income, employment status, highest educational attainment, and the age of the first and last child), as well as scales on marital attachment, conflict management, and marital satisfaction. The data collection process was conducted door-to-door at respondents' residences, starting from late February to early March 2025..

2.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis and processing were conducted using Microsoft Excel and SPSS Statistics for Windows version 25. Descriptive analysis was employed to identify family characteristics, marital attachment, conflict management, and marital satisfaction. In addition, inferential analysis included Pearson correlation tests, multiple linear regression, and independent sample t-tests to examine differences, correlations, and the influence between variables. The data were considered statistically significant when the significance value was less than 0.05

3. RESULT

3.1 Family Characteristics

The study involved 66 wives as respondents, consisting of 33 wives from families with adolescent children and 33 wives from empty nest families. The average age of wives in families with adolescent children was 43.94 years, with the majority (81.8%) falling within the 40–45 age range. The employment status of these wives was relatively balanced, with 51.5% not working and 48.5% employed. Most of them had a bachelor's degree or equivalent as their highest level of education (60.6%). Among wives in empty nest families, the average age was 48 years, with nearly half (42.4%) aged 46–50 years. Half of these wives were employed (51.5%), while the other half were not (48.5%). Similarly, half of the wives from empty nest families held a bachelor's degree or equivalent (51.5%). More than half of the wives from families with adolescent children (66.7%) had been married for 16–20 years, whereas more than half of those from empty nest families (57.6%) had been married for 21–25 years. In families with adolescent children, the first child was aged 18 years or younger, while in empty nest families, the youngest child was over 18 years old. The average monthly household income of the respondents was Rp11,491,000. The average age of husbands was 45.97 years, with more than half aged 46–50 years. Almost all husbands were employed (97%), with only two reported as unemployed. More than one-third of the husbands held a bachelor's degree or equivalent (34.8%).

Table 2. Results of the Comparative Test of Family Characteristics Based on Family Type

Family Characteristics	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		p-value
	F	Sig.	Sig. (2-tailed)
Age of wife (years)	1.532	0.220	0.000**
Age of husband (years)	1.603	0.210	0.000**
Age of child (years)	14.309	0.000	0.000**
Duration of marriage (years)	0.053	0.819	0.000**
Monthly household income (Rp/month)	2.867	0.095	0.186
Wife's education (years)	0.728	0.397	0.398
Husband's education (years)	0.716	0.401	0.195

Notes. (**) significant at $p \leq 0.01$

The independent sample t-test on family characteristic variables revealed significant differences between the two family types in terms of the wife's age, husband's age, length of marriage, and child's age ($p = 0.000$). This indicates that empty nest families are at a more advanced stage of family development compared to families with adolescent children.

3.2 Spousal Attachment

Table 3 shows that more than three-quarters of wives from both families with adolescent children (78.8%) and empty nest families (78.8%) fall into the secure attachment category. The average attachment index for wives in empty nest families was 68.35, while for those in families with adolescent children it was 66.26. The

independent sample t-test on the total marital attachment variable found no significant difference between the two family types ($p = 0.578$).

Table 3. Distribution of Wives Based on Total Marital Attachment Category and Family Type

Category	Families with Adolescent Children		Empty Nest Families	
	n	%	n	%
Secure Attachment (High Care)				
Optimal Attachment (Low Control)	5	15.2	6	18.2
Affectionate Control (High Control)	21	63.6	20	60.6
Insecure Attachment (Low Care)				
Controlling without Affection (High Control)	1	3.0	4	12.1
No Attachment (Low Control)	6	18.2	3	9.1
Total	33	100	33	100
Min-Max	44.44-88.9		37.78-95.56	
Mean ± Std. Deviation	66.26±11.29		68.35±11.73	
Mean Difference Test (p-value)			0.578	

Based on the attachment dimensions presented in Table 4, both families with adolescent children and empty nest families showed high index scores on the *care* dimension. A significant proportion of wives from families with adolescent children (87.9%) reported that they greatly enjoy hugging their husbands, and 93.9% consistently speak to their husbands in a gentle tone. All wives from both family types also made efforts to create a pleasant atmosphere with their husbands when traveling with their nuclear family. Additionally, 75.8% of wives from families with adolescent children expressed love verbally to their husbands, compared to 45.4% of wives from empty nest families.

Table 4. Distribution of Minimum-Maximum Scores, Mean, and Standard Deviation Based on Dimensions of Spousal Attachment by Family Type

Attachment Dimension	Families with Adolescent Children		Empty Nest Families		Difference Test (p-value)
	Min-Max	Mean \pm SD	Min-Max	Mean \pm SD	
Care	37.5-100	71.33 \pm 16.94	29.17-100	70.20 \pm 16.8	0.786
Control	23.81-90.48	60.46 \pm 13.95	33.33-95.24	66.23 \pm 17.18	0.139

Conversely, in the control dimension, wives from empty nest families tended not to exercise control over their husbands. They did not require their husbands to report their daily activities, did not attempt to change their husbands' habit of being preoccupied with gadgets during family time, and refrained from judging their husbands for leaving items scattered around the house.

3.3 Conflict Management

Table 5 shows that nearly three-quarters of the total wives from families with adolescent children were in the moderate category (72.7%), and almost one-quarter were in the high category (21.2%). Among wives from empty nest families, more than half were in the moderate category (57.6%), and one-third were categorized as high (36.3%). The average conflict management index was higher among wives from families with adolescent children, at 75.92. Based on the independent sample t-test,

there was no significant difference between families with adolescent children and empty nest families ($p = 0.161$).

Table 5. Distribution of Wives Based on Conflict Management Category and Family Type

Category	Families with Adolescent Children		Empty Nest Families	
	n	%	n	%
Low (≤ 59.9)	2	6.1	2	3.1
Moderate (60.0-79.9)	24	72.7	19	57.6
High (≥ 80.0)	7	21.2	12	36.3
Total	33	100	33	100
Min-Max	48.15-92.59		51.85-92.59	
Mean \pm Std.	75.92 \pm 10.58		72.33 \pm 9.98	
Difference Test (p-value)			0.161	

Based on Table 6, the highest average index in the dimension of conflict management for both wives from families with adolescent children and empty nest families is the integration dimension. The integration dimension in families with adolescent children had an index score of 90.30, while in empty nest families it was 86.9. Nearly all wives from both family types reported that when facing problems, they would seek solutions together with their husbands, attempt to cooperate to reach mutually beneficial decisions, align their thoughts, share helpful information for resolving conflicts, and be open about their concerns. In addition, wives from families with adolescent children also consistently made time to listen when their husbands needed someone to talk to (97%), were able to accept their husbands' suggestions (87.9%), and gave compliments in ways their husbands expected (87.9%).

Table 6. Distribution of Minimum-Maximum Index Scores, Mean, and Standard Deviation Based on Conflict Management Dimensions and Family Type

Conflict Management Dimension	Family with Adolescent Children		Empty Nest Family		Difference Test (p -value)
	Min-Max	Mean \pm Std	Min-Max	Mean \pm Std.	
Integrating	33.33-100	90.30 \pm 15.19	66.67-100	86.9 \pm 12.3	0.317
Obliging	33.33-83.33	65.65 \pm 9.93	33.33-91.67	72.47 \pm 15.93	0.363
Domination	25.0-100	73.48 \pm 20.03	25.0-100	70.2 \pm 23.29	0.542
Avoiding	41.67-100	71.46 \pm 17.68	25.0-100	65.15 \pm 19.25	0.170
Compromising	0-100	72.72 \pm 24.23	66.67-100	73.73 \pm 13.83	0.836

The lowest conflict management index among families with adolescent children was found in the obliging dimension. More than three-quarters of the wives in this group (78.5%) reported being unable to accept any decision made by their husbands. However, a majority of them (87.9%) were still able to agree with the suggestions proposed by their husbands. In contrast, the lowest index among empty nest families was found in the avoiding dimension. When experiencing conflict, several wives preferred not to discuss differences of opinion with their husbands (33.4%), tried to avoid misunderstandings (57.6%), and kept their disagreements to themselves to avoid uncomfortable feelings (42.4%).

3.4 Marital Satisfaction

Based on Table 7, marital satisfaction among wives in families with adolescent children is relatively high (45.5%). Half of the wives in empty nest families have a moderate level of marital satisfaction (54.6%). However, 15.1 percent of wives in families with adolescent children and 21.2 percent of wives in empty nest families fall into the low category. The average index score for families with adolescent children is higher, at 77.87.

Table 7. Distribution of Wives Based on Marital Satisfaction Categories and Family Type

Category	Families with Adolescent Children		Empty Nest Families	
	n	%	n	%
Low (≤ 59.9)	5	15.1	7	21.2
Moderate (60.0-79.9)	13	39.4	18	54.6
High (≥ 80.0)	15	45.5	8	24.2
Total	33	100	33	100
Min-Max	46.67-100		40.0-100	
Mean \pm Std.	77.87 \pm 16.62		69.69 \pm 14.70	
Difference Test (p-value)			0.038*	

Note. (*) Significant at $p < 0.05$.

The difference test based on family type shows a significant difference ($p = 0.038$). Families with adolescent children have a higher index score, indicating that marital satisfaction among wives in these families is higher compared to those in empty nest families. The differences are evident in the following statements: "I am dissatisfied with my husband's personality" ($p = 0.028$), "I am dissatisfied with our family's financial situation" ($p = 0.000$), "I am dissatisfied with how we express affection" ($p = 0.009$), and "I am dissatisfied with how we fulfill our responsibilities as parents" ($p = 0.004$). Some wives in empty nest families still feel dissatisfied with how parental responsibilities are carried out, how affection is expressed, and the family's financial condition. Meanwhile, some wives in families with adolescents express dissatisfaction related to communication with their husbands and the way affection is shown.

3.5 Relationships Between Family Characteristics, Spousal Attachment, Conflict Management, and Marital Satisfaction

The Pearson correlation test was conducted to examine the relationships between family characteristics, spousal attachment, conflict management, and marital satisfaction. The results in Table 8 show that conflict management is positively correlated with the family's monthly income ($r = 0.280^*$) and the wife's highest educational attainment ($r = 0.466^{**}$). Higher monthly family income or higher educational levels of the wife tend to enhance an individual's conflict management skills. Conflict management also shows a significant positive correlation with secure attachment ($r = 0.243^*$), indicating that better conflict management within the couple is associated with a more secure spousal attachment.

Table 8. Results of the Analysis on the Relationships Between Family Characteristics, Spousal Attachment, Conflict Management, and Marital Satisfaction

Variables	Spousal Attachment	Conflict Management	Marital Satisfaction
Wife's age (years)	-0.021	-0.057	-0.067
Husband's age (years)	-0.188	-0.189	-0.360**
Length of marriage (years)	-0.118	-0.155	-0.194

Variables	Spousal Attachment	Conflict Management	Marital Satisfaction
Monthly family income (Rp/month)	0.060	0.280*	0.250*
Family type (0 = Empty Nest; 1 = Adolescents)	0.070	0.175	0.256*
Wife's highest educational attainment (years)	0.218	0.466**	0.384**
Husband's highest educational attainment (years)	0.225	0.205	0.207
Wife's employment status (0 = Unemployed; 1 = Employed)	0.074	0.060	-0.098
Husband's employment status (0 = Unemployed; 1 = Employed)	0.124	-0.110	0.116
Spousal attachment (0 = Insecure; 1 = Secure)	1	0.243*	0.254*
Conflict management (index)		1	0.670**
Marital satisfaction (index)			1

Note: (*) significant at $p < 0.05$, (**) significant at $p \leq 0.01$

There is a significant negative correlation between the husband's age ($r = -0.360^{**}$) and marital satisfaction, indicating that younger husbands tend to be associated with higher marital satisfaction. The results also show a significant positive correlation between monthly family income ($r = 0.250^{*}$) and marital satisfaction, suggesting that higher income levels contribute to greater marital satisfaction.

Additionally, there are significant positive correlations between marital satisfaction and the following variables: family type with adolescent children ($r = 0.256^{*}$), wife's highest educational attainment ($r = 0.384^{**}$), secure spousal attachment ($r = 0.254^{*}$), and conflict management ($r = 0.670^{**}$). This means that marital satisfaction tends to be higher when the wife belongs to a family with adolescent children, has a higher level of education, experiences a secure attachment with her husband, or demonstrates good conflict management skills.

3.6 The Influence of Family Characteristics, Spousal Attachment, and Conflict Management on Marital Satisfaction

To examine the influence of several independent variables on marital satisfaction, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. As shown in Table 9, the multiple linear regression test resulted in an Adjusted R Square value of 0.539 with a significance level of $p = 0.000$. This indicates that the model explains 53.9% of the variation in marital satisfaction, while the remaining 46.1% is influenced by other variables not examined in this study. Husband's age ($B = -1.488$; $p = 0.004$) has a significant negative effect on marital satisfaction, meaning that for every one-year increase in the husband's age, marital satisfaction decreases by 1.488 points. Wife's employment status ($B = -5.265$; $p = 0.097$) also shows a significant negative effect, indicating that when the wife is employed, marital satisfaction decreases by 5.265 points. Meanwhile, the length of marriage ($B = 1.289$; $p = 0.093$) has a significant positive effect on marital satisfaction, meaning that each additional year of marriage increases marital satisfaction by 1.289 points.

Table 9. The Influence of Family Characteristics, Spousal Attachment, and Conflict Management on Marital Satisfaction

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Std. error	Standardized Coefficient (Beta, β)	Sig.
Constant	6.052	28.895		
Wife's age (years)	0.834	0.503	0.226	0.103
Husband's age (years)	-1.488	0.495	-0.442	0.004**

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Std. error	Standardized Coefficient (Beta, β)	Sig.
Length of marriage (years)	1.289	0.754	0.327	0.093*
Monthly family income (Rp000000/month)	0.090	0.075	0.116	0.239
Family type (0 = Empty Nest; 1 = Adolescents)	11.418	4.589	0.357	0.016**
Wife's highest educational attainment (years)	0.349	0.838	0.047	0.678
Husband's highest educational attainment (years)	-0.562	0.660	-0.096	0.399
Wife's employment status (0 = Unemployed; 1 = Employed)	-5.265	3.122	-0.165	0.097*
Husband's employment status (0 = Unemployed; 1 = Employed)	8.117	9.318	0.087	0.388
Spousal attachment (0 = Insecure; 1 = Secure)	3.382	3.659	0.086	0.359
Conflict management (index)	0.856	0.163	0.551	0.000**
Uji F		7.901		
Sig		0.000^b		
R Square		0.617		
Adjusted R Square		0.539		

Note: (*) significant at $p < 0.05$, (**) significant at $p \leq 0.01$

Family type ($B = 11.418$; $p = 0.016$) has a significant positive effect on marital satisfaction. This means that when a family is in the adolescent child-rearing stage, marital satisfaction increases by 11.418 points. In addition, the conflict management variable ($B = 0.856$; $p = 0.000$) also has a significant positive effect on marital satisfaction, indicating that for every one-point increase in conflict management, marital satisfaction increases by 0.856 points.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 The Relationship Between Spousal Attachment, Conflict Management, and Marital Satisfaction

Couples with secure attachment styles are better able to resolve conflicts. Shaver and Mikulincer (2016) found that attachment is related to interpersonal relationships, including conflict management. Couples who communicate openly, show respect, and meet each other's emotional needs tend to form deep and lasting bonds. In this study, the wives reported efforts to share their true feelings with their husbands, ask for their opinions before making purchases, and express disagreement using respectful language.

Couples with secure attachment styles also tend to experience higher marital satisfaction. This is supported by Azhar et al. (2021), whose findings indicate a positive relationship between secure attachment and marital satisfaction. Most of the wives in this study reported enjoying hugging their husbands and verbally expressing love. In contrast, couples with insecure attachment styles experience lower marital satisfaction due to poor interaction, lack of effective communication, and absence of emotional support (Hemalzi & Indryawati, 2019).

Strong conflict management skills also contribute to greater marital satisfaction. Effective conflict resolution can strengthen the relationship and enhance marital satisfaction (McDaniel in Shoba et al., 2023). This is evident in the fact that most of the wives from both groups adopted an integrative conflict management style. They made efforts to cooperate with their husbands in reaching mutually beneficial decisions, thereby resolving conflicts effectively.

4.2 The Influence of Family Characteristics, Spousal Attachment, and Conflict Management on Marital Satisfaction

A husband's age may decrease marital satisfaction. As individuals age, they experience shifts in roles and emotional needs. Husbands tend to focus on work, preparing for retirement, and social life, while wives seek to build deeper emotional intimacy (Ghafur & Hidayah, 2014). However, these results cannot be generalized, as the satisfaction measured in this study is based solely on the wives' perceptions. Long-standing marriages may increase marital satisfaction, as indicated by the regression analysis. Supraba (2022) also found that 73 respondents (48.7%) who had been married for more than five years reported high marital satisfaction, and 33 respondents (22%) reported very high satisfaction.

Conversely, working wives tend to experience lower marital satisfaction. A study by Saudi and Umar (2022) revealed that working wives often face dual-role conflict between work and family responsibilities, resulting in psychological stress that negatively affects relationship satisfaction.

When the family is in the stage of raising teenage children, marital satisfaction tends to increase, as parents feel joy from the presence of their children at home, who serve as emotional attachment figures (Hasmalawati & Hasanati, 2018). Supporting this, Du et al. (2022) noted that high marital satisfaction is influenced by a positive relationship between parents and adolescents, as well-adapted children help reduce family conflict. On the other hand, the absence of children at home can lead to excessive feelings of loss and loneliness for parents, which in turn may decrease marital satisfaction (Ghafur & Hidayah, 2014).

Marital satisfaction is also influenced by conflict management skills. Muhid et al. (2019) found that conflict resolution contributed 43% to marital satisfaction. Similarly, Ayenew (2016) found that the conflict resolution variable contributed 17.8%. The simple linear regression in this study showed that conflict management influenced marital satisfaction by 42.3%.

However, the husband-wife attachment variable in this study's regression model did not significantly affect marital satisfaction. This may be due in part to Indonesian cultural norms in expressing affection toward a spouse. Typically, wives do not express affection—either verbally or non-verbally—frequently and tend not to make a big issue out of minor matters. These results differ from the findings of Soraiya et al. (2016), who reported that secure attachment contributed 26% to marital satisfaction.

4.3 Research Limitations

The limitations of this study include the limited number of literature reviews on the husband-wife attachment variable, resulting in insufficient empirical data to support the analysis. The instrument used to measure husband-wife attachment, namely the Intimate Bond Measure (IBM), has not been widely applied in research conducted in Indonesia, although it is considered fairly reliable. Additionally, modifications made to the conflict management instrument, the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II), specifically the reduction in the number of statement items, may have lowered the instrument's reliability and validity particularly in the compromise dimension, which consisted of only one statement item.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

The average age of wives in families with adolescent children is 43.94 years, while in empty nest families it is 48 years. The average length of marriage for wives in families with adolescent children is 18.45 years, compared to 24.7 years for wives in empty nest families. The majority of wives and husbands in both types of families hold a bachelor's degree or its equivalent. The average monthly family income for all respondents is Rp11,491,000. More than three-quarters of the wives in both families with adolescent children and empty nest families have a secure attachment to their

husbands. In terms of conflict management, more than three-quarters of the wives in families with adolescent children and more than half of those in empty nest families are categorized as moderate. Marital satisfaction among almost half of the wives in families with adolescent children is high, while more than half of the wives in empty nest families report moderate marital satisfaction. Higher marital satisfaction is found among wives in families with adolescent children.

Correlation test results show that the husband's age is significantly negatively related to marital satisfaction. The wife's highest level of education, family monthly income, family stage with adolescent children, secure attachment, and conflict management are significantly positively related to marital satisfaction. A younger husband's age, higher monthly income, family stage with adolescent children, secure attachment, or higher educational attainment of the wife can improve marital satisfaction. Regression test results indicate that length of marriage, family stage with adolescent children, and conflict management have a significant positive effect, while the husband's age and the wife's employment status have a significant negative effect on marital satisfaction. A younger husband, longer marriage duration, a wife who is not working, good conflict management, or being in a family with adolescent children can increase marital satisfaction.

In dealing with conflict situations, wives need to be open in discussions with their husbands, not avoid differences of opinion, and set aside discomfort in order to find mutually beneficial solutions, particularly in empty nest families. Wives can strengthen their relationship by offering praise, making time for their husbands, accepting joint decisions, and listening to one another with an open heart to prevent conflicts. Husbands and wives in middle adulthood can become more actively affectionate and caring toward their spouses. Parents and adolescent children need to build warm and harmonious relationships through quality time together. Future researchers are encouraged to explore the variable of spousal attachment and involve husbands as research subjects. The government is expected to provide free marital counseling services and conduct seminars or workshops for newly married couples on how to foster marital satisfaction with professional support.

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