

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the literature used as a framework for the study which include: journals, articles, and previous studies pertinent to marriage issues. However, the review of literature of this chapter is mainly related to factors affecting satisfaction level.

2.1 BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT FAMILY AND MARRIAGE

2.1.1 Definition of family

Family is the smallest but most fundamental unit in a society. If the family unit is strong, the society will also be powerful. According to Murdock (1949), family is the basic social structure for humans everywhere. It consists of a husband, wife and their children which can be also known as a “nuclear family”. If the family consists of more than husband, wife and their children, it is then referred to as “extended family” which has a nuclear family as its core. Historical analysis reveals that the family has provided many important functions for society.

2.1.2 Family Functions

Murdock (1949) concluded that there were four essential functions that the family provides for all societies

- 1) Sexual is what all societies have accepted that it is important and needs to be control in order to avoid chaos, insufficient population. Marriage is the only solution of compromise. Even though sexual relationships outside of marriage frequently occur, sexual relations within marriage remains the only practice that is socially acceptable.
- 2) Reproduction or “procreation” is the physical relationship that produces offspring’s generation to generation before developing into a society.
- 3) Socialization will follow after the producing children. The family must care for their children and instruct them to perform adult tasks including

transforming particular cultures to them. All societies depend on the family to love and nurture their children so that they will become both civilized and socialized.

4) Economic – in this context, it is not placed as the meaning of economic unit of production. Murdock (1949) referred it to the division of labor by gender. In other words, men and women have different physical strengths; they then should divide responsibilities according to their capacities.

2.1.3 Origin of the Family

The questions of how and when the family originated among humans is presently considered to be beyond the reach of science. However, per Lee's (1982) explanation, "the family originated among human beings because a certain division of labor between the sexes was found to be convenient or efficient and maximized the probability of survival for individuals and groups . . . the logic here implies that the origin of sex roles . . . coincided with the origin of the family" (Lee 1982: 54).

2.1.4 Definition of Marriage

Many researchers have sought to define marriage. However, according to William Stephens (1963), marriage is defined as the following:

"Marriage is a socially legitimate sexual union, begun with a public announcement and undertaken with some idea of permanence; it is assumed with a more or less explicit marriage contract, which spells out reciprocal obligations between spouses, and between spouses and their future children" (Stephens 1963: 5)

There are several definitions of marriage. Here are some more examples:

- 1) The state of being a married couple voluntarily joined for life (or until divorce)
- 2) Two people who are married to each other
- 3) The act of marrying
- 4) A close and intimate union

2.2 THEORIES RELATED TO FAMILY AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

2.2.1 Families last for a considerably longer period of time than do most other social groups.

Klein & White (1946) stated that the family unit was considered the division that lasts longer than any other groups of people such as friends and colleagues. Assuredly, some relationships in families are not enduring. Marriages can be broken by divorce or the death of the partner. Normally, we think that our families are lasting throughout our lifetimes. From the moment we are born, we automatically become a family member of an existing family. We have parents who will retain their parenthood status even as we become adults. The family members can be added up when we are married and produce offspring. Our siblings and relatives remain family members until the end of our lives. In some cases, it is possible that our friends and coworkers will maintain relationships for a long period of time but that cannot be compared to the family membership. We cannot select who our parents will be or who will give birth to us, whereas we have some options about joining the other social groups.

2.2.2 Families contain both biological and affinal (e.g., legal, common law) relationships between members.

As Klein & White (1946) stated, “It is the biological act of birth that creates the fundamental family tie. This act also means that we share at least some inherited characteristics with family members that are directly or indirectly related to us by birth” This can be assumed that families are in the business of producing and sustaining persons.

Apart from the biological process of creating a person, there is a social side to form a person as well. It can be processed through socialization which is subject to worldly and religious rules. Per those rules, family members have rights and obligations which tend to be classified in both laws and informal agreements.

In addition to adoption, marriage provides a major legal possession. We consider marital relationships as a part of families whereas some may not think

of a marriage as establishing families. It might even be debated that humans would not need marriages, if they did not have families. Moreover, the families would function well without marriage. Marriage creates certain rights and obligations under the law and creates legal family ties and obligations. Some of the family members combine and abandon their groups because of their own marriages and divorces. They, nonetheless may be excluded from the family circle due to family conflicts.

2.3 RELATED ARTICLES

2.3.1 Marital Interaction and Satisfaction

Per Marital Interaction and Satisfaction, Gottaman & Krokoff (1980) stated that the satisfaction in married life depends on how a couple is able to balance the strengths and weaknesses of the other. If one is unsatisfied with the behavior or treatment of another, they should recognize the strong points of the partner to compensate for the weaknesses of the other. Happiness in marriage has a fundamental dependency on trust, love, and respect in different aspects. The couple must respect and try to accept differing opinions of their partner. Prior to marriage, if one learns to accept the differences of the other, many marital problems could be avoided. Nonetheless, many couples surmise that their partners changed after entering the marriage relationship. Some behaviors might be acceptable while others might be deemed unacceptable. Couples should learn to accept perceived negative behavior of the partner and be supportive if need be. The ability to compromise is fundamental to ensuring harmony in the marriage relationship. Prior to marriage, the couple should also discuss post marital responsibilities so that there will not be any misunderstanding among each other (Lewis et al, 1976). Unavoidably, marriage conveys some changes even though some couples may not expect and prepare for them.. The first obvious change is that the couple must adapt to living together. Two persons will share everything in daily life e.g. space, activities, feelings, etc. It is not unusual for problems to arise due to compromises regarding one's preferences. Typically, the compromise involves one spouse foregoing his or her preference in deference to the other. Couples who are able to tolerate the inherent differences

between each other will find it much easier to live together happily. Though some couple may find this practice of compromising to be a “sacrifice”, it may very well turn a potentially negative situation into a positive one and ultimately result in marital happiness. In conclusion, there are only two options for this dilemma, either take it or leave it (Patricia et al, 1990).

2.3.2 Life, Marriage, and Happiness

According to Life, Marriage, and Happiness, เกียรติวรรณ (2531) states that if a husband and a wife have good understanding toward each other and always care and respect each other, their married lives will be successful regardless of their family issues. When the relationship in marriage is smooth, the couple may possibly consider having children. If children are born in a cohesive and understanding family, the children will be raised with high quality because of their parents’ responsibility and readiness, and could potentially prevent social problems from occurring. Currently many couples in Bangkok have children without preparation (เกียรติวรรณ อมาตยกุล 2531: 81). They are not emotionally and psychologically prepared to enter parenthood. The reasons for not being ready may be because of the immaturity and financial insecurity. The couples who have children by accident mostly lack those qualifications. As a result, such types of married couples will often have insufficient knowledge to raise their children, and this will become a severe root cause of social problems.

People have often questioned why humans create a unit of family (เกียรติวรรณ อมาตยกุล 2531: 2). It is common knowledge that humans cannot live alone as they are social creatures, and there is always connection between people: family, friends or relatives. Humans need to rely on one another, and this is the most fundamental reason why there is a “family” unit. To create a family, it usually begins with a man and woman who agree to be husband and wife and decides to live together under one roof and consummates in a “marriage”. Marriage in the Persian Language is referred to as “Coshy” which means “happiness”. In Pali Sanskrit Language, marriage

Indeed, most couples are not satisfied in their married life as much as they have anticipated. During a wedding ceremony, both the bride and bridegroom appear to be very happy. They smile, laugh, hold hands, and walk side by side. When the wedding ceremony is over, the couple life together has just begun. The couple will be together at all times.. It can become a routine that can seem very repetitious. The feeling of craving to stay together may begin to slowly fade away. Some behaviors that one thinks are acceptable turn out to be unacceptable. One may even anticipate the other to change or may anticipate the other not to change after marriage. Those dilemmas will emerge when the couple has lived together for such a period of time. When those actions occur, fighting and quarreling may result. Divorce often is viewed as the best solution (เกียรติวรรณ อมาตยกุล 2531: 31).

2.3.3 Why Marriages Fail – 7 Crucial Reasons Why Marriages Fail

Without prior notice, people typically decide to marry those who have unique characteristics that attract them. However, people unconsciously try to convert their spouses into what they like after living together in such a period of time. If their effort of trying to convert their spouses into what they like is unsuccessful, the married life may perhaps reach the end. Husbands and wives must realize that their spouses have freedom to be what they want to be, do what they want to do, and establish their own preferences. To fulfill the ideal relationship, the couple may attempt to mould or change their partner into their “perfect spouse” (Gomez, 2009). This happens quite regularly in marriages. It may be both doing by intention or without intention, but they can result in quarreling nonetheless. Marriage is not the process of modification either physically or mentally, but the process of adjustment and acceptance.

By living under the same shelter, it is common that husbands and wives may have different attitudes toward matters. Some matters should not necessarily be cause for arguing, but they can become a problem because the couple does not want

to listen or compromise with the other. There is a famous phrase stating, “Do not allow an argument between a husband and wife crossing over night” (Gomez, 2009). This is quite interesting and reasonable. When a couple is having an argument, both husband and wife should discuss and achieve an appropriate solution. Do not allow a small problem develop into a serious one. In addition, if a couple has been arguing over a certain topic, neither of them should relate the current argument to the past argument. If one keeps on making a complaint about the former argument, the argument will never end. The same may be said if one makes a mistake. The couple should not deride their spouse for making a mistake, especially while arguing. One should not refer to the previous mistake over and over because it is extremely disrespectful and it can affect their spouse’s esteem in long term.

From the article “Why marriage fails”, the statistic reveals a distressing reality of divorce rate. Each year 2 million couples decide to divorce around the world (Gomez, 2009). This equates to a couple making the decision to divorce every 15 minutes, and this statistic is increasing every year. Gomez (2009) has also revealed several crucial reasons that lead to marriage failure. Those crucial reasons are:

1. The abnormality that waiting for the couple to experience.
2. Communication insufficiency
3. The commitment to marriage
4. Lack of trust
5. Accepting your spouse
6. Laziness
7. Selfishness

To lengthen a relationship, giving and taking is the key to success and is known as “reciprocation”. Many couples have split up because one has never provided anything to the other in return, either feelings or tangible items. When one feels that he/she is the only one furnishing the other’s needs all of the time and has never received anything in return, that person will start to feel insecure and unsure in his/her partner as to whether their partner cares for them or not. If this behavior

continues it may very well eventually lead to the dissolution of the marriage because of the spouse's selfishness. Selfishness is believed to be one of the chief factors that leads to divorce (Gomez, 2009). To maintain the marriage, one should give and take equally and be attentive to the needs of the partner.

Gomez (2009) also suggests that the communication of the first day is the most significant in married life. A husband and wife may not be brave enough to say at the first stage of marriage what they require, like and dislike. It is because they consider it is too early to expose their true feelings, and do not want to appear to be too demanding. They carry on the wrong idea that the longer they live together, the more understanding the partner will be. They have a faulty belief that time will help unite a couple without verbal communication.

2.4 THE RELATED STUDIES

สุวรรณณี พุทธิศรี และ นางพางา ลิ้มสุวรรณ (2546) have conducted a study to investigate the satisfaction of married couples in Bangkok. 1,200 respondents who were randomly selected from various professions were requested to complete the questionnaire which was divided into two categories. The first category was aiming to elicit whether the respondents had prior expectations for their married lives. The second category was targeting to elicit whether they had encountered a number of problems in their married lives.

The results of the study disclosed that 727 respondents completed the questionnaire. The ages of the respondents ranged from 21-75 (mean age is 42 years old). It showed that the majority of the subjects were satisfied with their marriage, and that if they were able to re-marry they would prefer to be with their original partners. Most of the subjects did not have major problems in their marriages. The male respondents tended to be more satisfied with their married lives than the female respondents in nearly every aspect, and most of the males did not consider their partners to be problematic compared to the female's opinion (e.g. the method of communication, belief in their partner, sharing household chores, child rearing, etc.). The study revealed another interesting result which is that the married couples had

better mental health than those who remained single. The tendency of this research was positive, and it could be applied to predict the future trend that people would be more confident to enter married life. Moreover it was believed that the percentage of marriage failure would decrease.

รจนา กุลรัตน์ (2545) has conducted an experiment concerning the discovery of techniques to maintain married life, and this study has been selected to publish in the Department of Mental Health Magazine. The purpose of the study was to investigate the techniques to maintain happy married life, the attitude toward married life, and reveal some recommended behaviors that couples could apply to strengthen and lengthen their married lives together. The subject was a group of married women who were living together with their husbands. Their age was limited to 50 years. The minimal education was primary school. Nonetheless, the subject must be able to read, write, and understand the Thai language in order to provide their answers to the questionnaire. At the first stage, subjects would be requested to complete the pretest. After receiving the result of pretest, the marriage manual would be provided to the subjects. The subjects would again be requested to complete the post-test after 1 month.

The study revealed several notable points of view which were completely different from the research of Suwannee สุวรรณี พุทธิศรี และ นางพางา ลิ้มสุวรรณ (2546) even though both studies were of the same sphere. However, the study was concluded into 5 points

1. The majority of the subjects were experiencing problems after marriage and were not satisfied with their married lives. The percentage was surprisingly up to 78.30. Those problems were the misinterpretation and misunderstanding between husband and wife and adultery.

2. The majority of the subjects perfectly understood and were knowledgeable about their married lives. Their marriage perception was clear and they realized what method a couple could apply to sustain their married life. However, the result revealed that the greater part of the subjects were aware of the

possible marriage conflicts and that they possess the knowledge of how to resolve those conflicts. In contrast, they were unable to adjust their possessive knowledge to maintain and resolve their marriage problems. After post-test, however, the subjects were more knowledgeable about marriage life than pre-test.

3. Regarding the attitude toward marriage, most husbands and wives possessed parallel positive thinking. However, after post-test, their attitude toward marriage was improved.

4. The subjects acted better to maintain their marriage life after post-test.

5. The majority of the subjects (43.3%) strongly agreed that the marriage manual was very useful. 28.3 % agreed that the manual was useful and the rest agreed that the marriage manual had no effect on their married life.

กิตติศักดิ์ จินดาศักดิ์. (2538) studied factors related to wife's expectations toward their husbands in household chores and child rearing. The purposes of the study were to explore married women's expectations toward their husband's sharing of household chores and analyze the relationship between the expectation and reality. The factors affecting the wife's expectations were wife's and husband's age, wife's and husband's education, wife's and husband's income, and the distance from home to wife's work place, residential area, maid services, and whether or not one possessed a clothes washing machine.

The results revealed several interesting points. For example, the wife whose education was higher than the husband's would expect her husband to share household chores and babysit more than the wife whose education was lower than that of her husband. The wife that had to work outside would expect her husband to share household chores more than the wife that did not work outside. The educational factor often had a direct bearing on the income of the wife. That was because if a wife possessed a higher education, there was a high possibility that the wife's income would exceed that of the husband's. Another example was that if a wife had a maid or house assistant that she would expect her husband to share household chores and babysit less than a wife who did not possess these. The distance from home to a wife's work place was also an important variation that

caused higher expectations toward husbands in sharing household chores and babysitting responsibilities, especially if the work place of the wife was considered far in her point of view.

It was also found that if a wife did not expect her husband to share household chores, the husband would not do so. On the other hand, if a wife expected her husband to share household chores, the husband would share more housework.

In short, the majority of wives expected their husbands to share household chores in the middle level. This reflected that traditional Thai roles still play an important role in Thai society which believes that husbands should be the leader of the family and women should take care of the house. Nowadays, the roles of women and men have changed, and both should try to understand. The responsible function should encourage the educating of couples to have better understandings between wives and husbands to be able to support each other both household and work issues. This is to create the equality between husband and wife to respond to the current society.

Perrone and Worthington (2001) conducted a study to investigate factors that influenced the marriage quality. The subjects were 52 working men and 55 working women. Each of their spouses must be working. The age ranged from 20-60. Perrone and Worthington had also prioritized the influential factors as listed below:

1. Total income - If the total revenue of the family was efficient to the total expense, the couple tended to be happier in their married lives. On the other hand, if the total income was insufficient compared to the total expense, the couple would be possibly more displeased.
2. Support from society – If society provided support to the working couples, they would be able to resolve conflicts more effectively in both household and working issues.
3. Love – Love is the centre of marriage. If there was no love, it would result in a high divorce rate.
4. Sexual satisfaction – If a couple was satisfied with their partner's sexual style, it would be positive to their married life. It could be one of the most

important variables, whether a couple would live together happily or divorce. This sexual problem was the most common problem leading to divorce or preventing happiness in married life.

5. Communication – This factor was confirmed theoretically and practically and is considered to be the key in marital success. If a husband and wife try to communicate their requirements, express their feelings and let the other know the true message, miscommunication will not occur. Apart from that, the other will gain an opportunity to learn what the other likes and dislikes.

อัมพร รัตนวิทย์ (2539) reveals in her study that problems in married life is the third most serious problem of working women in Bangkok, while the first and the second serious problems are children and health. A large number of working women cannot deal with their family problems and need consultancy from mental institutions.

จันทร์ชนก โยธินชัชวาล (2544) studied the behavior of married Thai couples and the research shows that the married couple who possessed a good status of family economy will not have problem regarding financial management, and that they tend to have maids for the household chores responsibility (including babysitting) purpose.

In summary, marriage is the beginning of the family unit and the family unit is the fundamental element of society. If marriage is full of happiness, the family will also be strong. Keeping a marriage happy depends on both husband and wife. Both of them need to possess numerous necessary qualities: understanding, good communication, love, and reciprocation, being accepting of differences, and sharing. If a couple has those qualities, their married lives will be certainly happy, divorce rates will decrease, and our society will be improved.