MARITAL SATISFACTION AMONG MARRIED IRANIAN STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA

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To my beloved husband (Ahmadreza), son (MohammadMahdi), mother and father.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to develop a Marital Satisfaction Instrument (MSI) among married Iranian students in Malaysia. This study also identifies the levels of marital satisfaction in terms of demographic traits. Finally, it will develop a Marital Satisfaction (MS) model for this population. So, to satisfy the purpose of this study, mixed method approach, qualitative and quantitative were employed. In the qualitative phase, 15 married Iranian students in Malaysia were interviewed. By utilising thematic analysis, 101 items were extracted from the interviews. In the quantitative phase, four pilot tests were conducted to test items and person reliability, item polarity and dimensionality based on Rasch measurement model. Findings show that MSI has an acceptable item reliability of 0.83, person reliability of 0.95 and dimensionality of 47%. MSI was able to identify that 44% or majority of the participants were in the satisfied level of MS. It was also found that there were differences between MS and demographic traits such as age, number of children and levels of finance. But, there were no significant differences between MS and gender, levels of education and length of marriage. Furthermore, MSI produced 10 most contributing dimensions of MS which include children's issues, conflict resolution, time together, financial issues, personality traits, communication, family of origin, commitment, support, and sexual relationship among this population with a total of 46 items. Thus, this study develops a MS model based on the above dimensions using Rasch analysis. In the MS model, three dimensions: children issues, support and sexual relationship did not emerge in the previous models. By recognising these factors, the administration of Malaysian universities can use the MS model of married Iranian students to accelerate their adaption. Future research can focus on other married international students at local universities. In addition, a comparative study could be conducted between married international students and other cultural contexts.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk membangunkan satu Instrumen Kepuasan Perkahwinan (MSI) dikalangan para pelajar Iran yang sudah berkahwin di Malaysia. Ia juga akan mengenal pasti tahap-tahap kepuasan perkahwinan berdasarkan beberapa ciri demografi. Akhirnya, satu model Kepuasan Perkahwinan (MS) akan direka bentuk untuk populasi ini. Maka, bagi memenuhi kehendak kajian, pendekatan kaedah bercampur, kualitatif dan kuantitatif digunakan. Bagi fasa kualitatif, 15 pasang pelajar Iran di Malaysia yang sudah berkahwin telah ditemuduga. Melalui analisa berdasarkan tema, sebanyak 101 perkara telah dirumuskan daripada sesi temuduga. Bagi fasa kuantitatif, empat ujian perintis telah dibuat untuk menguji perkara-perkara kajian dan kebolehpercayaan perseorangan, perkara polarisasi dan dimensi berpandukan model pengukuran Rasch. Keputusan menunjukkan MSI telah mencapai tahap kebolehpercayaan sebanyak 0.83, tahap kebolehpercayaan perseorangan sebanyak 0.95 dan tahap dimensi sebanyak 47%. MSI telah menunjukkan bahawa 44% atau majoriti peserta berada pada tahap kepuasan MS. Terdapat juga beberapa perbezaan diantara MS dan ciri-ciri demografi seperti umur, bilangan anak dan kedudukan kewangan. Tetapi, tiada perbezaan ketara diantara MS dan jantina, tahap pendidikan serta tempoh perkahwinan. Selanjutnya, MSI menyumbangkan 10 dimensi MS paling utama termasuk isu-isu mengenai kanak-kanak, penyelesaian konflik, masa bersama, hal-hal kewangan, ciri-ciri personaliti, komunikasi, asal usul keluarga, komitmen, sokongan dan hubungan seksual bagi populasi ini yang kesemuanya berjumlah 46 perkara. Maka, kajian ini dapat menghasilkan satu model MS bersandarkan dimensi-dimensi tersebut mengikut analisa Rasch. Untuk model MS tiga dimensi, isu-isu berkaitan kanak-kanak, sokongan dan hubungan seksual tidak diterapkan dalam model-model terdahulu. Dengan mengenali faktor-faktor ini, pihak pentadbiran universiti-universiti di Malaysia boleh menggunakan MS pelajar-pelajar Iran yang sudah berkahwin bagi mempercepatkan adaptasi mereka. Kajian seterusnya boleh menumpukan kepada pelajar-pelajar antarabangsa lain yang telah berkahwin di universiti-universiti tempatan. Disamping itu, satu kajian perbandingan harus dijalankan diantara pelajar-pelajar antarabangsa yang sudah berkahwin dan pelbagai konteks sosial.