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**PREMARITAL and MARITAL PROBLEMS and PROBLEM SOLVING STYLES
in MARRIED and DIVORCED TURKISH PROFESSIONAL WOMEN and MEN**

**by
Sevinc Cirak**

**A Doctoral Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of
Doctor of Philosophy**

**Department of Social Sciences
Loughborough University**

April, 2001

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*Dedicated
to my parents*

*Sevgili Anne, Babam, Memet
ve Metin'e adanmistir.*

Abstract

Close relationships play an integral role in our lives. Problems associated with close relationships could have social and psychological effects on individuals. Research has documented that disruption of a relationship is considered as one of the major life stressors.

In this context, the present research aims to identify differences between the intact marriages and those which ended in divorce, in Turkey, in relation to problems experienced during premarital level and marital level. Furthermore, this research has examined the perceived problem solving behaviour of the currently married and divorced individuals with respect to premarital and marital problems experienced. Retrospective survey interviewing was adopted as a data collection strategy in order to study self reported problems and problem solving behaviour by respondents. It has been hoped that the findings from the present study would be beneficial for relationship enhancement programs to be developed in Turkey.

The study found differences in both experienced problems and problem solving behaviour between currently married and divorced individuals for premarital and marital stages. The total number of reported problems significantly differed between divorced and currently married subjects, with divorced individuals reporting more problems than married individuals for both premarital and marital stages. Personality attributes as a problem domain was cited more frequently by divorced individuals than married in the premarital stage, and a set of problem domains involving personality attributes, attitude differences, communication problems, closeness and sexual problems, and excessive control and lack of trust were reported more frequently by divorced respondents than married respondents for the marital stage. Although gender differences appeared in some domains of problems using chi-square analyses, this was not supported by loglinear analyses. Also, there were no gender differences in the total number of problems.

Additionally, the analysis indicated the differences in problem solving behaviour in both premarital and marital level between divorced and married individuals. More married people than divorced reported positive problem solving behaviour. On the other hand, more divorced respondent than married cited a compliance type of problem solving for the premarital level. Regarding marital stage, more divorced respondents cited compliance than married respondents. The results also indicated some gender differences in problem solving behaviours.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Duncan Cramer, who not only supervised but also provided great support.

I would also like to thank my friends and colleagues, especially Terry Sallis, Hye-Chung Eun, Li Kuan, Emine, and Banu for their help and support.

I am grateful to Mersin University, who funded my study in the UK.

I would like to extend my gratitude to my brother Memet and to my parents for allowing me to continue my education after primary school, while many bright girls had to terminate their education after the compulsory five years due to cultural and economical pressures.

Finally, my thanks go to my best friend and husband Metin for his assistance, patience, and love.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1. Background to the Study

As an ultimate expression of intimate relationships (Brehm, 1992) marriage is still a dominant institution even in the most individualistic western societies. In many parts of the world, it has rapidly been losing its characteristics of being a cultural imperative and an economical necessity. However, it seems that people still prefer marriage as a form of a long term, committed, secure heterosexual relationship. Cherlin (1992) stated that marriage continues to be at the centre of most Americans' lives. Most cohabiting couples either marry or end their relationships within two or three years of the start of their relationships. Most divorced remarry and most people marry in the end. Furthermore, in some societies it is considered as the only culturally acceptable way of living with an opposite sex partner.

A satisfying marriage plays an important role in people's life. It may contribute to one's psychological and physical wellbeing (e.g., Berkman & Syme, 1979; Glenn & Weaver, 1988). Berkman and Syme (1979) carried out research by using a large sample and reported that the stability of marriage was the best predictor of dying or staying alive when the initial health and health habits were controlled. In this study, marriage and friendship had a relatively strong buffering effect for men among the other three social ties, friendship, church membership and informal groups. Similarly, Glenn and Weaver (1988), reported that married people were happier than persons in any of the three unmarried positions, never married, separated, and divorced. In a recent study conducted by Stack and Eshleman (1998) with individuals from 17 industrialised nations, it has also been found that marriage and happiness were correlated. In this study, it was also reported that happiness increased more in marriage than in cohabitation, in almost every country involved in the study (16 out of 17 countries), regardless of gender. As a result, a

marriage that works well satisfies the important needs of human beings, and contributes to their overall wellbeing.

However, recent statistics have shown that marital dissolution is substantially high. For example, the divorce rates (per 1000 population) were 2.6 and 0.7 in 1950 in the United States and the United Kingdom respectively but they were 4.5 and 3.0 in 1994 (see Table 1.1). Since divorce rates started to rise sharply in the 1960s, marriage has become an important issue for psychological study. In particular, the question of what keeps a marriage intact and satisfying; and what differentiates the marriages that are still intact from those that ended in divorce have remained popular among marriage researchers. However, some researchers have stated that research related to divorce still fails to explain divorce (see, for example, Gottman, 1994).

Therefore, identification of the sources of marital dissolution has drawn the attention of the social scientists in the past years¹. We can say that there has been a considerable amount of knowledge accumulation on the causes of the divorce over the years. According to Kitson and Raschke (1981), such studies could be divided into two main categories. The first group of studies predicted divorce based on structural variables and the second group utilised the self-described causes of divorce. Amato and Rogers (1997) have labelled the former as distal causes (structural and life course variables) of divorce and the latter as proximal causes (perceived causes) of divorce in their recent study. This differentiation could also indicate the difference between the individuals' own perception of causes of divorce and the researchers' (or outsiders') perception of caused of divorce. However, we believe that it is the individuals' awareness of problems that lead them to seek divorce.

Therefore, the self-report causes of divorce as well as structural causes of divorce merit study. In addition, it seems that practical efforts for reducing divorce rates, such as

¹ *Divorce, marital stability, marital dissolution, and marital break-up* are used interchangeably in this study. Marital stability, marital dissolution, and marital break-up may also imply marital separation in some other studies along with divorce.

intervention and prevention studies, would more easily work on self-reported causes of divorce rather than structural and life course causes of divorce. For example, it would be possible to change an unpleasant behaviour of a partner rather than his/her age.

It was reported that self-reported causes of divorce and marital problems could change over time (Kitson & Sussman, 1982). Hence, replications of self-reported problem studies would be required for identification of changes in marital problems over time so that they provide updated knowledge for policy makers and application studies. Likewise, the aforementioned problems could also vary depending on cultural contexts, and this would also necessitate the identification of marital problems in different cultural settings.

In recent years, there has been a growing body of literature that emphasises the necessity of incorporating cultural components into the studies of close relationships (e.g., Duck, 1999; Goodwin, 1999; Hinde, 1997; Kagitcibasi, 1996). According to Kagitcibasi (1996), psychological phenomena are not immune from context influences. Duck (1999) has stated that cultural context may have effects on the form of relationships that are regarded as acceptable in addition to cognitions, projects and concerns of individuals. In fact, one might say that cultural contextual factors are present from the beginning to the dissolution of the relationships. However, the available knowledge is largely obtained from individuals in western countries (Goodwin, 1999; Imamoglu & Yasak, 1997) and thus this body of knowledge needs to be expanded by recruiting samples from other types of cultures. In this respect, the present study, serves this aim by using a sample from Turkey.

As mentioned before, self-report reasons for divorce, or the marital problems of divorcees, have been studied extensively. However, some studies have employed only female divorcees (Goode, 1956) or only divorced or separated individuals, without a comparable group of married individuals (Burns, 1984; Cleek & Pearson, 1985; Kitson & Sussman, 1982; Levinger, 1966). In addition, most of them focused only on marital problems. To our knowledge none of the studies investigated premarital problems in relation to divorce. However, some longitudinal studies explored the early marriage

problems in relation to divorce. Furthermore, there does not appear to be any study that identifies the premarital problems of married and divorced individuals in detail. In fact, identification of premarital problems and their relation to subsequent divorce could be very important for lay persons who experience some problems in their premarital relationships in deciding whether to go through with marriage or break up early. Otherwise, it would be too late to break up after marriage took place, considering that not every person would be able to receive psychological counselling or treatment before his or her marriage.

Therefore, studying the identification of pre-marital and marital problems of married and divorced people and thereby establishing the link between premarital problems and marital problems gains importance as far as divorce is concerned.

A prominent group of scientists have investigated the problem solving behaviours of couples in relation to marital breakdown (e.g., Christensen & Shenk, 1991; Kurdek, 1994a; Noller et al., 1994). In this trend of thought, it was believed that marital problems are ubiquitous and do not differentiate between distressed marriages and non-distressed ones (or divorced and non-divorced) (Storaasli & Markman, 1990; Markman, Floyd, Stanley, & Storaasli, 1988). However, the behaviour displayed during problem (or conflict) situations could be different for maritally distressed and non-distressed partners in predicting the future success of a marriage. According to this view, some styles of problem solving behaviours would be deleterious to marital satisfaction and stability. For example, avoidance (e.g., Noller et al., 1994) and conflict engagement with negative behaviour (e.g., Gottman, 1994) are generally not effective and rewarding methods of problem solving. These unrewarding (or punishing) experiences during problem solving interactions could accumulate and consequently affect judgements concerning marital quality in married partners thereby contributing to marital dissolution. As a result of these premises, scientists supporting this view suggested that marital success (satisfaction and stability) could be predicted at the onset of marriage.

In this direction, there has been a substantial number of studies exploring the prediction of marital dissolution by employing problem solving variables (e.g., Christensen & Shenk, 1991). However, studies investigating the relationship between marital success and problem solving behaviour have been carried out mostly with observational data and have employed small, voluntary samples. Furthermore, during observational sessions, only micro-level behaviour samples were observed and background effects (e.g., life events) and everyday behaviours of partners were neglected (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). In addition, problem solving behaviours have been observed and coded from the standpoint of observers (or outsiders). Only a few studies have used self-report measures (e.g., Christensen & Shenk, 1991; Kurdek, 1994a) but these self-report studies have generally been in the form of structured questionnaires.

Hence, in order to study and understand the relationship between pre-marital and marital problems and problem solving behaviours with respect to divorce, the use of self-report data collection and retrospective longitudinal design appeared to be an appropriate research strategy since it allows us to monitor the change in the relationships from the respondents' point of view. Furthermore, it has been utilised by other researchers, and is considered an acceptable way of studying relationship development (see Ponzetti & Cate, 1986).

Although there has been some research investigating certain aspects of marital process such as demographic correlates of marital satisfaction/adjustment (e.g., Canakci, 1992; Hatipoglu, 1993; Imamoglu & Yasak, 1997), perception of conflict and marital satisfaction (e.g., Hatipoglu, 1993; Tezer, 1992), the study of premarital and marital problems in relation to consequent divorce remains uncharted territory as far as Turkey is concerned. Also, there appears to be a lack of study investigating problem solving styles and marital dissolution regarding Turkey. To our best knowledge, the present study, in this respect, is the first one that investigates the relationships between premarital and marital problems and consequent divorce in Turkey.

1.2. Consequences of Divorce

It has long been recognised that divorce may have powerful negative effects on spouses, children and society. Divorce is considered to be among the most stressful events in life (Pledge, 1992). For example, it means loss of emotional attachment, loss of social support and, in some cases, loss of economic welfare and social network to the spouses. At the same time, it brings a number of crises into one's life in a short period of time. Weiss (1976) stated that separation is distressing for both spouses regardless of who initiated the divorce. In addition, dissolution of marriage is known to be far more stressful than unhappy marriage (Gottman, 1994).

Deleterious effects of divorce on spouses include vulnerability to psychological illnesses, physical illnesses, traffic accidents, and increased tendency towards crime (Bloom, Asher, & White, 1978; Pledge, 1992). Since divorce and serious marital problems could be considered as serious threats and causing losses by involving individuals, they may induce serious depression in individuals. After separation, spouses tend to exhibit a depressive response to marital disruption. Kendler, Kessler, Walters et al. (1995) carried out research with community based female/female twin pairs comprising of 2164 individuals to detect the relationships between genetic liability and stressful life events for the purpose of determining the aetiology of major depression. Serious marital problems and divorce were found to be among the depression inducing events, depending on the altered sensitivity of individuals by genetic factors. However, it should be stated that, despite the mounting evidence of the correlational relationship between marital distress and depressive symptoms in individuals, the research findings are inconclusive to establish a causal relationship between marital distress and subsequent depression (Burns, Sayers, & Moras, 1994). One of the most recent interpretations of the phenomenon has been that marital functioning and depressive symptoms can have a bi-directional relationship (Davila, Bradbury, Cohan, & Tochluk, 1997).

There has also been some evidence that divorced people show increased vulnerability to physical illnesses. Kiecolt-Glaser and his colleagues (1987) reported that women divorced or separated from their husbands showed reduced immuno-competence compared to women who were still married. In another study (Kiecolt-Glaser, Kennedy, Malkoff, Fisher, Specier, & Glaser, 1988), it was stated that divorced or separated men reported more illness compared with the same aged, socio-demographically matched married men.

In addition, divorce has a negative impact on children's psychological and behavioural adjustment, and cognitive development (e.g., Amato & Keith, 1991; Emery, 1988). When compared to children of intact families, children of divorced parents showed a lower level performance in academic achievement, psychological adjustment, self esteem, social relationships and parental relationships (Amato & Keith, 1991). Compared with children who come from intact two-parent families, children who come from one-parent families performed at a significantly lower level on standardised measures of academic and intellectual capacity. Furthermore, teachers' reports defined children from divorced parents as dependent, disruptive, and unpopular with their peer groups (Emery, 1988). Similar to these studies, Cherlin, Furstenberg, Chase-Lansdale, and Kiernan (1991) studied statistical records of national samples of children in the United States and Great Britain who were followed for a period of five years. The information obtained included records of behaviour problems, reading and mathematics achievement, and the family difficulties of the children. They started collecting data from children from intact families with biological parents at the start of the study. Afterwards they followed the sample as it was split into two groups: those whose parents were divorced and those whose parents still lived together. Children whose parents were divorced had lower levels of performance on reading and mathematics tests than the children who came from intact families.

Moreover, family disruption and criminal offence are more likely to be interrelated, since family disruption provides suitable grounds for this. Firstly, single parent families carry the entire burden and may not be able to provide adequate supervision. Secondly, since

the single parents themselves are suffering from negative aftermaths of divorce such as financial difficulties, depression and increased household tasks, the parenting practices are influenced negatively, causing lack of care and attendance (see Blackburn, 1993).

Also, divorce appears to have a long-term effect on people who experienced parental divorce in their childhood. Kulka and Weingarten (1979) analysed the data collected from adults through a national probability survey conducted at two different periods (1957 and 1976). They reported slight but statistically significant differences for those who had experienced parental divorce and those who had not. The male adults whose parents had divorced applied for help from the mental health services more than the adults with no parental divorce. Furthermore, higher levels of occasional feelings of anxiety, more instances of unhappy memories, and difficulty with handling negative events were reported among the adults who had divorced parents.

However, it would be wrong to state that divorce has a single, clear cut, long lasting effect on children since the literature also yields controversial and inconsistent findings (Guttman, 1993). Furthermore, in the recent longitudinal study in the UK and USA, mentioned above, Cherlin et al. (1991) found that the pre-divorce family atmosphere, which is generally conflictive, contributed to children's distress more strongly than divorce itself. For some cases, divorce would be more beneficial than living in a constantly conflictive relationship.

1.3. Divorce Statistics in Western Countries and Turkey

Despite its negative consequences, over the century, the divorce rates have increased in most countries worldwide. Most western countries have substantially high levels of divorce rates (see Table 1.1). However, the divorce rates and increase in divorce rates have been relatively low in Turkey over the years (see Table 1.2).

1.3.1. Divorce Rates in Western Countries

Between 1860 and 1965 the crude rate of divorce (i.e. divorce per 1,000 population) rose from 0.7 to 2.5 in the United States (Plateris, 1969, cited in Goode, 1993). Similarly, in other western countries in which divorce was legal, the rates have been rising upward steadily since 1900 (Goode, 1993). While the figures for the United States were more extreme in this respect, for its divorce rate had been rising in every decade since the Civil war, the European curves have moved up only modestly.

The following table shows the crude divorce rates in western countries from 1950 to 1995.

Table 1.1 Crude Divorce Rates in Some European Countries and The United States between 1950-1995 (Per 1000 Population).

<i>Country</i>	<i>1950</i>	<i>1960</i>	<i>1970</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1994</i>	<i>1995</i>
Austria	1.5	1.1	1.4	1.8	2.1	2.1*	2.2
Belgium	0.6	0.5	0.7	1.5	2.0	-	3.4
Denmark	1.6	1.5	1.9	2.6	2.7	-	-
Finland	0.9	0.8	1.3	2.0	2.6	2.7	2.7
France	0.9	0.7	0.8	1.5	1.8	1.9	-
W Germany	1.6	0.9	1.3	1.6	1.9	2.0	2.0
Netherlands	0.6	0.5	0.8	1.8	1.9	-	-
Norway	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.6	2.4	2.5	-
Sweden	1.1	1.2	1.6	2.4	2.2	2.5*	-
UK	0.7	0.5	1.2	2.8	2.7	3.0	-
US	2.6	2.2	3.4	5.2	4.7	4.5	4.4

Sources: Goode (1993, p.27 and 138); United Nations Demographic Yearbook (various years).

*Provisional

As can be seen from Table 1.1, the United States has the highest divorce rate among the industrialised countries. Since 1960, the divorce rates in the USA have increased dramatically (from 2.6 in 1960 to 4.4 in 1995 per 0/00). Notice that the divorce rate reached at its peak (5.2) in 1990.

With regard to European countries, since 1960 a sharp increase has been prominent in all of the countries as can be seen from Table 1.1. However, the most dramatic increase has been in the UK (from 0.7 to 2.7 per 1000). As shown in Table 1.1, the UK and Denmark have the highest divorce rates in Europe both with 2.7 in 1990. These are followed by other Nordic countries such as Finland (2.6), Norway (2.4), and Sweden (2.2). On the other hand, Germany and Netherlands, and France (1.9 and 1.8 respectively) have relatively lower rates than the others. According to the statistics obtained for recent years, it can be said that a stabilisation or only slight changes in divorce rates have occurred.

1.3.2. Divorce Rates in Turkey

Despite the fact that the divorce rates in Turkey are much lower in relation to western countries, they have gradually increased in recent years. Table 1.2 shows the crude divorce rates in Turkey between 1984-1997.

Table 1.2. Crude Divorce Rates in Turkey between 1984-1997 (Per 1000 Population)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population (Million)</i>	<i>Number of Divorces</i>	<i>Divorce Rate (0/00)</i>
1984	49.070	16987	0.35
1985	50.306	18571	0.37
1986	51.433	18774	0.37
1987	52.561	18305	0.35
1988	53.715	22513	0.42
1989	54.893	25376	0.46
1990	56.098	25712	0.46
1991	57.064	27167	0.47
1992	57.931	27133	0.47
1993	58.812	27725	0.47
1994	59.706	28041	0.47
1995	60.614	28875	0.48
1996	61.536	29552	0.48
1997	62.510	32717	0.52

Source: State Institute of Statistics [SIS], Divorce Statistics (various years).

Note: Estimated population is provisional between 1991 and 1997.

As can be seen from Table 1.2, the divorce rates are much lower than those of western countries (see Table 1.1). However, there has been an increase in the rates between 1984 and 1993 (from 0.35 per 0/00 in 1984 to 0.46 per 0/00 in 1993). It might be said that this increase is due to the alterations in the Turkish divorce law in 1988.² It would seem that the divorce rates have stabilised in the years between 1989 and 1994 around 0.47 0/00. Between 1994 and 1997, rates climbed up by 0.5 point. Although increases in the rates are present, it is apparent that divorce rates in Turkey have been much smaller than those of the European countries and the United States (see Table 1.1).

As it is beyond the scope of the study to give every aspect of why divorce rates have low compared to western countries and why it has increased in recent years, this study rather focuses on the topics such as the pre-marital and marital problems of Turkish divorcees and married individuals, and their problem solving experiences.

1.4. Brief Background about the Marriage in the Turkish Society

Marriage and divorce are social matters, as well as personal, since they occur in a social and cultural environment and affect this environment as well as being affected by it (Guttman, 1993). In this context, in line with changes in socio-economical fluctuations, there have been changes in divorce rates (Cherlin, 1992). Likewise, changes in divorce legislation have reflected upon the number of divorces in societies. For example, according to Turkish State statistics (see Table 1.2), the number of divorces increased considerably after the introduction of several changes to the old legislation in 1988 in the direction of making no-fault divorce possible. Hence, it would be useful to give some introductory information about divorce regulation and change in Turkish marriages in accordance with this legislation. This should further clarify the societal background in which the data of this study was collected.

² The information about these alterations is given later in this chapter.

The Turkish family is regarded as traditionally patriarchal and patrilineal (Duben and Behar, 1996). However, since 1839, family life in Turkey has undergone a rapid change in the direction of western societies (Kuran, 1991). Before this change started, marriage and divorce had been under the effect of Islamic law, which allowed men to marry up to four women and divorce them with ease on the condition that *mihri museccel*³ was provided by men (Koyuncuoglu, 1988). In 1961, for the first time, the Turkish Constitution mentioned the family. According to this constitution “the family is the basis of Turkish society (Article 41)” and is considered to be under state protection. Although it is not explicitly defined, the family in the Turkish Constitution was implicitly regarded as the nuclear family, in common with European Societies (Ansay, 1985). Marriage and divorce have been regulated by the Turkish Civil Code. Since it is not the task of this study to go into details, we give a brief account of the Turkish Civil Code in relation to marriage and divorce as the following.

The current Turkish Civil Code was adopted in 1926 from the Swiss Civil Code with some minor changes. At that time, the Swiss Code was regarded as the most modern code in its field (Koyuncuoglu, 1988). In accordance with the introduction of this code, Islamic based rules were eliminated; females and males were provided with equal rights with monogamy being the only acceptable mode of marriage. The right of marriage was defined as an individual right and left to the individuals' own decisions rather than those of family members or others. The minimum age for getting married was defined by the new law as 15 years for females and 17 years for males. Regarding divorce, the Turkish code has been considered as being one of the most permissive divorce laws in the world (Levine, 1982). Over the years, some amendments have been made to make the code compatible with the changing needs of individuals and society.

In 1988, the code was significantly amended in the area of marriage legislation. One of the important alterations was made in terms of the acceptance of no-fault divorce. The other main alteration was in relation to the court's consideration of one partner's desire

³ Sum of money or equivalent in land etc. that males pay to females if divorce occurs. The amount is agreed at the start of marriage by both sides.

for divorce. According to this ruling the court does not have to wait to decide on a divorce if one party does not accept it.

However, it should be noted that the regulations made by modern law have not been consumed equally by the populace. Particularly, people who dwell in certain rural areas and have a lower education level are more likely to live according to traditional cultural values than individuals who live in urban areas and have a higher education level, although this has decreased over time (Atalay, Kontas, Beyazit, & Madenoglu, 1992). For example, it is likely for rural individuals, particularly females, to marry below the legal age for marriage or to be forced into marriage by family members. On the other hand, it could be said that well-educated professional people, dwelling in cities, live in accordance with the values introduced by modern law. According to Kagitcibasi (1998), education and being part of the labour force are the most representative signs of high female status in Turkey. These groups of people would be considered to have benefited most from modern values of the judiciary regulations in effect.

Today, in the Turkish society, one might say that there are diverse forms of marriages (e.g., self selected, family arranged, expanded, nuclear) depending on social class, rural-urban, and development level. Timur (1968) reported that 60% of Turkish families were nuclear. In a later study Timur (1982) stated that among the city dwellers, the nuclear family is most common. As Hortacsu and Oral (1994) states, families are more involved in Turkish marriages in relation to Western marriages. This is because they pay a substantial part of the wedding expenses. Also, the families are heavily involved in choosing the spouse or introducing the prospective marriage partners. According to Atalay et al. (1992) more than half of the marriages are family arranged, but among the better educated, young, city dwelling segments of the society the percentage of family arranged marriages is lower in comparison to the other segments of the society. For example, in rural areas the involvement of families in marriages is 60.2% while this figure is 52.2% in urban areas.

1.5. The Aim of the Study

Aims of the present study can be summarised as follows:

1-a) to provide descriptive information on relationship problems of currently married and divorced individuals at the premarital and marital stages.

b) to find out whether there is a difference between currently divorced and married individuals in relation to premarital stage problems.

c) to find out whether there is a difference between currently divorced and married individuals in relation to marital stage problem domains.

2- to determine whether there is continuity between premarital stage problems and marital stage problems in married and divorced groups.

3-a) to find out whether married individuals differ, compared to divorced individuals, in their premarital stage problem solving styles.

b) to find out whether married individuals, compared to divorced individuals, differ in their marital stage problem solving styles.

1.6. The Structure of the Thesis

The thesis contains eight chapters. The first chapter gives an introduction to the subject matter of the thesis. In chapter 2, some introductory information is given about the theoretical approaches to the marital breakdown. Chapter 3 reviews the literature on marital problems and marital problem solving. This chapter also includes the research hypotheses. Chapter 4 is about the methodology employed in this study. The results of quantitative analysis are presented in Chapter 5, which starts with premarital problem identification and the comparisons between married and divorced individuals, followed by marital problem identification and comparisons in terms of the number of problems and the characteristics of problems. In this, the results of problem solving styles of individuals, premarital level and marital level, are also presented and comparisons

between married and divorced individuals are made. Chapter 6 discusses the results given in Chapter 5 in light of the available literature. Chapter 7 discusses the qualitative aspects of the data. The final chapter summarises our main results and gives the main conclusions drawn from the quantitative and qualitative analyses of the results.

CHAPTER 2

Main Approaches to Marital Dissolution

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the major approaches to divorce are reviewed. Since it is beyond the scope of this study to cover all aspects of literature pertinent to this topic, our review is focused on the main approaches and the two new models developed in recent years.¹ Marriage itself and its dissolution is a complex phenomenon that is influenced by a multitude of variables. In order to be able to comprehend this complex phenomenon, a number of theoretical orientations have been developed (see, for example, Gottman, 1994; Rusbult 1980; Thibaut and Kelley, 1959). Regarding this, the main classification can be made according to the embracement of intrapersonality, or of interpersonality variables in the theoretical orientation. Psychoanalytical and trait theories were found to be dependent on intrapersonality variables, such as neuroticism, extraversion, and agreeableness, while behavioural oriented researchers mainly favoured interpersonality variables. On the other hand, marriage cannot be explained without the context in which it develops, in either a negative or positive direction. Therefore, another string of variables, called structural variables, which can be evaluated in the structural approach to marriages have been introduced. The main concern is what differentiates the successful marriages from the failures as far as the theories related to marital relationships are concerned.

This chapter aims at presenting a summary of fundamental approaches to marital dissolution and a brief survey of literature related to these approaches. In the next section, we give the impact of demographics (referred to as structural approach) on marital relations. Then we present a description of social exchange theories. Moreover, information about the contextual model of marital interaction is presented in this chapter.

¹ These two theories are, namely, contextual theory and comprehensive theory of marital stability. Contextual theory has been introduced by Bradbury and Fincham (1987, 1988, and 1991), while the latter has been introduced by Gottman (1994).

This chapter also describes Gottman's comprehensive theory of marital stability, followed by a discussion of the personality approach in marital stability.

2.2. Demographics in Divorce

Demographic variables, including age, socio-economic status, premarital pregnancy, and parental marriage, have been found to have a correlation with divorce (see, for example, Cherlin, 1992; Gottman, 1994; Kurdek, 1993). Although many authors (for example, Cherlin, 1992; Martin & Bumpass, 1989) agree that these variables are highly correlated with divorce, Gottman (1994) argues that, even if they are statistically meaningful, their effect is relatively small and they do not posit a separation mechanism. However, Kurdek (1993) stated that the demographic variables predicted divorce more strongly than any other variables, namely individual differences, interdependence, and spousal discrepancy variables.

The most important demographic variables related to marital stability are explained as the following:

Parental Marriage

Several studies have demonstrated that the children of divorced couples were more likely to divorce than children of intact marriages (McLanahan & Bumpass, 1988). Kelly and Conley's study (1987) found that parent divorce predicted offspring divorce statistically significantly.

Age

There is some evidence that age plays an important role in marital stability. People who married before 20 and over 30 are more likely to divorce or to separate than people who marry in the age group between 20 and 30 (Norton & Glick, 1976). Bumpass and Sweet (1972) also found divorce proneness for people who married under the age of 20, when they controlled the level of education, premarital pregnancy, and length of marriage.

Likewise, Martin and Bumpass (1989) reported that women married in their teens in the United States are twice as likely to separate than those who married after the age of 22. In Thornes and Collard's (1979) study, carried out in the United Kingdom, 44% of brides in broken marriages were under 20 years old compared to 28% of brides in intact marriages.

Premarital Pregnancy

Premarital pregnancy is one of the most cited characteristics of dissolved marriages. Martin and Bumpass (1989) noted that, during the period 1970-1985 in the United States, among whites with premarital pregnancy there was a 71 per cent higher rate of dissolved marriages than among whites without premarital pregnancy. Thornes and Collard (1979) reported that the proportion of premaritally pregnant brides was higher in broken marriages than intact marriages in the United Kingdom.

Socio-economic Status

Socio-economic status, which is defined by education, income, and employment status, has been found to be inversely associated with the likelihood of divorce. One might say that people who have low paid and low-status jobs, and are less educated, are more likely to divorce than those who are well-educated, well-paid, and have high -status occupations (Raschke, 1987), since wealth has the potential of bringing in more satisfaction to the household. Conversely, financial burdens have a potential for creating tensions between spouses. Conger and Elder (1990) demonstrated that economic pressures were indirectly influential on marital evaluations of individuals by creating hostility and preventing warmth in couples' interactions. From another point of view, wealthier people have much to lose through divorce (Guttmann, 1993). Therefore, in this case, income behaves as a barrier to divorce and may influence the divorce rates among the wealthier. However, the relationship between wealth and divorce is not clear-cut. For example, Cherlin (1992) showed that wives' having a higher income level than their husbands' leads to higher divorce rates. However, if their income level is lower than their husbands, the divorce rate is lower. Some researchers (e.g., Rogers, 1999) also claimed that wives' low level of marital quality led to increases in women's income rather than vice versa, since non-employed wives in disturbed marriages were more likely to enter the labour force. As far as education is concerned, Bumpass and Sweet (1972) found that there was a negative

relationship between education and marital stability. They reported that the likelihood of separation increased at lower education levels.

2.3. Social Exchange Approaches to Divorce

The most influential current theories of break-ups in close relationships have taken their roots mainly from the social exchange approach. This approach was based on the work of Homans, Thibaut and Kelley (see Raschke, 1987). According to this approach, basically the balance between costs and rewards keeps relationships intact. The partners continuously evaluate their outcomes from the relationship. Consequently, the relationship has to be mutually rewarding and bring maximum benefits for both sides so that it would be attractive and would stay intact.

One of the most influential social exchange approaches is called the interdependence theory of relationships (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). This theory has had a strong impact on more recent social exchange theories concerning close relationships. Two important concepts have been at the centre of this theoretical approach, namely, outcomes and evaluations of outcomes. According to the interdependence theory, the outcomes of a continuing relationship could be explained in terms of rewards received and costs incurred by the partner. A reward could be anything that is considered as beneficial by an actor, and generally associated with pleasure. A cost could be defined as anything non-beneficial to the interest of actor such as embarrassment, anxiety, or pain (Klein & White, 1996). Magnitudes of experienced rewards by an individual in a relationship vary depending on the individual's needs and values, and how well these are in congruence with the partner's performance.

As far as evaluations of outcomes are concerned, Thibaut and Kelley (1959) identified two types of evaluation levels of outcomes, namely, 'the personal comparison level of outcomes' and 'the comparison level for alternatives'. The personal comparison level of outcomes referred to the quality of outcomes that a member of the dyad believes she /he

should have had. Depending on either his/her own experiences, or observation of others, a person would develop evaluation criteria for his/her relationship over rewards and costs. If the rewards outweighed the costs according to the standard comparison level, the relationship was considered satisfactory or vice versa.

On the other hand, a comparison level for alternatives was the lowest level of outcomes that one could have a chance to obtain from outside of the relationship. It works in a similar way to that of the comparison level. A person in a relationship would take account of the other positions available to himself/herself outside the relationship. These positions were evaluated in terms of rewards and costs. As long as the balance of outcomes was in favour of the ongoing relationship, alternative opportunities would remain unattractive and the given person would stay in an ongoing relationship. Hence, it could be said that a person would leave or stay in a relationship depending upon the balance of outcomes between ongoing relationships and alternative opportunities as far as the interdependence theory was concerned.

In recent years there have been developments in the area of the interdependence theory (see Rusbult, 1983). Rusbult (1980,1983) was interested in three aspects of relationships, namely, satisfaction, commitment and break up. She paid particular attention to the differentiation of these concepts. She posed three main questions in relation to these concepts:

- What caused partners in romantic involvement to be satisfied with their relationship?
- What caused individuals to be committed to maintaining their involvement?
- Why did some relationships persist over time whereas others ended?

In order to answer these questions, in both of her studies, Rusbult established a model called the “investment model” which simply extended the concepts used in the exchange theories, in particular the interdependence theory. She distinguished between satisfaction and the maintenance of relationships in the same way as the interdependent theory.

Thus, she formulated satisfaction as:

satisfaction = (rewards - cost) - comparison level,

While maintenance was defined as being equal to commitment, i.e.,

commitment = (satisfaction - quality of alternative) + investment.

According to this theory, commitment is the very essence of maintenance behaviour and satisfaction was one of the components of commitment. Thus, it could be said that the greater the satisfaction was in the relationship, the more commitment was expected to the relationship. However, for an increased commitment, low quality alternatives were essential. In addition, investment was introduced to the interdependence model as a new concept, to work together with 'quality of alternatives' and 'satisfaction' with regard to stay /leave behaviour. However, from the above summary, it could be construed that, other than the concept 'investment', the other concepts of the model were, in a way, the same as the interdependence model.

Regarding the above summary, Rusbult (1983) divided investment into two general categories, namely, intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic investments comprised those that were directly put into the relationship, while extrinsic investments were considered initially extraneous and they became a part of relationships, such as, mutual friends, shared memories or material possessions, activity/persons/objects/events uniquely associated with the relationships (Rusbult, 1983). In order to be able to distinguish between 'rewards and costs' and 'investment', she suggested that while rewards and costs could be separable from the relationship itself without being costly at any time, investments were impossible to separate once invested. With separation, individuals lost whatever they had invested in the relationship, such as time-shared and memorable places visited together.

Rusbult has tested the investment model in her studies both cross-sectionally and longitudinally (see Rusbult, 1980,1983). An experimental study to test the predictions of the investment model (Rusbult, 1980) was carried out with 82 males and 89 females. Different levels of investment (small, medium, large), costs (low, high) and alternative

qualities were manipulated using the role-play method. The main dependent variables, satisfaction and commitment, were measured using questionnaire items. Apart from the cost variable, manipulations of the other two variables (investment and alternative qualities) were significantly effective on commitment measures. Low cost levels led to a high level of satisfaction with the relationships as hypothesised. The results obtained from this study were supportive of the model.

In a 7-month's longitudinal study of romantic relationships of college students, Rusbult (1983) found out that increases in rewards led to increases in relationship satisfaction but changes in costs did not create significant changes in satisfaction. Likewise, increases in rewards caused greater degrees of commitment, whereas increases or decreases in costs did not affect commitment. Commitment increased along with increases in satisfaction and investment size, and decreased in alternative values.

Also, other exchange models are in existence. However, they will not be all covered here, since this chapter has only an introductory aim for the relationship stability theories.

2.4. The Contextual Model of Marital Interaction

The contextual model has been introduced by Bradbury and Fincham (1987, 1988, 1991) in order to expand the behavioural model and to embrace the affective and cognitive processes that accompany observable behaviour. The model accepted that marriage was enormously complex and requires many interrelated phenomena to be taken into account (Bradbury & Fincham, 1991). Therefore, it could not be understood by simply relying on the identification of a single class of related variables and the determination of their relations with marital quality. The model itself identified a small set of components that represents a multitude of variables and processes. All sets of components all together form a comprehensive understanding of how marriages worked or how marriages changed for better or worse.

According to the model, marital interaction followed a sequential order of actions. An example of these sequential actions is shown below.

Spouse behaviour → partner processing → partner behaviour → spouse processing → spouse behaviour.

According to this model, initially a spouse (hypothetically a wife) would engage in the *processing* of some *stimuli*. A stimulus could be an event in the environment or behaviour enacted by the other spouse in the interaction. The processing stage followed a few steps of actions beginning with perception of an event/behaviour. The perception of the event helped to form a representation of the event, which took place in the three dimensional processes. These three dimensions were:

- negative versus positive
- expected versus unexpected
- personally insignificant versus personally significant.

After the evaluation of the event on the grounds of these three dimensions, the spouse (wife) would act. For example, according to the extent the stimulus was judged as being negative, unexpected, and personally significant, the spouse (wife) could form a response that would be highly negative affectwise. At that point, attributional processes would be at work for the hypothetical spouse (wife) who would search for reasons for the stimulus, and would find and assign responsibility for it. According to the results she reached, she would find a few alternative responses and choose one of them. The chosen response would serve as a stimulus for the other partner (hypothetical husband) and then the other partner would start processing for this stimulus, and in the end would shape a behaviour. The whole process continued in this fashion repeatedly.

In the interaction process depicted above, there were two concepts that influenced the processing of responses to partner behaviour that deserve detailed explanation. These were *proximal context* and *distal context*. Proximal context comprised immediate feelings and thoughts. Immediate feelings and thoughts, prior to process any given behaviour, may

affect the features of subsequent behaviour of a spouse. For example, the spouse may have held specific memories of, or explanation for, behaviours enacted by the other spouse. Thus, it could be said that proximal context defined the subjective state of an actor just prior to a given partner's behaviour. On the contrary, distal *context* was related to long-term psychological variables that affected a spouse's processing of behaviour. Beliefs towards marriages (such as how a marriage should be), personality variables, memory, chronic mood states (e.g., depression), and information processing biases (e.g., egocentric bias) constructed a distal context that bore a direct relationship to the functioning of a given marital relationship.

According to the contextual model, proximal and distal variables work together in the interpretation and processing of relationship behaviour. However, distal context represented variables with stable characteristics that operated across the many relationship positions and proximal context delineated specific, rapidly changing thoughts and feelings that created by certain stimuli. The network of behaviour/event (environmental stimulus), behaviour processing, and distal and proximal contexts was all connected to another concept appraisal. Appraisals were made by spouses before and after their interactions. They were influenced by distal and proximal contexts and thus affected the processing of behaviour via those contexts (distal and proximal). Although the model included a wide range of variables to capture a comprehensive scope of marriage, there seemed to be a biased representation in favour of individual difference variables in empirical attempts made to support the model (e.g., Bradbury & Fincham, 1988; Kurdek, 1993).

Criticising the previous studies that focused on single constructs or denied interrelations among variables and oversimplified close relationships, Bradbury and Fincham (1988) conducted a study with 78 spouses. This study aimed to test the relationship between distal (femininity, relationship beliefs, masculinity) and proximal variables (responsibility and causal attributions), and marital satisfaction. They found that higher levels of femininity were related to higher levels of marital satisfaction, higher levels of

dysfunctional beliefs were related to lower levels of marital satisfaction, and less benign causal and responsibility attributions were associated with lower levels of marital satisfaction. They concluded that no evidence was obtained to assert that proximal elements mediated between distal elements and marital satisfaction. On the other hand, contextual and distal elements both accounted for marital satisfaction.

2.5. Gottman's Balance Model of Marriage

Gottman (1994) developed a theory that aimed to explain the marital interaction process, and the relationships between marital satisfaction and marital stability. The theory embraced behaviour, cognition, and physiological variables at the same time. He stated that his theory was influenced by the studies of a Swiss theoretical physicist, Roland Fivaz. Fivaz defined a set of variables to describe the behaviour of a wide class of systems. He named the set of variables P and Q variables. In Physics, P variables (flow variables) represented the equivalent of kinetic energy whereas Q variables (order variables) represented equivalent of potential energy. Gottman adapted P and Q variables into the marital interaction process. In this new context, P variables were defined "as the cumulative sum over time of positive minus negative behaviours" (p.333), and they were measured by RCISS² (Rapid Couples Interaction Coding System) graphs in Gottman's empirical studies. Negativity was balanced by the received positive behaviours. P variables (cumulative variables) carried a threshold point that influenced the way that perception variables play on the scene. Q variables were the perception variables measured by using rating dials, video-recalling procedures, and techniques such as thought listing. Q variables could represent wellbeing, in which cases $Q = +1$, or distress or non-wellbeing, in which case $Q = -1$. According to Gottman, when Q was a negative value it led to flooding variables, this in turn led to an isolation cascade in the relationship, and gradually to separation.

² This system is explained in the section for Interaction Coding Systems in marital problem solving.

In this theory, P and Q variables were the foundation of the explanation of a couple's trajectory of marriage. P variables can be translated into a daily rate of negative and positive behaviours and Q variables could be translated into perceptions of the marriage such as wellbeing, non-wellbeing, depending on the balance between negativity and positivity of behaviour in the P- space. Interacting with these two variable sets, there existed flooding and negative attributions of marriage, which were considered more stable and global thought. 'Negative attributions' and 'flooding' could have led to a 'distance and isolation cascade' and 'recasting the entire history of the marriage'. At the end of the process, there would be divorce.

According to Gottman's theory (1994), the balance between positive and negative behaviour could be achieved by three different kinds of couples who were able to stay together in their marriages. Gottman classified these couples as volatiles, conflict avoiders, and validating couples. These three groups were named collectively as regulated couples. On the other hand, he classified another two groups of couples, namely, hostile conflict engagers and hostile detached couples, both of whom were not able to continue in successful marriage. These two groups were named non-regulated couples and they could not achieve the required balance between positive and negative behaviour in their interactions.

Gottman organised his theory by relying on self-report, physiological, and interactional observation data resulting in a theory comprised of cognitive, physiological, and behavioural components. In order to collect observational data, laboratory observation methods were used. The couples discussed their salient problems and daily activities (not involving problems) in the laboratory. As well as the discussions, physiological aspects of behaviour were monitored and recorded using special equipment. Gottman's couple discussion data, which established foundations for his theory, were coded through three observational coding systems, MICS, CISS, and RCISS. Since these coding systems are described in Chapter 3, they will not be discussed here.

Gottman (1994) attached a great deal of importance to physiological variables in his theory of marital dissolution. He and his colleagues (Gottman & Krokoff, 1989; Levenson & Gottman, 1985) asserted that physiological variables were correlated with marital satisfaction over a period of time and that they predicted processes related to marital dissolution. The aforementioned physiological variables consisted of cardiac interbeat, activity, skin conductance, pulse transit, and pulse amplitude. In this model, physiological variables were thought to be one of the components of the core triad of balance, which comprised P-Space, Q-Space, and physiological responses. P-space was the positivity component (central idea of behavioural balance) of the triad, Q-Space was the perception of the wellbeing balanced against negative feelings, such as hurt, and physiological responses, which had buffering effects against arousal by soothing mechanisms. To summarise, along with the other two components, physiological variables had the potential for balance and worked with them bi-directionally.

The theory asserted that declining marital satisfaction led to considerations of dissolution, eventually separation and divorce. Gottman's model is called the cascade model of marital dissolution. It is considered that couples who were divorced were more likely to be separated and to have considered divorce before those who were not divorced. This assertion was supported by the empirical analysis of Gottman's data (1994).

2.6. Personality and Marital Success

The relationship between personality and marital success has attracted the interests of marriage scholars since the early studies of marriage (e.g., Terman, 1938). One group of researchers have invested their interest in similarities of personalities as far as the research related to personality and marriage is concerned (see, for example, Eysenck & Wakefield, 1981; Bentler & Newcomb, 1978). According to this group of researchers, people seem to be attracted to others who had similar characteristics, such as intelligence, attitudes and psychopathology. Furthermore, personality similarities have been seen as indices of relationship compatibility. Also, they stated that unstably married couples are

less similar in their personality characteristics than stably married ones. Several researches supporting these ideas will be reviewed in the following.

Eysenck and Wakefield (1981) conducted a cross sectional study to test the role of personality variables in marital satisfaction by using 566 married couples. Although the dependent variable is marital satisfaction rather than marital stability, it is still relevant for our research review to include their study, since there is a link between marital satisfaction and divorce (Gottman, 1994; Karney & Bradbury, 1995). In their study, marital satisfaction was measured by the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test along with additional items prepared by the researcher. Personality variables were assessed by the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire which provides scores for personality dimensions; extroversion, neuroticism, psychoticism and lie scales. Extroversion indicates sociability; neuroticism is related to worries and fear; and psychoticism indicates coldness, hostility and egocentricity (Eysenck & Wakefield, 1981). Correlational statistical analysis was carried out to reveal the relationship between wives and husbands' marital satisfaction with a result that was somewhat high giving an r value of 0.73. Effects of personality similarities on marital satisfaction were analysed through regression analysis. The results supported the hypothesis that high similarity is related to high marital satisfaction. For psychoticism, similarity between couples' scores at the lower levels produced higher marital satisfaction levels. For neuroticism, similar results were found; in lower levels of neuroticism, spouses with similar levels of neuroticism scores achieved higher levels of marital satisfaction scores.

Another study, carried out longitudinally by Bentler and Newcomb (1978) considered similarity in relation to marital compatibility. The study followed 77 newlywed couples over four years. At the end of the research, 24 couples had already been separated. The collected data included self-report measures of personality traits and eight demographic features. According to the results obtained, the married couples were more alike than the divorced couples in terms of age, attractiveness, interests in hobbies, and extroversion. As

a conclusion, the findings for similarity variables between couples could help marital adjustment by providing a less conflicting and a more rewarding atmosphere.

Another important focus has been on the pathology of personality and marital success. It has been predicted that people with high levels of neuroticism have a high risk of being unsuccessful in marriage. In an early study, Zaleski and Galkowska (1978) compared thirty happily and thirty unhappily married couples in an attempt to test the hypothesis that emotional instability had deleterious effects on marital satisfaction. Marital satisfaction was measured using the Galkowska Marriage Success Scale and personality factors were assessed through MMPI. The analysis of the data indicated that there were no differences between happy and unhappy couples with respect to extroversion scores. However, happy and unhappy couples differed regarding neuroticism scores. Unhappy couples clearly had higher neuroticism scores than the happy couples. In addition, happily married females had higher neuroticism level than males, on the other hand, unhappily married females and males did not differ in their neuroticism scores.

Eysenck and Wakefield's study (1981), which is reported above, also tested the relationship between personality traits and marital satisfaction. The study indicated that lower levels of psychoticism were associated with higher levels of marital satisfaction. High scores of psychoticism affected both scorer and spouse's marital satisfaction in a negative way. In the same fashion, high neuroticism scores of one partner lowered the level of both spouse's marital satisfaction. In conclusion, according to Eysenck and Wakefield's study, neuroticism and psychoticism are both detrimental to marital satisfaction.

A classic longitudinal study was carried out by Kelly and Conley (1987) investigating the relationship between marital stability (divorce or remaining in marriage) and personality variables. The study followed a panel of 300 couples from the premarital stage into marriage over a period of 50 years. Out of the 300, 22 couples separated during their engagement and 50 couples divorced during the course of the study. Engaged couples

were recruited voluntarily through newspapers and other advertisements for the study sample. The data were obtained from spouses and their acquaintances in three different times (1935-38; 1954-55; 1980-81). Self-report measures of attitudes and social background were obtained and personality measures were gathered premaritally from acquaintance ratings. Of the two major criterion variables, marital satisfaction had been measured on the annual reports for 1936-41 using a 7 point, single item scale (from extremely happy to unhappy), and in both follow-ups (1954-1955; 1980-1981) using a four item scale. The other criterion variable, marital stability, was gathered about marital status and included couples who remained married throughout the period of the study, and those who divorced. For the analysis of the data, the discriminant function was used. Four groups of subjects, still married, early divorced, late divorced, and partners with deceased spouses, were compared in terms of marital satisfaction and personality trait ratings. The analysis of the data revealed that males who divorced early showed higher levels of neuroticism, lower levels of impulse control and conventionalism in their attitudes, and more sexual experience, compared to the males who remained married. The males who divorced late in life were found to have higher levels of neuroticism, social extroversion, premarital sexual experience, ties to their side of family, and lower levels of agreeableness. Females who divorced early differed from the stably married females, having higher levels of neuroticism; being more tense, less close, and having more unstable families of origin; being less puritanical in their attitudes; and having more premarital sexual experience. On the other hand, females who divorced late in life differed from their stably married, same sex counterparts only in neuroticism (having high levels of neuroticism), sexual attitudes and behaviour (showing high levels of premarital sexual experience, being less puritanical in their attitudes).

In a recent study Russell and Wells (1994) have explored the three personality attributes of each partner and the marital quality of each partner using a more complicated statistical analysis in order to establish a causal link between two sets of variables, personality and marital quality. They predicted that personality had an impact on marital quality rather than vice versa. The sample consisted of 94 couples, whom a revised version of the

Eysenck Personality Questionnaire, and a research version of a marriage questionnaire were administered. The data were analysed through LISREL VII and PRELIS. From the analysis of the data, they concluded that there were no sex differences in the findings. The husbands' neuroticism level correlated with their level of marital quality in a negative way, as did wives' neuroticism with their marital quality. However, they maintained that the relationship between marital quality and neuroticism was indirect, reasoning that one spouse's neuroticism correlated with their partner's and that a neurotic person affected their partners' marital quality and hence their own marital quality. To explain further, one spouse's neuroticism had a detrimental effect on the other spouse's marital quality by influencing his/her experience of marriage, not because a person's neuroticism depressed their own level of marital quality. Hence, the study contributed to the argument that neuroticism is related to marital outcome.

2.7. Attempts to Integrate Variables from Multiple Approaches

A few studies have explored the variables derived from different approaches to divorce in an attempt to obtain comparison or integration. One of them was a longitudinal study carried out by Kurdek (1993) with 222 newlywed stable couples and 64 unstable couples over 5 years. In this study, the data was collected in relation to four approaches namely, individual differences, demographic, interdependence, and spousal discrepancy approaches. In the case of individual difference variables, neuroticism, extroversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, dysfunctional beliefs about relationships, and satisfaction with social support were measured. For demographic risk variables, the sample provided information about age, gender, race, education, and annual income. For the interdependence approaches, the variables were marital satisfaction; faith in the marriage; value of autonomy and value of attachment; and intrinsic, instrumental and external motives to remain in the marriage. Variables from the spousal discrepancy approach gave absolute values of both the difference between spouses' individual differences scores and the differences between their interdependence scores. The results of the statistical analysis for the study showed that the four approaches successfully

predicted the relationship status at the end of the study with the demographic approach best classified the couples as stable and unstable in the first year and interdependence approach best classified the couples as stable and unstable in time sampled scores (for 4 follow-up scores).

Another study was conducted by Karney and Bradbury (1997) to investigate two models of marriage, namely, interpersonal model (couples interaction) and intrapersonal model (personality variable, neuroticism), in terms of the trajectory of marriage. The sample of 60 couples was recruited through advertisement and sub-selection. The data, comprising 8 waves of measurement, were collected at six-month intervals over four years. The measures included the Marital Adjustment Test, (Locke & Wallace, 1959), the Quality of Marriage Index (Norton, 1983), the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (Shumm et al, 1983), and the Semantic Differential (Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1957) for marital satisfaction; and for neuroticism, the Neuroticism Scale of the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1978). In addition, interactional data (time 1) was collected from the couples during a problem solving session. The interactional data were coded through the Verbal Coding Scheme (Sillars, 1982). The results obtained from the study revealed that neuroticism was more strongly related to the initial level of satisfaction than the change in satisfaction over time. On the other hand, the interpersonal model variable was found to be more strongly related to changing levels of marital satisfaction over time, in the absence of the initial level of satisfaction.

2.8. Conclusion

This chapter has sought to give a brief review of the main approaches in understanding the phenomenon of divorce. Among those approaches, social exchange theories have been widely employed by researchers, because a wide range of variables is embraced by this approach. However, this approach has a shortcoming in explaining the process of change from satisfactory relation to the dissolution of the relationship (see Karney & Bradbury, 1995). It has also been criticised for being tautological in a way that the

constructs are similar to the phenomenon being explained (Cramer, 1996). As mentioned previously, since divorce is a rather complex phenomenon, it is difficult to explain divorce by only one group of variables (or approach). Therefore, there has been a tendency towards comprehensive models that cover variables from multiple approaches in recent years (see, for example, Bradbury & Fincham, 1987, 1988, 1991; Gottman 1994).

Hence, we do not particularly depend on one of the given approaches. Instead, because of the explanatory characteristics of our research, we will discuss our results by taking the findings of the empirical studies related to the given approaches into account. Specifically, we utilised the studies that investigate what people see as being the causes of the break-up of their marital relationship and the studies that concern the ways or styles of problem solving in marriage. In the following chapter, we will review these studies in detail.

CHAPTER 3

Literature Review of Marital Problems and Problem Solving

3.1. Introduction

The relationship between marital problems and divorce has long been a principal concern of marriage researchers and clinicians in relation to prevention, intervention and merely explanation efforts. The studies in this field mainly attempt a) to explore the difference between intact marriage and dissolved marriages in terms of problems encountered during marriages and b) the styles of problem solving in which those problems can be eliminated.

Investigations that aimed to identify marital problems that caused divorce started just after the first half of 20th century. The first well-known published study on this issue was conducted by Goode (1956), which explored divorced females' evaluations on the causes of their marital dissolutions. Since Goode's study, a well established body of literature has accumulated and these studies have improved on study design and sampling issues, such as, including both sexes, various socio-economical classes, different marital statuses, and employing longitudinal designs (e.g., Amato & Rogers, 1997; Eells & O' Flaherty, 1996; Kitson & Sussman, 1982).

On the other hand, the studies regarding problem solving styles in marital interaction has emerged as an important topic in the last three decades¹. These studies established a link between positive marital interaction and stability (or divorce) and tried to foresee marital

¹ *Problem solving* and *conflict resolution* are used interchangeably in most studies. In this study, although *problem solving styles* are used in general, *conflict resolution styles* are also used

success from the outset of the relationship (see, for instance, Kurdek, 1995; Markman 1979, 1981, 1984; Noller, Feeney, Bonnell, & Callan, 1994).

This chapter aims to give an overview of literature in relation to marital problems and the ways of their solutions. In the next section, we gave a literature survey of marital problems that have been identified as to be connected with marital stability. We also give an overview of literature survey regarding to the styles of problem solving with respect to marital success (marital quality and stability).

3.2. Marital Problems

Several researchers have stated that it is difficult to define the causes of divorce by depending simply on retrospective accounts given by the divorcees (e.g., Cramer, 1998; Goode, 1956). Firstly, complaints made against a partner can be questionable on the ground of their closeness to reality. This means that they could be different from the actual situation. Secondly, complaints or causes given for divorce in retrospective accounts could be the ones “made on the spot” during the interviews (Cramer, 1998). However, according to Goode (1956), there was at least “felt truth” in these complaints for the participant, and this might affect the behaviour of the complainer. It could still be possible to learn from the divorcees’ retrospective accounts by describing them systematically. As Goode put it: “Once we could see the problem as the respondent viewed it, we would have some grasp of her position and complaint when the divorce occurred and thus some understanding of why she acted as she did later.”

In his classic study, Goode (1956) asked participants retrospectively ‘what caused their divorce’? His study covered 425 randomly chosen urban divorced women, who were between the ages of 20 and 38, who had been divorced for 2 to 26 months. He classified the answers given to the aforementioned question into 11 categories: 1. non support (33%), 2. authority (32%), 3. complex (31%), 4. drinking (30%), 5. personality (29%), 6. home life (25%), 7. values (21%), 8. consumption (20%), 9. triangle (16%), 10.

miscellaneous (12%), 11. desertion (8%), 11. relatives (4%). Goode drew attention to the differences in complaints according to the respondents' urban or rural background, their social class, and racial origins. The respondents from urban area (31%) were more likely to complain about personality problems than those from rural area (21%). However, the respondents from rural origins were found to be more likely to complain of "authority" than was the case for urban participants (38% versus 30%). In terms of race "desertion was the most common among the respondents of black origin than those of white origin (14% versus 7%). Overall he did not find great differences between races.

Levinger (1966) compared marital complaints of husbands versus wives, and of middle-versus working-class marriages by using a sample of 600 couples applying for divorce. He used marriage counsellors' records for analysis, and the complaints were coded into one of the above listed 12 categories. The main finding of this study was the difference in the number and nature of complaints between husband and wife. In relation to the frequency of problems, the wives complained twice as much than did the husbands in over all problem frequency. Concerning the nature of complaints, physical abuse was the most frequent reason for the wives to complain (11 times more frequently than the men). The second most frequent difficulty for the wives were financial problems and drinking, with verbal abuse being the third most common. Wives complained about neglect of the home and children, lack of love, and mental cruelty, but these complaints were not dramatically different in the ratio to the husbands'. On the other hand, husbands complained exceedingly high on in-law related problems by a ratio of 5 to 2, and sexual incompatibility by a ratio of 3 to 2.

In this study, comparisons also were made between middle class and working class pairs. In terms of mean complaints there was not any difference between the two groups, however, working-class wives tended to complain about economical problems, physical abuse, and drinking. On the other hand, middle-class wives were significantly more likely to complain about lack of love, infidelity and excessive demands. For the middle-class husbands, lack of love was a significant concern, however, for working-class husbands,

infidelity was a significantly important problem. It was concluded that, in general, middle-class spouses were more concerned with psychological problems and interactional issues, while working-class spouses perceived financial problems more important.

It should be noted that Levinger's study investigated data that were collected as a part of court proceedings. Therefore, it could be influenced by efforts to give admissible reasons for the court to ease divorce process (Kitson, Babri, & Roach, 1985).

Utilising Goode's coding system, Kitson and Sussman (1982) carried out research with 322 divorcing men and women from Cleveland. All were from middle class and working class backgrounds. The respondents' age ranged from 17 to 65, of whom 73 % were white and 26 % were black. The purposes of the study were to discover the differences between the complaints of men and women; to explore the change in complaints from a historical dimension; and to establish the link between marital complaints and their impact on the respondents' mental health. To detect the answers for the marital complaints they simply asked the respondents "What caused your marriage to break-up?" The answers were coded in two separate coding systems, one of which was used in Goode's study and the other was particularly developed for this study (Cleveland code) to be able to make finer distinctions between the complaints and to do further analysis. Analysis of the data with Goode's codes indicated that females make significantly more complaints than males. Although it was not statistically significant, similar results were found with the Cleveland code. In relation to the types of complaints mentioned using Goode's code, it was reported that women complained significantly more about personality, authority, drinking, being out with the boys, sexual problems, non-support, the husband's infidelity, and money management. On the other hand, males were significantly more likely to make complaints about the wife's infidelity and relatives than females.

The researchers reported that, in the Cleveland marital complaint code, there was more variation in the ranking by sex than the Goode's code. For instance, while for men complaint about roles was the second most common one, females ranked it as the eighth.²

² Such as appropriate gender roles for females and males, and authoritarian tendencies of spouse or paternalistic/maternalistic spouse.

For women, on the other hand, the second most frequent complaint issue was internal gender role conflict, which was defined as conflict within the individual as to independence, desires for freedom, a life of one's own. In conclusion, although the results showed the difference between two coding systems used, overall, the study supported the gender differences thesis, which was supported by both Goode (1956) and Levinger (1966).

Kitson and Sussman (1982) also revealed that the complaints had changed across time since Goode's study in 1956. They concluded that the most frequent complaints (non-support, authority, being out with the boys, and drinking) in Goode's study of 1956 were not reported as frequent as in their study. Instead, personality, home life, authority, and values were more frequent in their sample. In sum, this study drew attention to the gender, and historical context, and differences in the marital complaints leading to divorce. Furthermore, it acknowledges the sampling differences between the studies, and avoids establishing causal link between marital problems and divorce, accepting the limitations of retrospective accounts.

Other than the connections that have been established between marital problems and gender, and changes in historical background, some studies have focused on marital problems and their change depending on the marriage's own history. In this context, Storaasli & Markman (1990) studied relationship problems from the perspective of stage theories of family development. Acknowledging that family problems were inevitably present in marriage, these scholars aimed at: (a) discovering the change longitudinally from the start of marriage, (b) identifying the differences experienced in marital problems in terms of gender, and (c) revealing the relationship between satisfaction and marital problems. In order to achieve these tasks, they recruited 131 predominantly white couples who were either engaged or planning to marry for the first time. For the data collection, two measures were administered, namely, the Knox Relationship Problem Inventory (Knox, 1970) and the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (Locke & Wallace, 1959). The Relationship Problem Inventory (RPI) assesses the perceived intensity of the problems in the areas of money, communication, relatives, sex, religion, recreation,

friends, drugs and alcohol, children, and jealousy. Subjects are expected to rate every item between 0 (no problem) and 100 (severe problem). In the Marital Adjustment Test (MAT), there are 15 items measuring marital satisfaction. The data collection process included six waves of data starting with pre-assessment (premarital level), 12-week follow-up; 1.5 year follow-up; 3-year follow-up; 4-year follow-up; and 5-year follow-up. Each time two measures of data collection were administered to the participants of the study. Statistical analysis of the data showed that the couples' problems had changed over time depending on the stages the couples passed through. For example, according to the results of pooled inferential analysis, while relatives, jealousy, friends, and religion were significantly more intense areas of problems in the premarital stage, they were found significantly less intense in the marital stage. The findings showed a shift from the exterior problem areas (for example, relatives, friends, and jealousy) towards interior problem areas (for example, communication and sex) in line with the depth of relationship. Moreover, the study found some differences between men's and women's problems. Although there was a moderate level of agreement between spouses over the problem areas, men found relatives, jealousy, and friends as more intense problems in the premarital stage while women found communication, sex, and recreational issues as more intense problems in the early stages of marriage. In addition, the findings indicated that there was also continuity in some areas of problems. For example, money, perceived as problem for 90% of couples at every stages of the data collection and also alcohol/drugs, and children remained as a problem across all the stages.

In conclusion, Storaasli and Markman's study (1990) has several advantages. First of all, it is one of the few studies that studied marital problems longitudinally. Secondly, it has a considerably large sample size. Thirdly, the data collection included the premarital stage. However, it has a controversial data set (Kurdek, 1994b) since contents of the two measurements, namely, the Knox Relationship Problem Inventory and the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test, utilised in this study are likely to overlap. Regarding this, our study is in common with the Storaasli and Markman study in a way that both studies concern with premarital and marital problems. On the other hand, our study differs from

Storaasli and Markman study in a sense that they use marital satisfaction as a variable, while we concern with the marital stability.

Gigy and Kelly (1992) administered a 27-item checklist to 437 divorcing individuals to study self report reasons for divorce in the middle years of 1980's as a part of the Divorce and Mediation Project. Their sample included 207 male and 230 females from a wide range of ages (21-78), with 13.3 years of average marriage duration and various socio-economical backgrounds. They found that the most common reasons for divorce for the males and females were loss of closeness, not being loved, sexual intimacy, and life differences. On the other hand, extramarital affairs, conflict over children, substance abuse, and violence were the less common reasons given for divorce by both sexes. Their results also indicated to statistically significant differences between females, and males both in number of reasons and the nature of the reasons for given divorce. According to the results, females were more likely than males to give reasons regarding not feeling loved, spouse' inadequacy to meet major needs, feeling put down or belittled, role conflicts, spouse's unreliability, spouse's extramarital affairs and spouse's alcohol abuse. However, males were more likely to cite reasons in relation to their own alcohol abuse and their own extramarital affairs. Furthermore, the number of reasons for divorce differed according to job and education level among the females. Females who worked for a part time job reported fewer reasons than the females who were either in full time jobs or who did not work at all. Also, females with a level of less education complained more than the females with higher education levels.

Investing extra importance in marital communication problems, Eells and O'Flaherty (1996) conducted research with a sample that consisted of 36.1% currently married, 2.0% separated, 48.8% divorced, and 13.0% widowed to investigate their marital problems. A 65-item inventory with five major sections, namely, lifestyle issues, finances, religion, marital relations and family relations, was applied to the sample. Individuals were instructed to rate from between one (not a problem) and seven (definite problem) on a seven-point scale for each item. This study found that communication related items were

considered as problems among the individuals irrespective of gender and marital status. Furthermore, according to marital status categories, the problem differed in intensity, for example, compared to currently married individuals, separated and divorced respondents found the problem as significantly more severe. In addition, communication items were seen as more problematic among the higher-class individuals especially among the currently married women. It was concluded that the higher the similarity between the coding and decoding of messages was among the individuals (i.e., currently married) the less likely they were to experience severe relationship problems.

This study showed gender differences among the respondents as well. The females perceived more problems than the males. Also, females tended to perceive that the males were responsible for marital problems, however, the males were more likely to see themselves as being mutually responsible. Finally, the divorced respondents were more likely to rate more problem areas than the married respondents.

Eells and O'Flaherty's (1996) study included married respondents in the sample, which gives it extra credit since most studies in this area have been carried out mainly with divorced individuals. In this way, the study was able to identify whether any differences existed in the classes of problems and in the severity of problems between divorced and married people.

One important inspiration to study premarital or marital problems of couples comes from prevention studies. These studies aim at young couples who are planning to marry and provide premarital counselling to prevent possible marital dysfunction. Boisvert et al. (1995) conducted a research into the perception of marital problems among 156 young adults (18-25 years) who were recruited through randomly chosen telephone numbers from directories in the Montreal and Quebec City regions. Among the participants only 13 were married, 21 were cohabiting, and the rest were single. Data were collected using the Perception of Marital Problems Questionnaire, which was originally developed by Geiss and O'Leary (1981). The questionnaire was translated into French and some

relevant items were added. All together 37 themes in three major sections were included in the questionnaire. Every section had different instructions in order to discover the frequency of the problems among the adults, how damaging the problems were, and the ten most damaging problem areas. This study found that jealousy was perceived most likely to apply to participants and communication problems were perceived to be the most frequent problems for the couples. Physical violence was perceived as the most harmful relationship problem, followed by incest, jealousy, family budget and finances, and problem behaviours other than alcoholism.

Kurdek (1994b) investigated the relation between relationship satisfaction and content of conflict areas longitudinally. His subjects comprised 75 gay, 51 lesbian, and 108 heterosexual couples. The heterosexual couples were married without children and lived together a mean of 57.34 months. The data consisted of demographic variables, areas of conflict, and marital satisfaction. In the areas of conflict, twenty relationship problem issues were adapted from Bloom, Hodges, and Caldwell (1983), and Spanier (1976). These twenty issues were presented on a five-degree scale ranging from one (never) to five (always) to measure how frequently subjects and their partners argued on each issue. Relational satisfaction was measured by three-item Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (Schumm et al., 1986). The 20 conflictual issues were collapsed into six groups that represented the areas of conflict relating to power (e.g., being excessively critical), social issues (e.g., political views), personal flaws (e.g., excessive drinking), distrust (e.g., lying, deceiving), intimacy (e.g., sex), personal distance (e.g., job or school commitments). The results obtained from the study showed that frequent conflict regarding power, social issues, personal flaws, distrust, intimacy, and personal distance were negatively related to each partner's concurrent relationship satisfaction. Regarding the rank order, intimacy and power were rated as the top problem areas for each type of couples. In addition, the study found that some areas of conflict predicted future relationship satisfaction more than others. For example, although intimacy was found to be related to concurrent satisfaction, it did not predict relationship satisfaction one year later. On the other hand, frequent arguing regarding power predicted the future satisfaction. Although the study included

gay and lesbian couples, the topic is highly related to our study. Therefore, we considered it as relevant for this review, since our study also concerns with the problem domains. Furthermore, heterosexual and gay/lesbian couples did not differ in the frequency of conflict in any areas although the area of conflict tended to differ among heterosexual, same sex couples. Overall, this study has several characteristics worth mentioning. Firstly, it is a prospective longitudinal work studying relationship problems rather than the more widely studied ways of problem solving. Secondly, it employed couples who were established in their relationships. Finally, it paid attention to the overlap in content between measurement instruments regarding relationship conflict and relationship adjustment.

Kincaid and Cadwell (1995) investigated 58 maritally separated individuals on the causes, coping and consequences of the separation. Three variables were used for the comparisons; gender, initiator status, and the length of separation. It was reported that participants identified a mean of 15.6 factors as being influential on making the decision of separation. Among them communication difficulties were reported as the most important precipitating event, emotional abuse and lack of love comes afterwards. For the least precipitating factors, physical illness, new school/job, and in-law troubles were identified by the subjects. In contrast to some other studies' findings, no difference emerged between the sexes in terms of the number of problems expressed by the subjects. However, women were found to be significantly higher in reporting "desire for change" as a precipitating event.

Vangelisti and Huston (1994) investigated the domains of marriage in relation to marital satisfaction. They identified eight domains: communication, influence, sex, own leisure, division of household tasks, time spent together, network, and finances in this study. After identifying these domains, they pursued a two-year longitudinal study with newlywed couples ascertaining their satisfaction within domains. The sample was initially recruited thorough governmental marriage records and included 168 couples from mainly working class background. The data collection included three phases of interviews. For

the first phase of data collection, the couples who participated in the study were interviewed after three months of their marriage. Second and third phases of interviews took place shortly after their second and third wedding anniversaries. The data were analysed cross-sectionally and longitudinally. Related to results of cross-sectional data, interpersonal domains (i.e., time spent together, communication) of marriage were found most consistently related to spouses' evaluation of their marital satisfaction. For example, either spouse's evaluation of communication was particularly related to their overall marital satisfaction level for the second year and third year. For wives, time spent together and network relationships were associated with marital satisfaction for the first year of the marriage. Furthermore, along with communication, female satisfaction with sex was related to their overall marital satisfaction in the second year of the marriage. Likewise, wives' overall satisfaction with marriage was associated with their satisfaction with their influence over their husbands for the third year of marriage. For the husbands, none of the marital domains assessed by the study were related to their marital satisfaction in the first year of the marriage. However, in the second year, together with communication, higher satisfaction levels with influence over the wife were related to male marital satisfaction. In summary, satisfaction with communication appeared to be an important indicator of marital satisfaction for both spouses in the cross-sectional examination.

According to longitudinal analysis of Vangelisti and Huston's study (1994), the most striking finding was that wives' marital satisfaction over the first two years was connected to the interaction variables, more specifically the variable of influence. Overall, longitudinal and cross-sectional analysis of this study provided different results. For example, both husbands' and wives' assessments of communication were related to their satisfaction during the second and third years of their marriage, but, neither spouse's ratings of communication predicted changes in their marital satisfaction over time. In addition, for both spouses, dissatisfaction with influence on making joint decisions appeared to be linked to low levels of marital satisfaction. Although this study was concerned with content overlap of the measurement, it did not check the domains'

relationship with each other. Therefore, it was criticised for its methodology by Kurdek (see Kurdek 1994b). Our study differs from Vangelisti and Huston's study in such a way that they examined the relationship between marital domains and marital satisfaction only, while we look at the relationship between premarital and marital problem domains and divorce.

Some researchers had interests in establishing links between structural causes and perceived causes of divorce assuming that certain structural variables (or conditions) work through promoting certain kinds of complaints leading divorce (e.g., Burns, 1984; Amato & Rogers, 1997). Burns investigated perceived causes of marital breakdown and a number of demographic/structural variables (sex, age at marriage, perceived onset of breakdown, socio-economical state, and religion) with 335 divorced and separated men and women in Australia. In this study, the data was collected through a checklist based on Goode's list (1956). With respect to the results obtained from this study, most respondents reported multiple causes for marital dissolution and the most frequently cited causes were sexual incompatibility, lack of communication, husband's lack of time at home, financial reasons, and husband's association with another women. The results also indicated that sex differences on the frequency of certain perceived causes of divorce. Wives nominated husband's lack of time at home, husband's adultery, drinking, cruelty, housing and financial problems more frequently than husbands. On the other hand, husbands complained more about wife's adultery and sexual incompatibility than wives. In relation to the relationship between structural variables and perceived reasons for divorce, she reported that one or more perceived reasons for marital dissolution were associated with sex of respondent, socio-economical states, both sides' religious affiliation, age at marriage, parity of marriage, parental approval, parental marital status, length of premarital acquaintance, marriage duration and number of children.

Another study (Amato & Rogers, 1997) also investigated the interaction between structural variables and marital problems led to divorce.

Although quite a number of studies have researched early marriage problem solving and marital success, there have been a few studies that attempted to establish a link between premarital problems and marital success. Thornes and Collard (1979) were interested in premarital break-up due to conflict between couples. They simply asked informants whether they had difficulties serious enough to cause them to split up or to come to the point of splitting up during their courtship. It was considered that the number of times couples split up before marriage was an index of on-going unresolved conflict. Twenty nine percent of divorcees and 19 % of the continued married group in their sample related such problems. However, this research did not detail the problem areas since it was not main concern for the study to discover premarital problems and their link to the marital stability.

Similarly, Hayes, Stinnett, and DeFrain (1980) carried out a study to examine middle years of marriage and divorce in order to gain insight into marital failure and marital success. They reported that 15 % of 138 men and women divorcees perceived their marriage was wrong from the beginning. However, there is no detailed information about the results and is no married group with which to make a comparison in the given study. In addition, we do not know which questions were asked the divorcees to obtain this information.

3.3. Problem Solving in Marriage

Although research on marriage started in the 1930s, the area of marital interaction has become popular in the last three decades. Marital theorists, who carried out research in this area, (see, for example, Christensen & Shenk 1991) emphasised communication as a central aspect in marital discord. Deficiency in communication skills, in particular problem solving behaviour has been perceived as a main reason creating marital distress (Gottman and Krokoff, 1989). It is believed that when the couples are not able to maintain a mutual, constructive, problem solving style to inevitable conflicts that arises between them, distress will build up in the marriage. When the negative feelings build up,

they lead to destructive behaviours and eventually erosion in some aspects of the marital quality (Markman, Renick, Floyd, Stanley, & Clements, 1993). As a result, one can say that mutual behaviours during problem solving discussions are essential as far as marital quality is concerned, since rewarding or positive behaviours provide a global evaluation of marital well-being while negative or punishing behaviours do not (Markman, 1981). Over time, negative and positive experiences obtained from daily interactions of marriage accumulate and influence spouses' perceived marital quality (Gottman, 1990, 1994).

In the next section, literature related to problem solving is reviewed. Since it is beyond the scope of this study to review all the literature in this area, the focus is mainly on the key studies.

3.3.1. Theoretical Background to Problem Solving

Interactional behaviours have been studied from several different theoretical perspectives (Schaap, Buunk, & Kerkstra, 1988). Among these the most influential theoretical approaches are social exchange and social learning perspectives. Social learning perspective introduces learning principles to marital interaction. According to this perspective behaviours are learned through reinforcement and modelling, and the different conditions of learning in childhood create different characteristic behaviours in adult individuals. Regarding marital interaction, spouses bring early experiences and social skills into their marital interactions and create either harmonious or a distressed marriage. Two core concepts, namely, *coercion* and *reciprocity* (Patterson & Reid, 1970), are at the heart of this theoretical perspective. According to Patterson and Reid, reciprocity is a dyadic interaction, which is equally reinforced by each person. In reciprocity, both aversive and positive consequences are exchanged in a balanced level. In terms of marriage, non-distressed couples are the ones who supposedly have more positive give and take than those who have more aversive give and take. On the other hand, coercion indicates an interaction in which one party's aversive behaviour is reinforced by the other party's compliance. To quote from Patterson and Reid:

“ ... person A interacts with B and A emits a mand. Typically, the reinforcer for a mand, or command, is compliance (Skinner, 1957). The behaviour of the person who complies is maintained by positive reinforcers supplied by the person who emitted the mand.” (p. 136.)

In terms of marital relationships, verbally and physically abusive behaviour of spouses would be explained by implementing this concept. For example, nagging would be an aversive stimulant, which leads to the other partner's compliance. Although the concept of coercion has not been used as often since other concepts substitute it, such as demand-withdrawal, compliance gaining, reinforcement, these constructs have been widely applied to marital interaction (Schaap et al., 1988).

The hypotheses with respect to coercion and reciprocity were tested with findings of a well-known study (Patterson & Reid, 1970). In this study, the families that applied to the University of Oregon Psychology Clinic for psychological help were used for data collection. These families were visited in their homes, while all the members were present to collect observational data at similar hours each day. The data were collected by the well-trained one or two observers four hours a week and one hour each given day when the families were in the kitchen and adjoining room during interaction. Operationally defined 21 behaviours such as silly, play, yell, talk, social activity, were used to code the interactional behaviours of family members. The observed behaviours were rated on the occurrences. Statistical results were supportive for the speculations mentioned earlier on the basis of reciprocity and coercion constructs.

Another highly influential theoretical perspective in problem solving literature is the social exchange theory.³ This perspective shares some similarities with social learning theory, for example, both perspectives embrace reciprocal features of human behaviours, and believes that human behaviours can be directed through rewards and punishment (cost). This may have eased the combination of these two approaches in practice (Gottman, 1979).

³ The main concepts of this theory are discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

According to social exchange theory, individuals in dyadic relationships aim to maximise their gains and minimise their losses. As well as maximising benefits and minimising costs, another premise of the social exchange perspective is that individuals who are involved in a relationship are driven to balance the inputs with the outcomes (also known as equity and equality). While equity is referring to the balance between rewards and costs in terms of what the individual receives, equality refers to the balance between partners' rewards and costs. Therefore, one might think that during the interaction processes, behaviours that lead to negative feelings in the individuals of the dyad might serve as costs. In contrast, behaviours that induce positive feelings could behave as rewards during problem solving occasions in married dyad.

Gottman (1979) pointed out that social exchange theory provided a cognitive base for marital interaction studies. For example, the theory served as a theoretical framework to measure couples own feelings and assessments about their marital interactions. Talk table and impact rating studies of marital problem solving depended on the premises of social exchange theory (behavioural exchange). In addition, Schaap et al. (1988) stated that self-report studies of marital relation take their roots from mainly social exchange theory.

3.3.2. Classification of the Problem Solving Behaviours

The classification of interactive behaviours of couples during problem solving have occurred from several point of views. One of the most common typifications has been done according to the effects of interaction on the relationship. According to its effect on the relationship, interactions during-problem solving could be seen constructive or destructive. However, there is not unanimity over the conceptualisation of destructiveness and constructiveness. Constructiveness is referred to as positivity or functionality, destructiveness is referred to as negativity or dysfunctionality in some research papers (e.g., Noller et al., 1994; Gottman, 1979). Barry (1970) reviewed early classifications of conflict. He also pointed out two kinds of conflict, destructive and constructive. In his review, destructive conflicts were understood to include the areas of threat, coercion, and

inducing suspicion. In contrast, constructive conflict was described as a friendly, trusting and open exchange of information, which leads to resolutions of the conflict. In a similar vein, Noller and her colleagues considered coercion and manipulation as destructive conflict behaviours since coercion lead to an escalation of negativity and manipulation indicates inadequate relational involvement. Gottman included positivity as a discriminative dimension between distressed and non-distressed marriages in his theorising. After carrying out a series of research, Gottman stated that simply the ratio of disagreement to agreements could show whether a relationship would continue happily or distressed, and that the ratio of negative behaviours emitted during problem solving were better predictor of the future relationship than the ratio of the positive behaviours.

Another dimension in which problem solving behaviour is classified is as a passive or active stance taken toward any problem or conflict. In terms of this dimension, behaviours of couples during problem solving could be classified as either *engagement* or *avoidance*. "Engagement" has been identified by Raush, Barry, Hertel, and Swain (1974) as being an active, direct, and persistent characteristic of behaviour in relation to problems confronted in marital relations. The opposite of engagement is avoidance. Avoidance is characterised by not taking a clear position towards the problem, and a lack of effort in taking responsibility for problems or solutions (Miller, Lefcourt, Holmes, Ware, & Saleh, 1986).

Engagement can lead to a resolution of the problems in combination with constructive aspects of behaviour (discussing the problem, offering solutions, compromising), which is what Gottman and Krokoff (1989) called positive problem solving and is called "voice" by Rusbult and his colleagues (1982). If engagement creates negative effects such as defensiveness, stubbornness, withdrawal, it may be dysfunctional in the long term (particularly on the part of the husbands).

3.3.3. The Measurement of the Problem Solving Behaviours.

There have been different modalities of data collection for a variable (in our case marital success), since none of the data gathering methods of social research on its own allows flawless results. Furthermore, there has always been a concern about the data gathered and its real value in the subject's life. Aside from the shortcomings of the data collection methods, the subject matter has its own characteristics, which requires different types of data gathering. In the marriage domain, spouses' behaviours have been considered under two broad categories: overt behaviours, which are readily available to observations during interaction and, covert behaviours, which are not easily detectable through observation. Covert behaviours are mostly related to knowledge, and feelings about events, which entails data collection dependant on self-report. On the other hand, overt behaviours are found in couples interactions or their direct behaviours towards each other, which can be observed by an outsider, such as a researcher or an acquaintance. As a result, depending on the aim of the research and theoretical background, one can chose a relevant data collection method. As far as marital problem solving is concerned, there have been two main data collection methods used by the studies, namely, self-report and observations.

Self-report has been widely used in marriage and psychology literature to assess individual's behaviours. The underlying idea of self-report measurement of behaviour is that what people think reflects what they do (Weiss & Heyman, 1997). Self-report studies have several advantages over observational data generating systems. First of all, they are easy to administer: participants do not have to undertake the burden of coming to the researchers' laboratory; and if they are structured, and are not administered in the presence of researcher, it is possible to recruit substantial number of individuals. Therefore, they are ideal for extensive survey research. Secondly, it is relatively easy and cheap to analyse self-report data since it does not require specialised knowledge for specifically developed coding systems. Thirdly, it allows clients to speak their own material. Finally, it has a face-validity and makes comparisons easy (see also Schaap et al., 1988; Weiss & Heyman, 1997).

On the other hand, observational research is considered to be the best way for gathering objective data that is not influenced by memory distortions. Furthermore, through observations it is possible to generate data which may be impossible to collect through questionnaires (Christensen, 1988). For instance, because of the unawareness of the subjects, physiological data would be difficult to obtain by using self-report. However, observational techniques are not without limitations. For example, it is not possible for every aspect of life to be observed in the laboratory settings in one session. Furthermore, observational data generating is not suitable for covert aspects of behaviour, such as perceptions, or attributions. In addition, observational techniques are time consuming and require a certain amount of expertise to code and analyse, therefore, they are relatively expensive and bound to be working with small samples. Admitting that both systems have their own shortcomings, several researchers (e.g., Christensen, 1988) suggested that combination of methods provide us with more wholesome data.

3.3.3.1. Self-Report Measurement Tools

A very common and widely employed way of assessing marital interaction is self-report, or questioning people. Self-report takes several forms and the most popular of those are interviews and questionnaires. As mentioned above, because self-report is a versatile method, it has been chosen for data generation since early studies at the beginning of the century. Although problem solving behaviours have mostly been studied by observational research, self-report measurements of interaction during problem solving have also been developed recently. While some of these self-measurement devices have focused on the individuals' style of resolving the conflict, the others have concerned with the couples interaction patterns.

The Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI)

Based on the behavioural observations of Gottman (1994) and his colleagues, Kurdek (1994a) developed an inventory, called Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory (CRSI), to

assess individuals' problem solving style as occurred in daily lives of couples. The conceptual position that relationship maintenance and stability are influenced by the each spouse's individual problem solving (conflict resolution) style provides a basis for the CRSI. It is comprised of four styles of problem solving, namely, positive-problem solving (e.g., compromise and negotiation), conflict engagement (e.g., personal attack and losing control), withdrawal (e.g., refusing to discuss the issue further), and compliance (e.g., giving in easily). The CRSI provides two sets of data, one for self and one for partner, which enables the researcher to avoid one-sided information and to employ further analysis on the data. Subjects are expected to rate 16 items in terms of frequency ranging from 0 (never) to 5 (very often). The internal consistency level was reported as ranging from .65 to .89, while Pearson correlation for 1-year stability was ranging from .50 to .83. In terms of validity, there were moderate levels of overlap between partner and self-report results relating to problem solving styles. In addition to this, problem engagement and withdrawal for both homosexual and heterosexual couples, and compliance for first members (this rank was assigned to identify the spouse in the same sex couples) of homosexual couples and both members of heterosexual couples were found significantly negatively related to relationship satisfaction. In predicting relationship change, positive problem solving predicted positive change in satisfaction for only second partners of homosexual couples and for both partners of heterosexual couples. Withdrawal predicted negative change for second partners and husbands. Compliance did not predict satisfaction change in all cases. As far as stability of the relationship was concerned, withdrawal was unsuccessful in predicting relational stability. Low problem solving level was related to relationship dissolution for first partners of homosexual couples, and both partners of heterosexual couples. Low-level compliance predicted relationship dissolution only for husbands, but high-level compliance predicted dissolution for second partners of homosexual couples. Overall, the CRSI would be considered as a valuable instrument for studying problem solving styles of couples. The studies carried out using the CRSI are reviewed later in this chapter.

The Communication Patterns Questionnaire (SPQ)

Christensen and his students developed a questionnaire intending to assess extensive interaction patterns in couples (see Christensen, 1988). Unlike Kurdek's Inventory (1994a), their questionnaire aimed at measuring sequential pattern as it has been realised by some observational coding systems (e.g., the MICS, the CISS). The questionnaire has changed and has been revised over time. The conceptual ground for the questionnaire comes from clinical literature, his and his colleagues' experience with the research couples. They hypothesised some patterns of couples' interaction, and measured this hypothesised interaction with the questionnaire. They created three sub-scales called *demand/withdraw communication*, *demand/withdraw roles*, and *mutual constructive communication*. The demand /withdraw sub-scale consisted of six complementary items, two of which are intended to assess reactions toward a problem which is just arising. For example, one partner's efforts to raise the problem and other partner's avoidance from the discussion of the problem. The other four items of the sub-scale aim to assess the behaviour of the partners, which include also demand/withdraw and criticism/defend interaction, during the problem discussion phase. The second sub-scale, demand/withdrawal roles, uses the same six items of the demand/withdraw sub-scale but obtains a different score by subtracting husband's ratings from the wife's ratings. When the values are positive, it shows that the wife demands and the husband withdraws. On the other hand, when the values are negative the position is vice versa. The last sub-scale, Mutual Constructive Communication, consists of five items, mutual discussion of problems, expression of feelings, negotiation of solutions, understanding of views, and the resolution of problems. The SPQ has been reported as an alternative or complementary measurement tool to observational studies since it provides an economical assessment of interactional behaviour.

3.3.3.2. Observation and Coding Schemes

Interaction research has mostly relied on observational techniques in which couples have been observed during conflict resolution in the laboratory setting. Gottman (1994) stated that:

“Nearly all the research on marital interaction has involved the observation of conflict resolution ...there were only three exceptions: The first is a study by Birchler et al. (1975) in which the couples were instructed to have any conversation while the equipment was being set up. The second study is by Rubin (1976), in which the couples were instructed to have a good time discussion. The last study is by Schaap (1982), in which the couples were asked to talk about their first meeting.”

Therefore, problem solving or conflict resolution has emerged as an important component of marital interaction literature. While the problem solving performance of couples in the laboratory setting has been vastly utilised as a mean of data gathering, the procedure has been more or less similar (Weiss & Heyman, 1997). In these types of studies, the problem area is first identified by questionnaires or interviews, in some cases, instructing the couples to chose a problem issue between them to discuss directly. Then, the couples are given some time in a laboratory to resolve the problems. During the discussion sessions interactions are recorded by a video system to be coded. The videotapes are transcribed and coded by trained coders using specially developed coding systems.

Widely Used Coding Systems

In this section, we review the most widely used coding systems in the domain of the marital interaction, particularly for problem solving interactions.

Marital Interaction Coding System (MICS)

One of the most widely used observational coding system is called the Marital Interaction Coding System (MICS), which is designed specifically for use with conflict resolution discussions and it takes its roots from another coding system called Family Interaction Coding System (FICS). Since the Family Coping System had been developed out of Patterson’s coercion theory, the MICS has a social learning based background. Furthermore, the MICS has been highly influential on the other coding systems developed afterwards. For example, Couple Interaction Scoring system (CISS) was developed

utilising some of the characteristics of the MICS. The MICS itself has been revised several times.⁴ The MICS contains affect codes, behaviour codes, and a blend of behavioural and affect codes. In practice, although early versions of MICS had only two dimensions (positive and negative), it has been criticised for being too broad and excluding neutral codes (Markman & Notarius 1987; Gottman, 1994). 1983 version of the MICS (Weiss & Summers, 1983) has 32 behavioural codes. Twenty-eight of the codes are divided into eight dimensions. The dimensions are problem description, blame, proposal for change, validation, invalidation, facilitation, irrelevant, and non-verbal affect. *Problem description* includes internal and external problem description. While *blame* consists of codes of complaint, criticism, mind reading (negative), and put down, *proposal for change* comprises positive solution, compromise, and negative solution. *Validation* includes agree, approve, accept responsibility, and compliance. *Invalidation* is comprised of disagree, deny responsibility, excuse, interrupt, no response, non compliance, and turn off. *Facilitation* is made up of paraphrase/reflection, mind-reading (positive), humour, positive physical contact, smile/laugh, and assent. The *irrelevant* dimension includes irrelevant talk and normative talk. Lastly, the dimension *non-verbal affect* contains positive, physical contact, smile/laugh, normative non-verbal behaviour, turnoff, and assent.

MICS has been reported as a valid coding system from several points of view, such as, differentiating distressed couples from the non-distressed and the assessment of outcomes of marital interventions (Schaap, 1984). Schaap also reported that this coding system has a high reliability level. In addition, it has comprehensive coverage of communication and problem solving-codes, and allows the researcher to be able to carry out sequential analysis. However, the MICS has been criticised for lacking construct validity for the dimensions (Markman & Notarius, 1987). Overall, the MICS has been the most widely-chosen coding system among marital interaction researchers for its beneficial properties.

Couple Interaction Scoring System (CISS)

⁴ The details of these coding systems are given in Markman and Notarius (1987)

The CISS was developed by Gottman and his students utilising other available coding systems, such as, the MICS.⁵ It has been the second most widely used coding system for assessing couple interaction. Unlike the MICS, the CISS has different codes for verbal and non-verbal behaviour for each coding unit or thought. It includes 28 verbal or content codes, which make eight summary codes or dimensions. The verbal dimensions and codes are as follows: *problem talk* (generalised problem talk; relationship issue problem talk; non-relationship problem talk; feeling); *mind reading* (mind-reading feelings, attitudes, opinions; mind reading behaviour); *proposing solution* (plan; non-specific plan; relationship information; non-relationship information, opinion, feelings); *communication talk* (back on beam-task; back on beam-solution; meta-communication; clarification request); *agreement* (direct agreement; accept responsibility; accept modification; compliance; assent); *disagreement* (direct disagreement; disagreement with rationale; command; non-compliance); *summarising other* (summarising other; summarising both); *summarising self*. The non-verbal codes of CISS are placed into three categories; positive, negative, and neutral. Speaker's voice (caring, cold, warm, tense), face (caring, cold, frown, head nod, sneer), and body movements (touching, rude gestures, open arms, hand tension) are assessed according to their being positive, negative, and neutral.

The CISS has high reliability and validity levels. For example, Gottman (1979) reported that the kappa for the content codes was .911 and the Kappa for the affect codes was .764. As in the case of MICS, the CISS renders sequential analysis possible, which makes it attractive for researchers. As Markman and Notarius (1987) states, the major weakness of the CISS is the conceptual formation of the summary codes. Compared with MICS, they reported that the CISS had more consistent application in practice relating to summary codes, which gives the possibility for comparison of studies employed the CISS.

Kategoriensystem ur partner-schaftliche Interactions (KPI)

⁵ See Markman and Notarius for more details.

KPI was developed by German scholars (Hahlweg, Schindler, Revenstorf, & Brengelmann, 1984) in Munich, and was considered as the first coding system to be developed outside the USA. Hahlweg and his friends' justification for developing a new coding system was that the available coding systems had shortcomings in the identification of coding units, criterion validity, content validity, double coding and summary coding components. Although available coding systems were criticised by the developers of the KPI, it was derived from the CISS and the MICS using their codes and definitions. The aim of the KPI was defined as the assessment of listeners' and speakers' communication and problem solving skills. The KPI includes content and non-verbal codes. The content codes of the KPI are comprised of 12 positive, neutral, and negative codes. These are as follows: *self-disclosure* (direct expression of the feelings, direct expression of the wishes and needs); *positive solution* (specific constructive proposals, compromise); *acceptance of the other* (paraphrase, open question, positive feedback); *agreement* (direct agreement, acceptance of responsibility, assent); *problem description* (neutral descriptions of problem); *meta-communication* (clarification requests, meta-communication related to topic); *rest* (non-fitting statements is coded in-to this item); *listening* (when the speaker had a double coding listener had this code); *criticise* (with intention to hurt, expression of dislike or disapproval of a specific behaviour of the listener); *negative solution* (speaker telling the other not to do something); *justification* (excuses for the speaker's own behaviour, denying responsibility); *disagreement* (direct disagreement, 'yes - but's, short disagreeing statements). The non-verbal codes included face, voice, and body signals in positive, neutral, and negative tones.

The KPI has been reported as a refined coding system, since it has a high reported reliability level and discriminative power between distressed and non-distressed couples (Hahlweg et al., 1984). Furthermore, it can monitor the change over time among couples sensitively. Although the KPI is a comprehensive coding system in coverage, it has been found weak in comprehending listener's behaviour (Markman & Notarius, 1987). In this aspect, this coding system could be considered as being inferior to the CISS.

3.3.4. Satisfaction, Marital Stability, and Conflict Resolution

Several influential studies have investigated satisfaction, marital stability and their connection to marital conflict resolution (e.g. Gottman & Krokoff, 1989; Heavey, Layne, & Christensen, 1993; Noller et al., 1994; Kurdek, 1995). Those studies will be reviewed in this section.

Kurdek (1995) examined the connection between husband's and wives conflict resolution ways and marital satisfaction levels longitudinally over a two- year period. He included 155 married couples who filled in three annual surveys composed of demographic variables, marital satisfaction and problem solving styles. He used both partner and self-reports of conflict resolution. Firstly, his results showed a particular gender- linked interaction, in which the wife frequently used conflict engagement and the husband frequently withdrew, for both husband and wife it was consistently related to marital satisfaction. This is consistent with the findings of earlier studies by Heavey et al.(1993) and Noller et al. (1994). Another important finding of Kurdek's study was that withdrawal, as a specific style for resolving conflict, seemed to operate differently for husbands and for wives. It appeared that, for husbands, the negative effect of withdrawal on their marital satisfaction depended on the level of their wives' negative conflict resolution styles, conflict engagement, compliance, and withdrawal. On the other hand, wives' use of withdrawal negatively affected their marital satisfaction without depending on the husbands' conflict resolution styles. In conclusion, this study found that conflict resolution styles caused marital satisfaction rather than vice versa, and changes in marital satisfaction reflected on conflict resolution styles.

Kurdek's study (1995) aimed at filling the gaps that earlier longitudinal studies left in the area. First of all, it involved a reasonably large group of subjects. Secondly, it used pure measures of marital satisfaction. Thirdly, the first data collection was made after the couples were well past the honeymoon phase of their marriage, which is important to avoid the normative decline effect in the early phase of marriage.

In an attempt to test the behaviourist paradigm that the stability and adjustment of intimate relationships depends upon the nature of the couple's interaction, Filsinger and Thoma (1988) followed 21 premarital couples longitudinally over a 5- year period. They employed a small sample as was the case in Markman (1979, 1981) and their sample was recruited through media advertisements. They aimed to predict couples' marital adjustment and stability through their premarital interaction. During the study period, the data were collected for five times. The measures for time one included demographic variables, a 15-minute moderate level problem discussion session, and a problem checklist consisting of 30 typical relationship problems. For time two, three, four, and five waves of data collection, relationship status and relationship satisfaction were measured by using the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. To test the statistical significance of the data a 2 (relationship status) x 2 (sex) ANOVA was performed. Their results did not support the hypothesis that distressed couples are characterised by higher levels of negative behaviour, and lower levels of positivity. However, their study supported the hypothesis, which was already supported by Markman's studies (1979, 1981), that distressed couples are characterised by higher levels of negative and positive reciprocity. In the work of Filsinger and Thoma, it was concluded that behavioural stinginess with regard to positivity - "I will be nice if you are nice" - was an important feature of those couples who separated within five years. Regarding adjustment as another dependent variable, the conclusion was that men who were married to more powerful females might be more likely to become dissatisfied with their relationship. It was the interruption ratio by females during problem discussion that led to this conclusion. One important characteristic of this study was that it did not study simply satisfaction, it also included separation (before marriage break-up and divorce). However, premarital break-ups and divorces were not compared so it remains one of this study's shortcomings as well as small sample size.

Roberts and Krokoff (1990) researched the link between negative conflict behaviours and marital happiness with 11 dissatisfied and 11 satisfied couples. The couples who participated in the study were recruited from a representative community sample, who

were taking part in another study at that time. The Locke-Williamson Inventory was used to distinguish happy couples from the unhappy. As for the problem solving behaviour, firstly, the couples discussed a highly rated problem area of theirs while being recorded on videotape. Then, the problem discussions, which were previously recorded, were rated by the 6 different coders using the Marital Interaction Rating Scale (MIRS; Roberts, 1984). The MIRS included three bipolar five point scales: hostile/friendly, withdrawn/involved, and displeasure/pleasure. For this study, the researchers operationalised negativity as withdrawal, hostility, and displeasure. The data obtained for the study were analysed through time series analysis. The most striking findings of this study could be summarised into several categories. First, with regard to the relationship between negative problem solving behaviour and marital satisfaction, there was found a significant difference between satisfied and unsatisfied couples relating to marital satisfaction. The couples who were unhappily married had significantly higher levels of hostility and displeasure compared to happily married couples. On the other hand, couples differed only slightly in withdrawal, which was not statistically significant. Secondly, regarding the gender differences, females and males did not differ significantly in withdrawal and hostility ratings, or displeasure in the context of distressed marriage. Thirdly, from the predictability viewpoint, time-series analyses results showed significant differences between the dissatisfied and satisfied couples. For example, for the satisfied couples, the wife's withdrawal predicted the husbands' ($r = .48$), husbands withdrawal predicted the wife's ($r = .41$), however, for dissatisfied couples, predictability did not emerge. Fourth, relating to the correlational analysis, for the dissatisfied marriages, the wife's level of hostility and the husband's level of withdrawal were associated temporally ($r = -.42$). In summary, the results of the study indicated that negativity was more characteristic for the dissatisfied marriages; predictability of the wife's hostility from the husband's withdrawal was an important sign of predictability of the marital satisfaction, regardless of amount of negativity and positivity; and the gender differences that emerged in the temporal level in the interaction.

Overall, Roberts and Krokoff's (1990) study used time-series analysis, which can be considered a novel approach to the problem solving studies then, as a method for evaluation of the temporal behaviours of husbands and wife, therefore, it was able to draw attention to the gender differences on the temporal levels. However, this study had a small sample size and couples with moderate level of marital satisfaction were not included in the study, so it leaves an information gap for these couples.

3.3.5. Prevention, Prediction, and Problem Solving

Markman (1979, 1981, 1984) has defended the argument that what is discussed is not important but rather how it is discussed, so negative interaction patterns are responsible for the later marital distress. Furthermore, the ways of discussing the problems stay stable throughout, at least, the first years of marriage. Through a longitudinal study Markman (1979, 1981, 1984) provided some evidence for his arguments. His study included four stages of data collection from the couples who were in the premarital stage at the beginning of the data collection. For the first stage, in addition to laboratory sessions, couples provided self-report measures of problem intensity and relationship satisfaction. Drawing on social competence and the social exchange theories he and his colleagues created a device called talk table to be able to measure the partners' perception of communication during problem solving discussions in the laboratory. The partners discussed high and low conflictive issues in their relationships and they rated each other's communication in terms of intent and impact on a five-point scale ranging from positive to negative. Subjects were asked to complete measures of marital satisfaction and marital status 1 year and 2.5 year later. Afterwards, 5.5 year later, all the intact couples were contacted by post to complete questionnaires measuring marital satisfaction and marital status. Analysis of the data showed that there was a significant relationship between Time 1 problem intensity and Time 2 relationship satisfaction level, $r = -.47$, $p < .05$, and between Time 1 relationship satisfaction and Time 2 relationship satisfaction, $r = .82$, $p < .01$. However, there was not a significant relationship between Time 1 problem intensity and Time 3 relationship satisfaction, $r = -.27$, and Time 1 and Time 3 relationship

satisfaction, $r = .02$. On the other hand, as it was expected by the researcher, there was a significant relationship between Time 1 impact rating and Time 3 relationship satisfaction, $r = .67$, $p < .01$, in contrast to Time 1 impact rating and time relationship satisfaction, $r = .06$. In a similar vein, the time impact ratings and 5.5 year later relationship satisfaction scores were found correlated, $r = .67$, $p < .01$. In conclusion, the research hypothesis was supported.

Larsen and Olson (1989) conducted a longitudinal study utilising a premarital inventory called PREPARE. PREPARE has been devised to identify the strength and weaknesses of relationship in 11 areas of relationships, which are *realistic expectations, personality issues, communication, conflict resolution, financial management, leisure activities, sexual relationship, children and marriage, family and friends, equalitarian roles, and religious orientation*. 179 married couples filled in PREPARE when they were at premarital stage. According to the scores obtained from PREPARE couples were divided into thirds: the upper third (*satisfied/married*), the lower third (*married/dissatisfied*). They identified the *divorced* or *separated* group and the couples with *cancelled* marriages after taking PREPARE through clergy records. Analysis of the data showed that the differences between groups, for example, *married/satisfied* and *separated/divorced* couples differed in realistic expectations, personality issues, communication, conflict resolution, leisure activity, family and friends, equalitarian roles and religion. They concluded that couples who had satisfactory marriages in three years of marriage viewed positively several aspects of their relationships before marriage and both spouses were closer in their rating of positive aspects than other groups (*divorced/separated, cancelled/delayed, and married /dissatisfied*). These findings are supportive of predictive validity of PREPARE.

To discover whether destructive conflict resolution styles are present premaritally, or are learned over the course of the marriage, Noller, Feeney, Bonnell, and Callan (1994) carried out longitudinal research involving 33 couples using questionnaires and interaction -based methods. Their study included one premarital and two follow-up

assessments during the first two years of the subjects' marriages. Relationship satisfaction was measured by using the Quality Marriage Index (Norton, 1983) and self report measures of communication behaviours were obtained through Communication Patterns Questionnaire (Christensen, 1988). In addition to these measurements, couples provided two videotaped discussions of conflict areas currently salient to their relationships, one for the husband and one for the wife. After discussions of conflict areas for each partner, the partner whose issue was discussed was asked to describe the strategy used by himself/herself in his/her words. The content of these descriptions was transcribed and analysed. Although the small sample size of couples who completed all the stages of data collection leads to a cautious interpretation, the results indicated that there were no changes over time in the conflict patterns used by the subjects. This means that the destructive way of dealing with conflict is present at the premarital stage. This finding is in line with Markman's thesis, which is communication patterns stay stable for at least the first years of marriage. According to their findings, couples who had lower scores of relationship satisfaction reported higher levels of demand/withdrawal or other destructive patterns of conflict resolution. These couples also reported higher negativity levels (using threats, verbal and physical aggression more often than satisfied couples), fewer positive behaviours and more avoidance. Unlike Markman's findings about concurrent correlation between communication pattern and relational satisfaction, this study found correlation between communicative style and relationship satisfaction over the three assessments. It should be noted that this study included only relationship satisfaction leaving marital stability out. However, it has strong point due to its start from premarital stage rather than early days of marriage.

Using cross sectional and longitudinal data, Huston and Vangelisti (1991) investigated marital satisfaction and its relationship with socio-emotional behaviour. The aim of the study was to demonstrate the causal link between satisfaction and early marriage negative or positive behaviours. Their sample included 106 newly wed couples and they were first recruited through marriage licence records for another study, which was considered representative for the region in which they live, and then recruited for this study. Data

collection consisted of three phases of interviews. The first phase took place after 2 months of marriage, the second and third phases followed at yearly intervals. Marital satisfaction measures were obtained through the Marital Opinion Questionnaire, which provided global satisfaction scores. Socio-emotional behaviour measures were obtained through nine telephone interviews in 2-to 3 three weeks with structured format. The data were analysed cross sectionally and longitudinally. According to the results, it was concluded that strong and consistent relationships were present between negativity and marital satisfaction. Longitudinal analysis demonstrated that husbands' negativity early in marriage predicted wives' satisfaction later in marriages. However, wives' negativity was not related to husbands' later satisfaction in marriage.

Smith, Vivian, and O'Leary (1990) conducted a research to evaluate the association between affective features of the premarital communication and marital relationship satisfaction. Although the direct intention of the study was not to measure the problem solving itself, it used problem solving discussions to obtain affective data. For this study, 91 Caucasian couples provided observational (problem solving sessions) and self-report (marital satisfaction measures) data. Four waves of data collection took place. While the data related to problem solving sessions was administered only at the premarital phases, data for marital was collected at the premarital phase, at 6 months (second), 18 months, and 30 months after marriage. The short form of the Marital Adjustment Test (SMAT; Locke & Wallace, 1959) was employed to measure relationship satisfaction. Regarding problem solving, the couples were asked to identify a problem which was important for them. After the identification of the problem, the couples were left alone to discuss the problematic issue, while audio-tapes were recording the discussion. The recorded discussions were coded by a measure called the Specific Affect Measure (Smith & O'Leary, 1987). The results obtained from the study demonstrated that longitudinal predictors of marital satisfaction differed from its cross-sectional correlates, for example, negativity and marital satisfaction were strongly correlated concurrently but negativity scores were not correlated with none of the follow-up phases of the study. In addition to these findings, premarital disengagement (withdrawal) was found to be negatively related

to later marital satisfaction but was not related to concurrent relationship satisfaction. The more satisfied couples at 18 and 30-month follow-ups appeared to be those who could discuss the problem issues premaritally in an active and energetic manner.

Gottman and his friends have conducted a series of research to understand early signs of future dissatisfaction and dissolution of marriage. One of them, with Krokoff (1989), is considered a classical study in the area. For this study, they followed 25 couples for one analysis and an additional 30 couples for another analysis over three years. Three kinds of variable were employed for data collection. These were marital *satisfaction*, which was measured by using the Locke-Wallace and the Locke-Williamson scales, and *problem solving* in the laboratory setting, and *problem solving* in home setting in the absence of an observer. The problem solving data was collected through couples' discussions of their highly important relationship problems, and analysed through observational coding systems, the MICS (Weiss & Summers, 1983), the CISS (Gottman, 1979), and the SPAFF (Gottman, 1994). The MICS codes were divided in to positive and negative sub-scales. Following are the positive codes (a) positive problem solving (sum of accept responsibility, compromise, paraphrase, and positive solution); (b) positive verbal (sum of agreement, approval, and humour); (c) positive non-verbal (sum of assent, and approval); and (d) compliance (sum agreement, assent, and approval). Negative codes involved (a) defensive (sum of excuse, deny responsibility, negative solutions, and mind reading; (b) conflict engagement (disagreement, criticism); (c) stubbornness (sum of non-compliance, put down, command, and complaint); and (d) withdrawal from interaction (sum of no response, not tracking, turn off, and incoherent talk). The most important finding of this study was that conflict engagement would be beneficial for a marriage longitudinally as long as it does not involve defensiveness, stubbornness, and withdrawal. Especially for the men, if the conflict is indicative of defensiveness, stubbornness, and withdrawal, it may be dysfunctional longitudinally. Another finding of this study was that wives who were positive and compliant did better for their husbands' concurrent satisfaction, however, in the long run marital satisfaction of these couples deteriorated over time. It was concluded that the stubbornness of withdrawal by husbands might be most harmful

for the marital satisfaction in the long term. In addition, the wife should not avoid conflict and express anger and contempt. This study has a special importance in showing that concurrent relationship satisfaction and problem solving variables have a different association than have long-term relationship satisfaction and problem solving.

Another study by Gottman and Levenson (1992) investigated the marital dissolution process in an attempt to test Gottman's "cascade" model of marital dissolution. In contrast to the Gottman and Krokoff (1989) study, this study included marital dissolution as a dependent variable along with marital satisfaction. Furthermore, it attempts to establish an empirically supported link between marital satisfaction and dissolution as an important component of the "cascade model". The researchers followed 73 couples, who were recruited longitudinally by newspaper adverts, between 1983-1987. For the research, observational, physiological, and self-report data obtained synchronically. Interactional (observational) data, which was only collected once in 1983, included three forms of discussions: (a) events of the day; (b) a continuing relationship problem area; (c) and a pleasant topic. Several days later discussion sessions took place, subjects were asked to recall their interactions in terms of capturing their feelings during the discussion. For this purpose, a rating dial ranging from *extremely negative* to *extremely positive* with *neutral in the middle* was used. Sessions of problem discussions were coded through the RCISS, the MICS, and the SPAFF. In 1987 follow-up, four years after initial data gathering, spouses completed two marital satisfaction questionnaires, a physical illness, and several items for evaluating consideration of separation, separation and its length, and divorce during their last four years of marriage. The findings of this research indicated that there was continuity in deterioration of the marital quality through separation and then divorce. In other words, low marital satisfaction led to consideration of marital dissolution, to eventual dissolution, and then divorce. The results were discussed in terms of *regulated couples*, who were defined by having significantly positive interaction scores in the RCISS for both spouses, and *non-regulated couples*, who did not have significant positive scores in the RCISS codes for both spouses. According to this classification, non-regulated couples were found to be more conflict engaging, more defensive, more

stubborn, more angry, more whining and more withdrawn as a listeners less affectioned, less interested in partners, less joyful than the regulated couples. Non-regulated couples had more severe problems, less marital satisfaction in 1984 and 1987, and rated more negative feelings during their interaction than regulated couples. Furthermore, they entered into dissolution process earlier than regulated couples. Consequently, the study established a link between signs of marital dissatisfaction and divorce. In opposition to many studies that had been conducted with premarital or early married couples, the Gottman and Levenson study was conducted with couples who were already married on average 5.2 years.

The predictive value of the impact rating and other problem solving research led Markman and his colleagues to utilise this knowledge to prevent marital distress. The reasons for the marital distress appeared to be obvious so by teaching the candidates right ways of problem solving and their behaviour during discussions would save future distress in the marriage. Although this point of view has been criticised by other researchers in the domain, several prevention studies, discussed below, proved to be functional.

Markman and his colleagues (1988, Markman, Renick, Floyd, Stanley, & Clements, 1993) designed a longitudinal study to evaluate the power of premarital intervention efforts. The rationale behind this attempt was to prove that early intervention could save marital distress and possible divorce, since to rescue already distressed marriages was difficult and, in some cases, impossible. They followed couples ten years from the start of the premarital stage. A community sample was recruited through adverts widely placed in the media. They established an intervention, a declining, and a control group. All the groups taking part in the study completed a preassessment and 5 follow-ups. The measures included the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test, the Relationship Problem Inventory (Knox, 1970), and the Conflict Tactic Scale (CTS). For the interaction task, the couples discussed a vignette chosen from the Inventory of Marital Conflicts (IMC) and a discussion of on their own top three problem areas. Each of these tasks was carried out

twice, once using communication box procedure in which couple rated their cognitive and affective reactions when the discussion proceeded, and once without communication box procedure. The intervention group completed five sessions approximately three hours each comprising communication and problem solving skills and also completed homework assignments requiring them to practise skills. After post-assessment, the three groups of couples (declined, control, and intervention) were contacted for follow-ups, at 1,5 years (follow-up 1), 3 years (follow-up 2), 4 years (follow-up 3), and 5 years (follow-up 4).

After comparisons of the three groups of couples the researcher concluded that especially at follow-up 3, intervention couples demonstrated greater use of communication skills, positive affect, more problem solving skill, and more support and validation than did the control group. At the same time they used less withdrawal, less denial, less dominance, less negative affect, less conflict engagement, and less overall negative communication. However, at follow-up 4 the groups did not significantly differ on the above-mentioned dimensions other than communication skill usage by men and a trend on negative escalation. In terms of the stability of the couples, the intervention couples were found less likely to dissolve their relationships than either the control and the decline couples, but differences on divorce and separation were not significant. Comparisons between decline couples and intervention couples did not differ significantly until 3 and 4 years later. One important feature of this study in terms of our research is that it studies relationship dissolution as well as relationship functioning (satisfaction). However, this study has some shortcomings, as it depends on voluntary couples, and almost half of the intervention couples declined. Voluntary subjects could be most motivated to function better in their relationship than others (Markman, Renick, et al., 1993).

3.3.6 Gender and Problem Solving-Demand/Withdrawal Pattern

Christensen (1988) first used the terms 'demand' and 'withdrawal' in his questionnaire, but the issue was not novel. Even the earliest self report studies of marriage had pointed

out the different styles of interaction between men and women, such as men's complaints about women's as to excessive criticism and verbal attacks (Julien, Arellano, & Turgeon, 1997). Schaap (1984) reported that among distressed Dutch couples, there were high levels of female blame. Recently a number of studies, reviewed above, have provided a substantial amount of information relating to demand withdrawal interaction patterns (see Christensen & Heavey, 1990; Gottman & Krokoff, 1989). The summary of the findings of these studies are as following:

- Husband withdrawal would be beneficial for short term but be detrimental for long term (Gottman & Krokoff, 1989).
- Demand -withdrawal pattern appeared to play an important part in development of marital distress over time (Kurdek, 1995; Levenson & Gottman, 1985, Noller, et al., 1994).
- Husband's withdrawal tended to create female hostility (Roberts & Krokoff, 1990).
- Men were more likely to be demanding when discussing a change they wanted, and women were more likely to be withdrawn when their partner wanted a change, but overall men were more withdrawn than women (Christensen & Heavey, 1990).

Curiosity to understand why males and females differ in their approach as to problems has prompted three different explanations. One group of researchers believed that gender differences in the demand withdrawal pattern were due to biological differences between females and males (e.g. Levenson & Gottman, 1985; Gottman & Levenson, 1988; Gottman, 1994), whereas another group claimed that the different socialisation of men and women creates actual differences in relationships (e.g. Noller, 1993). Also, some others asserted that unequal power distribution in western societies leads to different ways of problem solving between the sexes (e.g. Jacobson, 1983).

Physiological differences approach to gender differences

The physiological differences hypothesis has been introduced by Gottman and Levenson (1988; Gottman, 1994). According to the physiological view men show a stronger arousal than women under stressful circumstances so withdrawal serves as a control mechanism for men to cope with strong arousal. On the other hand, women endure stressful situations instead of escaping from it. To support this assertion Gottman and Levenson (1988) reviewed the research in the area and stated that cardiovascular arousal was higher among the men than women. However, Julien et al. (1997) reported in their recent review that many studies showed that women did not differ from men and some studies found that women showed higher reaction to emotional stress than men. They concluded that the results are somewhat confusing but endocrinal differences between females and males cannot be ruled out.

Physiological indexes of behaviour have shown that there were differences between satisfied and non-satisfied couples (Gottman, 1994; Gottman & Levenson, 1988). In a longitudinal study by Levenson and Gottman (1985) it was shown that physiological activation of husbands was able to predict changes in marital satisfaction in over 3 years. The results for women were less powerful than men. The overall conclusion was that the more physiologically aroused the couples Time 1 assessment, the less satisfied they were with their relationship three years later.

In another study by Levenson, Carstensen, and Gottman (1994), the hypothesis that “negative affect and physiological arousal are related for husbands, but not for wives” was supported. The researchers asserted that high levels of physiological arousal to be experienced as aversive and to motivate male withdrawal behaviour, men would need either to be closely attuned to changes in their level of arousal or to feel badly when aroused, or both. On the other hand, to be able to tolerate these high levels of arousal women would need either not be attuned to changes in their level of arousal or not to feel badly when aroused, or both. Their results showed that, during problem area and pleasant topic discussions, there were a number of small but reliable correlations between affective

negativity and physiological arousal for husbands, but for wives there were no significant correlations between affect and physiology during the conversations.

Sex role differences approach

The difference between female and male members of marital union in communication and problem solving styles has been explained in terms of gender role stereotypes (e.g., Markman, Silvern, Clements, & Kraft-Hanak, 1993). In society men are known as instrumental, rational, and problem solving as well as angry and withdrawn. On the other hand, women have an expressive, nagging or intrusive image. According to Markman, Silvern, Clements, & Kraft-Hanak, these stereotypical images of males and females in society could work as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Femininity requires orientation toward and a skill at communal, cohesive characteristics related to communication facilitating, interpersonal closeness and emotional expression. On the other hand, masculinity entails agentic and instrumental attributes which are better suited to communication that is task and problem solving oriented.

However, it has been asserted that these gender differences do not emerge in well working marriages (Markman, Silvern, Clements, & Kraft-Hanak, 1993; Huston, Surra, Fitzgerald, & Cate, 1983, Christensen, 1987). It is a function of conflict and distress. In order to investigate these stereotypical images of females and males, Markman, Silvern, Clements, and Kraft-Hanak conducted two studies. In the first study, 29 couples were examined longitudinally before and after marriage in terms of sex roles, problem solving, intimacy, and marital quality. The data were obtained by self-report and observation. The results showed that there were no differences between sexes premaritally in the scores of problem solving, intimacy and communication variables. In another study, 324 undergraduates took part in and the data were gathered with self-report methods for sex roles, problem solving, and marital quality. The results showed that stereotypical gender differences were apparent between sexes. It was concluded from the results of those two

studies that gender differences such as the demand/withdrawal cycle are a function of gender roles and marital distress rather than gender itself.

On the other hand, some studies did not support Markman, Silvern, Clements, & Kraft-Hanak's (1993) findings. In a study conducted by Sayers and Baucom (1991), it was observed that the males were more negative even if they scored high in femininity scores. Consequently, there has been confusion over the contribution of gender traits to conflict resolving behaviour (Julien et al., 1997).

3.4. Overview of Turkish Studies in Relation to Marriage

Although marital quality and stability have been widely studied in the western countries, there has been relatively little research carried out in Turkey. We should mention that some of the studies reviewed are not directly relevant to our study. We include them in this section of the review as they are broadly related to marital quality and maintenance of marriage as far as Turkey is concerned.

Turkish society is regarded as traditionally patriarchal and patrilineal (Duben and Behar, 1996). Since the 19th century, it has been under the effects of western values. Although fluxes of western values have had effects on the Turkish lifestyle, traditional values continue to exist as well (Kagitcibasi, 1990, 1996). For example, despite the fact that traditional forms of marriages (family arranged, expanded) are declining, they still exist in the country along with the modern forms of marriages (self-selected, nuclear) (Atalay, Kontas, Beyazit, & Madenoglu, 1992). According to the recent research findings, people who live in Urban areas, are well-educated, with a higher earning capacity tend to marry at a relatively late age, have less children, and chose their marriage partners themselves (Atalay et al., 1992; Hortacsu & Oral, 1994; Imamoglu 1997).

Several studies have looked at the differences between family initiated and couple (or self) initiated marriages regarding some indices of relationships in recent years, in

Turkey. (e.g., Hortacsu, 1997; Hortacsu & Oral, 1994; Imamoglu & Yasak, 1997). Hortacsu and Oral (1994) collected data from 230 individuals who were on the brink of either self or family initiated marriages. They asked the individuals about their educational backgrounds, relationship duration, contexts and characteristics of interactions with the partner, ratings of reasons given for marriage and perceived level of disclosure. Their results showed that the respondents who were in self-initiated marriages had a higher-level of education, and gave less importance to pragmatic reasons for marriage. These individuals also rated their interaction with their partners as more frequent and disclosed more to the partners.

In another study, Hortacsu (1997) investigated the nature of self-initiated and family initiated marriages in Ankara, Turkey. She recruited 469 couples who were getting marriage licences for their first marriage. The data was collected using a questionnaire composed of several parts relating to the background characteristics of the couples; reasons for marriage; feelings and cognitions about the spouse; parents, and bride's and groom's families; and frequencies of interaction on various social settings. The comparisons between the two types of marriages indicated a difference in educational background. The results also showed that these two types of marriages were different in relation to endorsement of reasons for marriage, cognitions, feelings about spouse, and frequency of spousal interaction in different social contexts. It was also concluded that there were relations between the level of modernity and marital characteristics.

Tastan (1996) investigated inter-spousal communication in a created, non-marriage problem situation. Her sample consisted of 32 couples in self-selected and 23 couples in arranged marriages. She collected observational data relating to positive and negative verbal and non-verbal communication (voice tones, nonverbal behaviours, and emotional behaviours). She also collected self-report data relating to personal information. The results demonstrated that couples in self-selected marriages exhibited more positive communication than those in arranged marriages on the condition that they were aware of

problem on the map. They also reported that gender differences were apparent: Females showed more positive communication than males.

Recently, Imamoglu and Yasak (1997) have studied dimensions of marital relationships in Turkey. Their sample was considerably large (456 married couples) and included married individuals from various socio-economic background, ages, and the length of marriage in three large cities (Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir). The extensive Turkish Marriage Questionnaire (Russel, Wells, & Imamoglu, 1989) was used for data collection. After running two factor analyses, they first identified nine first order factors that mattered for the Turkish marriages, and then reduced them to four factors, namely, level of socio-economical development; marital satisfaction; harmonious relationships with extended family; desire for sexual possessiveness. They also reported that the higher the socio-economical level was, the more frequent self-initiated marriages were, which indicated modernism. In relation to the gender differences, this study demonstrated that husbands' marital satisfaction was best predicted by wives' marital satisfaction and husbands' relations with the extended family. On the other hand, husbands' marital satisfaction and wives' desire for sexual possessiveness, extent of socio-economic development, and relations with the extended family were the best predictors of wives' marital satisfaction.

Hatipoglu (1993) examined the effects of demographic variables (age, education, family type, marital length, number of children, family life cycle, income, and occupation), expansion and frequency of conflict on marital satisfaction. She used a sample of 77 voluntarily recruited married couples to obtain data for this study. The data was gathered through a Demographic Inventory, Marital Conflict Questionnaire (Hatipoglu, 1993), which comprises 70 items providing expansion and frequency of conflict scores, and the Marital Life Scale (MLS) (Tezer, 1986). The MLS consists of 10 items with a Likert like scale ranging from five to zero, which measures overall marital satisfaction (e.g., I think our marriage is very meaningful). The data was analysed using multiple regression analysis. The results indicated that the expansion of marital conflict predicted both

spouses marital satisfaction level. That is, the wider the conflict, the less marital satisfaction for both spouses. For the demographic variables, wives' level of education was found to be positively related to their marital satisfaction level. Income also was predictive of marital satisfaction for both spouses. On the other hand, frequency of conflict did not appear to be influential on marital satisfaction. Furthermore, the occupational state and the number of children were not predictive of marital satisfaction.

Canakci (1992) examined the link between involuntary childlessness and marital satisfaction in a Turkish married female sample that consisted of 37 women who were involuntary childless and 37 women with children. The data gathered for this study consisted of demographics, marital satisfaction and overall wellbeing. The findings of the study did not confirm the expectation that the mothers would be happier in their marriage. These two groups of women did not differ significantly in their marital satisfaction. However, one demographic variable, which is living with another family member, created extra stress for married females. It should be noted that, in this study, the sample covered only married people from a big city and marital satisfaction was studied as a dependent variable. Furthermore, the subjects were voluntarily recruited. In this respect, the study is far from being representative for the whole population living in Turkey. Childlessness could have various impacts on the trajectory of the marriage depending on the background of the individuals (rural or urban origin, socio-economical level, gendered reasons of childlessness etc.) For example, for the families of a rural origin, female childlessness could be more likely to be a reason for divorce than families of an urban origin due to social pressures. Therefore, it may influence the satisfaction of a couple substantially.

Arikan (1992) examined divorced women who were from a low socio-economic level. Her main objective was to discover the psychosocial problems of women during the divorce process and after the divorce, and secondarily the study covered the reasons given for divorce. The study sample included 161 divorced women who lived in Ankara, and received financial help from Social Assistance and the Solidarity Foundation. The data

was collected using a questionnaire, which was developed by the researcher. The analysis of the data showed that disagreements started soon after the subjects' marriage (57.76 %). The main areas of disagreement were beating (53 %), alcohol addiction and gambling (47 %), financial hardship (45 %), the illegitimate relations of husbands, and relationships with relatives (44. %), respectively. In comparison to our study, Arikan's study differs from ours in two main ways. First, the sample used in her study was comprised of women from a lower socio-economic strata who had no jobs or had low skilled jobs, while our study includes women from mainly middle socio-economic strata with professional or semi-professional jobs. Second, her study included only divorced women and the problems of married life, whereas in our study we look at premarital and marital problems in both currently married and divorced individuals.

Tezer (1986) looked at the relationship between marital satisfaction and expansion and frequency of conflict as well as the tension experienced as a result of conflict in 104 married couples from Ankara, who were voluntarily recruited. Each of the variables was assessed by questionnaires developed by the researchers: the first Questionnaire was the Marital Life Scale (MLS), which was developed to measure, overall marital satisfaction and it consisted of 10 items each with a 5 point scale. The second questionnaire was called Marital Life Questionnaire (MLQ), which was developed to measure the four aspects of conflict, namely expansion, frequency, tension, and responsibility relating to conflict. In relation to the four aspects of conflict, four sub-scores were obtained through MLQ. Using t-tests, she assessed differences between the spouses related to conflict expansion, conflict frequency, tension and responsibility towards conflict. According to her results, there were differences in tension and responsibility towards conflict between the sexes. The wives were found to be more strained than their husbands and found that their husbands were responsible for the conflict. On the other hand, husbands reported that they were responsible for the conflict. Using ANOVA, she compared the subgroups on the marital satisfaction level. Excluding responsibility scores, four subgroups were created on the three aspects of conflict sub-scores (frequency, expansion, and tension): wife high-husband high; wife low-husband low; wife low-husband high; and wife high-

husband low. Although the results were not statistically significant, mean scores showed that the wives who perceived frequent and expansive conflict in their relationships also tended to perceive their marriages less satisfactory. Similarly, the husbands' satisfaction level significantly increased when both spouses felt that their marriages had less conflict. Also the husbands' satisfaction level increased according to their level of responsibility for being the sources of conflict. In conclusion, the study indicated that, individually, a spouses' marital wellbeing is related to both partners' marital well-being.

To summarise the results of studies from Turkey, to our best knowledge, research on marital process mainly studied marital satisfaction/adjustment and its demographic correlates; traditional and modern forms of marriages and marital functioning; perception of conflict and marital satisfaction. The findings implied that there is an inclination towards modern marriages that are described as self-selected, egalitarian, and promoting relatively more interaction between spouses. For the urban population, self-selected marriages seemed to be working better than family arranged ones. In general, expansion of marital conflict, relations with expanded family members, and economical hardship seemed to be related to marital satisfaction. In line with the findings of western studies, females' perception of conflict matters for marital satisfaction.

3.5. Research Hypotheses

We should draw attention to the important points that the present study has only one-culture sample (Turkish professionals) and that there are methodological differences (e.g., coding scheme/list differences) compared to the reviewed studies. Also, given the substantially descriptive characteristics of our study, a formal set of hypotheses does not appear warranted. However, it is predicted that several general patterns will emerge from the data set used in the study. These patterns are given after a short summary of the literature as the following.

3.5.1. The Hypotheses of Premarital and Marital Problems

Premarital problems in their relation to subsequent divorce have not been studied extensively. A few studies included data from premarital stages. For example, Storaasli and Markman (1990) described premarital problems of prospective marriage partners as a part of their longitudinal study. However, this work studied marital satisfaction while the present study concerns marital dissolution, so it is only relevant to the present study in relation to the description of premarital problems. Although there does not appear to be any study that directly investigates premarital problems and their link to divorce, findings of some studies indicate that premarital problems could be related to marital dissolution. For example, in a study conducted by Hayes, Stinnett, and Defrain (1980), 15 % of divorced individuals reported that their marriages were wrong from the very beginning. Likewise, Thomes and Collard (1979) asked respondents about the frequency of premarital break-ups in their relationships as an indication of unresolved conflict. According to this study, 29 % of divorcees, compared to 19 % of married individuals, reported conflict. Therefore, the present study tests the following hypothesis.

1-Regarding premarital level, divorced individuals will report more problems in numbers than currently married individuals.

The studies that used longitudinal data showed that some problems are persistent over the years and it is possible to detect certain problems that cause divorce as early as 9-12 years prior to divorce (Amato & Rogers, 1997). In Turkey, Arikan (1992) found that disagreement started soon after marriage and continued to divorce. In the light of this, we assume that certain problem areas could be detected at the premarital stage of the relationships. Such problems related to personality (or behaviour problems) attributes and attitude differences in lifestyle, in sex roles, and in political views may be transferred from premarital level and continue into the marriage, and may contribute to marital discord and divorce. Hence, we aim to test the following hypotheses:

2-Some premarital problem domains will also persist into the marital stage.

3-Certain premarital problems such as personality attributes will have discriminative power on marital dissolution.

In the United States, Storaasli and Markman (1990) found that money, communication, jealousy, relatives, friends and sex respectively were most frequently cited as relationship problem areas during the premarital period. During this period, partners pay attention to knowing each other better as much as possible to understand the level of compatibility (See Houts, Robins, & Huston, 1996). After deciding to marry, preparation for marriage requires a series of negotiations about how to live together. In relation to this, we formulate the following hypothesis.

4-Some problem domains, such as, problems regarding personality, social network and attitude differences in spending money will be reported more frequently than others regarding the premarital stage.

The literature about close relationships points to gender differences in awareness of relationship issues (e.g., Acitelli, 1992). It has been asserted that females monitor their relationships more closely than their male counterparts. Males also have more difficulty in the identification and expression of specific problems related to divorce than their female counterparts (Kitson, 1992). Accordingly, the reviewed studies carried out with divorced or divorcing respondents found that females cited more reasons (causes or problems leading to divorce) for divorce (e.g., Amato & Rogers, 1997; Burns, 1984; Eells & O'Flaherty, 1996; Gigy & Kelley, 1992; Kitson & Sussman, 1982; Levinger, 1966). In Turkey, Tezer (1992) found that females' complaints about their husband as a source of conflict had negative effect on their marital adjustment.

5-Both married and divorced females will be reporting more problems than married and divorced males for both premarital and marital stages.

Although there is no consensus over the coding systems/lists employed by researchers to study reasons given for divorce (or marital problems which led to divorce), reviewed studies showed similar results on the domains of marital problems leading to it. To summarize, there are common problem issues in marriage, and the most frequently cited of those include the topics of communication (Amato & Rogers, 1997; Cleek & Pearson, 1985; Eells & O'Flaherty, 1996), general incompatibility (Amato & Rogers, 1997; Cleek & Pearson, 1985), not spending enough time at home (Amato & Rogers, 1997) and money (Burns, 1984; Cleek & Pearson, 1985).

These studies also showed that the nature of complaints might vary in relation to marital status, gender, class and historical context. Different perceptions of marriage and divorce by males and females are reflected in the nature of marital problems as well as in the number of problems that people reported as causes of divorce (see also Amato & Rogers, 1997). While females complain more about personality (Kitson & Sussman, 1982) and authority (Goode, 1956; Kitson & Sussman, 1982), males complain about infidelity (Levinger, 1966; Kitson & Sussman, 1982) and relatives (Levinger, 1966; Kitson & Sussman, 1982; Burns, 1984). Regarding social class, individuals from a higher social class tend to report more interaction problems such as communication (Eells & O'Flaherty, 1996). Eells and O'Flaherty also indicated that there was a shift from individual behavioural problems to more relational ones (e.g., communication and intimacy) over time. Hence, the following hypotheses are formulated from these findings.

6-Gender differences will emerge in marital level problem domains.

7-Perceived areas of marital problems will differ according to marital status (currently married / divorced).

8-Some domains of marital problems will be more discriminative between currently married and divorced individuals.

As mention in Chapter 1, there has been a growing body of literature that emphasises the necessity of incorporating cultural components into the studies of close relationships in recent years (e.g., Duck, 1999, Goodwin, 1999; Hinde, 1997, Kagitcibasi, 1996).

Regarding this, it is expected that there will be similarities and differences emerging from the findings of the present study. Some culture-specific differences might occur due to characteristics of a Turkish social setting. Also, our findings could be affected by rapid changes that Turkey has undergone as a developing country. According to Goodwin, large-scale changes in a society may have effects on personal relationships arising from adaptation to conflict. It requires new arrangements in roles, values and priorities. For example, changes in the roles of women are considered an important factor to rising divorce rates across societies (McKenry & Price, 1995, cited in Goodwin, 1999, p.86). Therefore, we aim to test the following hypotheses:

9-Among females there will be more complaints about attitude and value differences over sex roles, life styles, and house maintenance.

10- Divorced individuals will cite more complaints regarding the attitude differences over sex roles, life styles, and house maintenance.

Traditionally, Turkey is a patrilineal/patriarchal society (Duben & Behar, 1996). However, today it has been infused with western values. The majority of Turkish families are regarded as nuclear (Timur, 1972), however, close family ties still exist (Imamoglu & Yasak, 1997). Kagitcibasi (1996) suggested that although economical or social structural changes (Industrialisation or Westernisation) may create similar results with individualistic societies in family structure, such as increased female status, low fertility levels, this however, does not create exact similarities with the West in values and family interaction patterning. A culture of relatedness (collectivistic) continues to be valued in socialization and family interaction patterning together with embracing new individualistic values. For example, while family loyalties exist, individual loyalties can emerge too and these two different values could go hand in hand in the same person.

Allied with this view, Hortacsu and Oral (1994) stated that families were more involved in Turkish marriages compared to western ones. Although, such close ties may provide economical and psychological support, the level of interference from extended families of spouses could also create some problems in the relations. The younger generation may prefer less interference in their personal relations compared to their parents within such a cultural context. Imamoglu and Yasak (1997) found that indices of modern marriages (such as self-selected marriages and egalitarian family roles) were more prevalent among younger couples than older couples. Also, Canakci (1992) found that living with another family member created extra stress for married females. Imamoglu & Yasak (1997) reported that relations with extended family predicted both the husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction. Hence we formulated the following hypotheses.

11-Social network problems will be frequently reported by both currently married and divorced individuals for both premarital and marital stage as far as Turkey is concerned.

12-Social network problems will discriminate between currently and married individuals.

3.5.2. The Hypotheses of Problem solving

Regarding the realm of problem solving, there appears to be a dearth of research conducted with Turkish couples. To the best of our knowledge, there appears to have been only one study carried out to date regarding marital processes and problem solving (e.g., Tastan, 1996). However, this study investigated relationships between positive communication and gender, type of marriage (arranged versus self-initiated), and problem awareness on the map (a non-marriage problem) while our study focuses on perceptions of problem solving and marital dissolution. As a result we mainly depend on information gained through early studies in western countries assuming that some similarities and some culture specific findings will emerge.

The styles of problem solving discussions are essential as far as marital quality and stability are concerned. Over time, negative and positive experiences obtained from daily interactions of marriage accumulate and influence spouses' perceived marital quality (Gottman, 1990, 1994). Quite a number of cross-sectional and longitudinal studies of problems solving have showed that there is a relationship between problem solving styles and marital outcomes (Gottman & Krokoff, 1989; Gottman & Levenson, 1992; Kurdek 1995; Markman et al., 1988; Markman, Renick, Floyd, Stanley, & Clements, 1993; Smith et al, 1990).

In Turkey, Tastan (1996) found that couples in self-selected marriages (also considered modern, egalitarian) reported more positive communication behaviour during problem solving when the source of the problem was obvious. In line with these findings, the following hypothesis is formulated.

1-Currently married individuals will report more positive problem solving behaviour than divorced individuals for both premarital and marital stages.

The research on problems solving styles also indicated that females and males differ in their problem solving behaviours. Husbands are more likely to withdraw than wives when problems are raised. On the other hand, wives tend to engage in conflict more than husbands (for a review, see Julien et al., 1997).

In the world of changing roles, women may want more changes than men in their relations with the opposite sex (Heavey, Layne, & Christensen, 1993). In Turkey, Tastan (1996) also reported that in a problem situation (non marital) females displayed more positive communication behaviour. In line with the western findings, Imamoglu (1993, cited in Tastan, 1996) reported that they shared their daily concerns and problems with their husbands more than their husbands did. Therefore, we hypothesise the following:

2-There will be differences between the sexes in reporting problem solving styles.

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter has given a review of literature related to premarital and marital problems, and problem solving behaviour in detail. Basically, the chapter has sought to identify relevant works analysing problems and problem solving behaviours that have connection with marital stability (in this case divorce). We have surveyed several aspects of the studies in the field, and have found out that although most studies share some similar characteristics, they differ in several areas, such as in design, data collection, and sampling.

In the light of the literature survey carried out in the chapter, this study attempts to contribute to accumulated knowledge of marital relationships in the following points.

To the best of our knowledge, this study presents the first attempt to identify the premarital problems from the point of view of currently married and divorced individuals. Therefore, we interviewed both married and divorced individuals retrospectively to collect relevant data for the purpose of the study. Although this study is similar to some of the previous studies (for example, Goode 1956; Kitson & Sussman, 1982) in some aspects, such as retrospective open-ended interviewing, it differs from these studies in such a way that our sample includes both married and divorced individuals. Also, it includes two levels of information, namely, premarital and marital. This allows us to compare married and divorced individuals in terms of their premarital problems and marital problems. Also, it makes the comparison of premarital problems to marital problems possible.

As can be seen from the literature review, problem solving studies are widely conducted in western communities (e.g., German, American, and Australian) and the findings widely indicated the gender differences. In this respect, there is a dearth of research with other societal samples (Julien et al., 1997). Therefore, we believe that this study would contribute to the literature by studying a Turkish sample.

Problem solving studies mainly focus on the first few years (generally first five years) of marriage. However, as relationships do not start with marriage, it may be misleading to begin to examine the marriages only after the wedding date. Therefore, in this study we have taken the time before the marriage and a time longer than five years in order to gain information as to whether individuals have different perception of problem solving styles in the longer term as far as marriage is concerned.⁶

Moreover, normally, problem solving behaviour studies employ observational data collection systems, except measuring marital satisfaction, as mentioned earlier. There are relatively few studies that used self-report measures on problem solving behaviours (not marital satisfaction) (Christensen 1988; Kurdek, 1995). However, these self-report measures are in the form of structured, forced-choice questionnaire studies. In contrast, the present study has questioned individuals about their problem solving behaviours with open-ended questions. In this way, it is believed that the perceptions of the respondents are better revealed.

In relation to cultural context, this study fulfils a significant gap by focusing on the differences in premarital and marital problems between divorced and currently married individuals, and between sexes. It has been asserted that due to the fast changing cultural context of Turkey, demographic correlates of marital adjustment (e.g., gender) is essential for clinicians since marriage and family therapists might adapt their programs to the different needs (Demir & Fisiloglu, 1999). We also claim that it is important to show the differences between continuing and dissolved marriages regarding problem issues to both practitioners and the lay persons since these issues might change over time as well. Also, the present study appears to be the first one that investigates the relationships between premarital and marital problems and consequent divorce in Turkey.

⁶ See Chapter 5 for more detail about demographics.

CHAPTER 4

Methodology

4.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, the review of literature has indicated that problem and problem solving studies could be studied cross-sectionally or longitudinally, retrospectively or prospectively. Although in some cases, methodological differences may lead to result differences (as Gottman and Krokoff, 1989, found differences between cross-sectional and longitudinal analysis of the data), the majority of the studies provide consistent findings despite methodological differences. According to these findings, currently married and divorced individuals differ in their perceptions of premarital and marital problem characteristics, problem frequencies, problem severity and their problem solving approaches to the encountered problems.

The present study aims at finding out the differences between currently married and divorced individuals in terms of premarital and marital problem experiences. It also examines the problem solving differences, and connections between premarital and marital problems, and premarital and marital problem solving with currently married and divorced professional in Ankara Turkey.

Marital stability (being in a currently married status or being in a divorced status) is used to group the sample employed in this study. Despite the fact that the studies that used marital satisfaction (or quality) as criterion or dependent variable were also reviewed in the previous chapter in some respects, the present study focuses on only the stability aspect of marriage.¹ In this context, a longitudinal retrospective interview technique within cross-sectional design (Featherman, 1980) is employed for the purpose of this

¹ There is some evidence that marital satisfaction and marital dissolution are clearly related (e.g., Gottman & Levenson, 1992; see also Karney & Bradbury, 1995).

study, since it provides an acceptable methodology for investigating the change in the relationships. Therefore, we interviewed 81 individuals (currently married and divorced) concerning marital problems and problem solving at the premarital and marital stages.

This chapter represents and discusses the data collection procedure, interview schedule, data coding scheme, and analysis of the data employed to study influence of premarital and marital problems and the styles of their resolutions on marital stability.

4.2. Recruitment of Interviewees

For the purpose of the study, the respondents were recruited by snowballing since other ways of sampling did not seem to work. First, it did not appear to be possible to gain access to the official records because of their confidentiality. Second, advertising in newspapers and pasting notices on area notice boards also were ruled out because people are not accustomed to it in Turkey. Consequently, it was decided that the most convenient way to establish a sample would be by snowballing. However, the researcher was determined to recruit the interviewees from as broad a spectrum of workplaces as possible in order to embrace as many social networks as possible.

The studies examining structural antecedents of divorce have shown that occasions of divorce vary according to law, religion, cultural values etc. (see Trent & South, 1989). That is why the sample was established in the capital city of Turkey, Ankara, which served our aim well for several reasons. Firstly, Ankara is a metropolitan city in which it is easy to find female professionals as well as male professionals. It is also more likely that professional people marry in a non-arranged manner (Dikecligil, V. Baser, Avcilar, A. E. Baser, Demirci, & Kavuncu, 1998) and practice modern values of law in administration (Kagitcibasi, 1998). Therefore, this meets the study's requirement that individuals know each other before marriage and they themselves chose their spouse for marriage instead of their families. Secondly, this city is in the region which has the second highest divorce rate (0.54%) among the 5 regions according to the division made

by the State Statistic Institute [SIS] (1995). According to this division, the divorce rates by the regions were: first region 0.62%, second region 0.54%, third region 0.44%, fourth region 0.40%, fifth region 0.15%, and over all 0.46%.

Potential participants were contacted by phone or face-to-face to determine their eligibility and their interest in participating in the research, and the appointments were made by the researcher. Candidates were informed about the aim of the research, the interview content and that the interview would be recorded. Eligibility requirements were: a) to have a permanent job, b) to have a higher education, c) not to have an arranged marriage. It was expected that individuals recruited for the study may have practiced a premarital dating period, and consequently they had the chance of monitoring relationship problems and practising premarital problem solving interactions, with which this study is concerned.

Most of the candidates who were contacted for the interviews were willing to be part of the research. However, a few (4 individuals) declined to be part of the study for specific reasons. When asked, they gave several explanations for their rejections. Some had already agreed with their spouses that they would not betray them by talking about their past. While some expressed that they did not want to go all through the divorce process again, which they had already experienced in the court, with their family and others. Some of them stated very frankly that they did not believe that talking about the past would bring about any good even for the purpose of this research. On the other hand, after being interviewed, most interviewees said that they had enjoyed talking to the interviewer.

4.3. The Sample

A sample of 81 individuals (34 currently married and 47 divorced) participated in this study². First time married and divorced individuals were considered as eligible for the

² More information about the sample was given in Chapter 5.

recruitment. In the sample, 96 percent of the divorced individuals had less than five years pass since their divorce. All members of the sample have higher education levels and have jobs. The majority of the respondents defined themselves as moderate level religious believers (Muslim), however, only six respondents identified themselves as being atheist. Respondents for both groups in the sample (29.16 million Turkish Liras for married and 26.40 million Turkish Liras for divorced) were considered middle class with an average income for the Turkish society using the Household Income and Consumption Expenditure Survey Results for the time of the study (State Institute of Statistics, 2000).

4.4. Procedure

Although a great majority of interviews took place in the interviewees' homes, some of them were conducted at the interviewees' work places, as they preferred. In order to keep an accurate record of data, the interviews were tape recorded with the permission of the respondents. One of the interviewees refused to have her voice recorded, giving no explanation for that. Consequently, that particular interview had to be written down as the interview proceeded.

A standardised format was used for the whole interview schedule.³ Each respondent was taken through the same procedure. All respondents were asked an identical set of questions in the same order. The researcher took care to make sure that all the questions were answered by the respondents to prevent missing information (data). Probing (Patton, 1980) including clarification (I am not sure What you said exactly, could you go over it again, please); elaboration (could you tell me please, how did you behave afterwards?); and the general probes (were there any other problems that you experienced?) used to obtain responses that were as consistent as possible in terms of depth and complexity. After each question was answered, the researcher required the interviewees to summarise the answer that they had given in an itemised format by helping them remember. For example, 1. I talked to his mother to solve the problems; 2. I

³ See Appendix 1 for the detail.

talked to him; 3. We went to a professional for help to get rid of the problems. Sometimes recorded pieces were listened to during the interview to facilitate summation. This procedure provided us with further clarifications of answers eliminating a misunderstanding, which in turn facilitated the coding procedure.

All interviews were conducted by the researcher, who adopted a neutral, impartial stance, which is considered as one of the ways that addresses potential interviewer bias. The interviewer had previous experiences with clinical interviews having worked with children and their families in a psychiatric clinic, in Ankara, Turkey. Furthermore, she is familiar with the method of interviewing as outlined by Fielding (1993).

Before the interview was conducted once again the interviewees were provided with information about the research, researcher, and interview content in which they were about to partake. It was made clear that they should ask about anything they did not understand during the interview.

4.5. Interview Schedule

The interview questions follow a prospective approach starting from the engagement period to the divorce and ranged from general informative questions towards private informative questions. The interview was divided into a number of sections: 1-general information section; 2- first awareness of problems and the identification them and their sources; 3- problem solving responses; 4- support from outsiders. Other than general information, the other sections include premarital and marital phases.

Section 1- General Information.

This section is designed to obtain demographic information about the respondents. The questions regarding, sex, age, occupational and educational status, the age at the time of marriage, the duration of marriage, and the number of children were included in this section. Also, this section served as warming up phase for the respondents facilitating

recollection. After demographic information had been gathered, the respondents were asked about their marriages in detail.

Section 2- Awareness of Problems and Sources of Problems.

The respondents were asked if they were aware of any problems relating to their marriage. The questions were about when the respondents became aware of problems, whether they or their partners were the first to be aware. The respondents were then asked to identify the nature of the problems in detail. Regarding problem identification, they were asked, "Did anything else happen?" until they said "no".

Section 3- Problem Solving

When they had identified the problems they were then asked what they did to deal with them. Furthermore, they were asked about their spouses' response to the problems as well. To help clarify the type of activities that could be labelled problem solving, all of the subjects were given the same examples; i.e. try to solve the problem, ignore the problems, engage in a fight with the partner. In this section the respondents were questioned on how effective their problem solving methods were and if they were unsuccessful, explanations were then asked for.

4.6. Coding Process for Premarital and Marital Problems

The data obtained via open-ended questions with respect to premarital and marital problems were coded step by step following the procedure detailed below.

Step 1: All interviews were transcribed in verbatim form. Then, the transcripts were read repeatedly by the researcher to ensure that adequate familiarity was achieved with the content.

Step 2: Problem statements and related texts were identified from transcripts and listed from across all the respondents. Every different statement encountered in the transcribed text was included in the list.

Step 3: Listed individual items were clustered around related sub category (for example, jealousy).

Step 4: Related sub-categories were gathered around one wider category (for example, sub-categories of problems with friends and problems with family members constituted social network problems).

Step 5: With the inductively created problem sub-categories, a frequency analysis was conducted for all the respondents. It was conducted one by one case and statement by statement. Every citation (or statement) of the problems by the case was recorded for the related sub-category.

Step 6: For the wider categories, any citation of problems independent of how many problems cited for the sub-categories under the same wider category was counted as one.

4.7. Overview of the Coding for Premarital and Marital Problem Solving

For the problem solving coding, the codes (or categories such as positive problem solving, conflict engagement, withdrawal and submission) were applied to every answer for the open-ended question 'how did you solve the problem'. According to whether answers included one or more categories of problem solving, a 'yes' (1) or 'no' (2) value was applied to the answer for each category. In this way, the qualitative data become quantified and appropriate for the statistical analysis.

Although there are quite a few observational coding systems, there exist relatively few self-report measurement tools directly focusing on problem solving behaviour.⁴ However, we were interested in the self-report version of the problem solving behaviour. Therefore, Kurdek's (1994) categorisation of problem solving behaviour seemed appropriate for the study. We had several reasons for borrowing the categories from Kurdek's conflict resolution style Inventory. First of all, according to Kurdek, it appeared to be relevant to code one partner level self-report problem solving since the data was collected from individuals. Secondly, it focuses on direct problem solving behaviours rather than general communication issues such as affect etc. during problem solving. Thirdly, as a

⁴ There are plenty of self report measurement tools aiming at measurement of marital satisfaction. Some items of various tools measure communication behaviour. However, it should be remembered that the major target of these measurement tools is to define marital satisfaction (or adjustment, or quality) level rather than problem solving styles.

measurement, it also had an acceptable level of validity (predicted relationship dissolution) and reliability levels (for detailed information see Kurdek, 1994). Furthermore, using the same measurement tools allow us to make comparisons across studies. For example, forced-choice self report data and the data obtained via open-ended questions (our study) could be comparable.

4.8. Data Analysis

The quantified data (coded data) was evaluated by using the SPSS (Statistical computing package for windows). In the present study, the data was mainly categorical, therefore, cross-tabulations were performed and initially chi-square analyses were carried out. In addition, loglinear analyses were performed as they are capable of handling more than two categorical variables. Additionally, discriminant function analyses were carried out using premarital and marital problem domains. Regarding discriminant analyses, in particular, we wanted to know which problem domains were good predictors of marital status.

Regarding quantified data a reliability check was carried out. All the responses for the questions with respect to problem awareness were recoded by the researcher and Kappa coefficient was calculated as .93 between two separate codings. In addition, the answers of the randomly chosen 40 individuals in relation to problem solving behaviour were recoded by another coder (doctoral level social science student) and inter-coder reliability was found as .76 (Kappa Coefficient). Both Kappa values are considered as acceptable.

A separate chapter is included in this thesis in order to study qualitative aspects of the data as it was considered that accounts of respondents regarding premarital experiences would complement and extent the quantitative analysis conducted in this study. With respect to qualitative analysis, the spontaneous accounts of respondents were analysed. In other words, we wanted to see why respondents failed to detect the problems in their premarital relationship, and why currently divorced individuals continued towards marriage despite the fact that they were aware of problems in their premarital

relationships. In contrast to quantitative analysis, all the cases were not included into the qualitative analysis since the accounts that were the subject of this chapter were voluntarily brought about by the respondents.

4.9. Conclusion

This chapter has given the methodology utilised in this study in detail. As explained in the chapter, retrospective longitudinal interviewing within the cross-sectional design was used for data collection, since it provides an acceptable methodology to study the relationships problems and their relations across the premarital and marital stages. The interview has open-ended questions to facilitate more information from the interviewees. The data obtained via interview questions related to premarital and marital problem awareness were inductively coded by the codes developed by the researcher, while the data related to problem solving behaviour were coded deductively with codes borrowed from Kurdek (1994). Coded data was analysed through relevant statistical analysis, such as chi-square, t-test, Pearson correlation, discriminant analysis, and loglinear analysis.

CHAPTER 5

Results of Quantitative Analysis

5.1. Introduction

The objective of this study is to investigate and to analyse problems and problem solving behaviour in premarital and marital stages with regard to marital stability. In the previous chapter, the selected methodology, for data collection and data analyses, was explained. As mentioned previously, from the various methodological approaches, we have chosen retrospective longitudinal interviewing for the purpose of the study.

In this chapter, the results of the interview data are presented. The main underlying assumption is that there is a relationship between premarital and marital problems and divorce. Also, problem solving behaviours of individuals at both premarital and marital stages are expected to be significantly related to marital stability. The statistical results for the analysis of the data have been obtained by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

The remainder of this chapter is organised as follows. We begin by giving the categories developed for data coding regarding premarital and marital problems. Then we present demographic information about our interview data. Next, we give the results corresponding to the total number, nature, and frequency of premarital and marital problems. Afterwards, we concentrate on the correlations between premarital and marital problems. And then, we present the results obtained using chi-square, discriminant function, and loglinear analyses regarding marital stability. Following that we give the results obtained through comparisons made between currently married and divorced respondents about problem solving behaviour at the premarital and marital stages.

5.2. Categorisation of Premarital and Marital Problems.

The open-ended question “What problems did you encounter during or prior to your marriage?” was asked of each respondent. Their answers, which were various, were listed, and then the listed answers were organised into small groups (sub categories) according to similarity. By the same token, the small groups of answers were grouped again under a wider more abstract category, because the frequencies of sub-grouping do not allow us to carry out statistical analysis for comparison. Then, created categories were re-imposed to the data to find out exact frequency levels. As far as the coding procedure is concerned, the unit of coding was one problem statement or response. Any statement that could suggest a problem was coded into the related category. The categories are summarised in the following sections.¹

1. Personality Attributes: This broad category was used to code any attribute of a spouse's personality as a problem. For example, “he was always tired,” “he drank a lot”, “she did not question anything”, “she was actually stupid”. As can be seen from Table 1 in Appendix 1, this category included a wide range of personality attributes. These were (1) drinking; (2) jealousy; (3) being tired, miserable, complaining; (4) not being clever or intellectual, and not questioning; (5) being easily manipulated; (6) inconsistency, lying and deceiving; (7) obstinacy; (8) resorting physical power; (9) having annoying habits; (10) becoming easily angered; and (11) the others. The category of *personality attributes* as problems could be easily related to the other areas of coding, and could, therefore, create some problems with coding. In order to solve this problem, the researcher used the respondents' way of presentation of the problems as a reference. For example, money spending could be problematic as to which category of coding would be used because it could be coded either under *personality attributes* as an annoying habit or under *attitude and value differences*. In such a position, the researcher investigated whether the problem referred to a flaw of personality or to attitude and value difference by the respondent. For instance, if the respondent stated that “ she was a miserly person” then it was accepted as

¹ Although these coding categories were developed relating to premarital and marital problems are in line with Goode's (1956), Levinger's (1966), and Kitson and Sussman's (1982) in many respects, we developed our own coding categories inductively, because it is believed that inductive coding may prevent the original characteristics of the data from being lost.

a personality attribute, whereas if the respondent stated that “ she had a different spending approach than mine” the statement would then be coded as differences of attitude and value category. This method is in line with Goode’s (1956) and Kitson and Sussman’s (1982) coding styles.

Examples from the data:

She would complain a lot about the events happening to her everyday, such as the buses are too crowded, or it is raining too much, whereas somebody else would not complain. Basically, she was a miserable person. (a 32-year-old male divorcee)

I noticed that he was jealous, we even separated once because of this. (a 29-year-old female divorcee)

She took everything at face value, and never questioned anything... for this reason I never wanted to marry her in the first place. (a 34-year-old male divorcee)

She was the sort of person that was easily influenced by others...She was always affected by others, for example, if a friend of hers said that her hair did not suit her then she would go and change it. For me this was a big flaw in her personality. (a 37-year-old male divorcee)

She was so docile that I felt something was wrong. (a 28-year-old divorced male)

2. Social Network: Social network problems were one of the most frequently mentioned problem categories and were easy to code due to their clarity in this study. These problems emerged in four different forms, namely, family interference, disputes between partners and in-laws, family opposition, and conflict over friends. It was observed that one form of social network problems would be together with another form of social network problems. For example, family interference and the opposition to the marriage would be stated as problems by the same respondent. On the other hand, it is not always necessary to have one social network problem associated with another one. For instance, family opposition did not always include dispute or interference. As far as the sample of

this study is concerned, interference was the most problematic issue perceived by the respondents.

Examples from the data:

She and I did not have many problems between us, but our families were from different sects of our religion. Her family was Alevi² and my family was Sunni³, so it created problems. My family did not want me to marry her so we had to deal with this. (a 32-year-old male divorcee)

My family's behaviour made her uncomfortable, for example my father's drinking. This invaded our agenda for quite a while. (a 30-year-old divorced male)

My husband's family tried to influence our decisions as to which house we should rent, which region we should live in, these were problems for me. (a 28-year-old married female)

My husband's mum did not like me at first, I think she found me too modern in my behaviour and dress, and behaved coldly towards me, I also reacted her in the same way. This was reflected in our relations with my husband. (a 31-year-old divorced female)

3. Attitude and Value Differences. The differences between the wife and the husband in relation to life style, preferences over belongings and choice of entertainment; the views of female and male roles in the family; political preferences; child raising; and money were coded into this category. This category was one of the most frequently stated problem domains by the respondents. As already mentioned, under personality attributes, it could be one of the most problematic categories for coding since other category codes could easily be thought of as being part of attitude and value differences. To decide when the attitude and value differences occurred as a problem, it was referred to the answer and context without much interpretation of the problem. Simply, if the problem issue related to the views, opinions, and believes about goods, concepts, roles, political parties, it was coded under this category.

Examples from the data:

² One of the religious sects in Turkey

³ One of the religious sects in Turkey

My husband supported the leader of the military coup. This made me sick. (a 38-year-old female divorcee)

He and I have a very different understanding of marriage. He understood it to be just as Islam decrees. (a 30-year-old divorced female)

She believed that the children should be educated in private schools, I opposed this idea. (a 38-year-old married male)

4. Communication: The problems relating to the theme of communication were coded into this category. The complaints in this domain included over-criticism, insult and put-downs by the partner, use of bad language, shouting; partner's and respondent's difficulties in sharing problems; sulking, not being listened to by the partner. Communication was another frequently mentioned problem domain of this study and it was relatively straightforward for the process of coding.

Examples from the data:

She sulked quite a lot. (a 28-year-old male divorcee)

He did not speak his mind to me. (a 31-year-old married female)

He would talk of his problems but he would never listen to you , and he did not know how to listen. (a 42-year-old female divorcee)

I did not want to talk to her at all. (a 29-year-old male divorcee)

The relationship became so cold between us, it was not possible to have daily chats like we used to do. (a 35-year-old male divorcee)

5. Closeness and Sexual Problems: Since sexual difficulties were not widely present for the research sample, they were considered together with closeness. Other than sexual difficulties, this category of problems included partners' being unfaithful to each other and remote in affectional closeness.

Examples from the data:

I did not want to make love with her any more, since everything else was so bad. (a 34-year-old male divorcee)

I wanted sex but he did not. (a 31-year-old -female divorcee)

We could not have sex at the beginning, she was so nervous and we had to have some counselling for that. (a 30-year-old-married male)

I caught her with some one else, I could not live with that. (a 37-year-old male divorcee)

6. *Economical Problems and Job Commitments:* Any form of economical hardship, joblessness, and job changing were usually considered in this category. For some respondents, joblessness appeared to be the actual problem rather than economical hardship. It would be the respondent, or either partner being jobless that would be the problem. Without considering economical hardship, if joblessness created a problem in itself, it was entered under joblessness. If it was combined with economical hardship, which was true for most cases, both sub categories, economical hardship and joblessness, were given a frequency score. In this case, the broad category, economical problems and job commitments, had only one frequency score. For example, a 31-year-old divorced male stated:

She did not have a job, was at home all day and had to wait for me to have someone talk to, so if I was five minute late, we had continuous arguments about it. If she had a job we would not have to face all these. (a 32-year-old divorced male)

In this case, we considered only joblessness as the problem rather than economical hardship since the respondent did not mention economical hardship.

7. *House Maintenance:* Problems relating to a partner's role in maintaining the house were considered under this category. Sub-categories in this domain included inadequate support for housework and child-care, frequent absence from the house and neglecting the

house and children financially. Financial neglect would seem to be related to economical problems, however, in this case, financial neglect has been differentiated from the economical problems. The problem was labelled as financial neglect only if it included an element of neglect, in other words, if a partner wilfully neglected the needs of the children and house financially as opposite to economical hardship, it would be considered under this category.

Examples from the data:

She would leave piles of dishes in the kitchen for ages, many times I ended up changing the nappies of our daughter. (a 32-year-old married male)

He spent nights out without us, he did not eat evening meals quite often. (a 29-year-old female divorcee)

I was doing everything by myself, he would not leave enough money and when he left for business trips, I would spend all my money on the house and children. (a 38-year-old female divorcee)

8. Excessive Control and lack of Trust: The problems in this category appeared in the form of either excessive control or lack of trust, or both together. Lack of trust and control generally tended to appear together, however, there were occasions when they not did occur together, therefore, they were coded separately under two different sub-categories as excessive control and lack of trust according to their presence.

Examples from the data:

He used to draw my route home, I was not allowed to change the route. At a later stage, I considered this to be ridiculous so I walked home using a different route and this was enough to create the apocalypse at home. We had a huge argument. (a 31-year-old female divorcee)

When I sold the car, I put the money into an account, one day my wife wanted me put it into her own account. She could not trust me, although I have never been untrustworthy. When I got divorced I left everything to her. (a 34-year-old male divorcee)

9. Marriage as an Institution: This coding category emerged in situations that respondents directly blamed marriage itself for their unhappiness and divorce. Complaints of marriage were arranged in two forms: marriage as killer of romanticism and marriage as a depletor of personal growth. Since none of the respondents saw themselves able to cohabit, they ended up marrying their partners.

Examples from the data:

Marriage made me feel suffocated and interfered with my social activities such as involvement with my political party actively. (a 33-year-old female divorcee)

Marriage killed my respect and love for my husband. I believe that if we did not have to marry and lived in the same house, we would be still lovers. (a 33-year-old female divorcee)

10. Other problems: Problems that were mentioned by only one or two respondents and were not possible to code under any other categories treated as other problem category.

Examples from the data:

My wife was not a virgin when we got married, it created some problems between us. (a 31-year-old male divorcee)

We had to live in different cities so it ruined our marital life. (a 26-year-old female divorcee)

5.3. Demographics

In this section, the main demographic information including marital status, gender, age, age at the time of marriage, duration of dating and engagement, duration of marriage, occupation, income and the number of children is given about the research sample.

5.3.1. Marital Status

Table 5.1 presents marital status of participants in the study.

Table 5.1: Distribution of Cases according to Marital Status

<i>Marital status</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
divorced	47	58.0
married	34	47.0

As can be seen from the table, 34 married and 47 divorced individuals volunteered to participate in the study. The divorced group is slightly over represented in size than those who are in continuing marriages.

5.3.2. Gender

Table 5.2 shows the distribution of individuals' marital status as far as their gender is concerned.

Table 5.2: Gender and Marital Status

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Married</i>		<i>Marital Status</i>		<i>Total</i>	
			<i>Divorced</i>			
	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Female	17	21	28	34.5	45	55.6
Male	17	21	19	23.5	36	44.4
Total	34	42	47	58	81	100

Of the participants, 45 were females and 36 males as shown in Table 5.2. The largest group in the sample was female divorcees (34.5%) following by divorced males (23.5%). The number of currently married males and females were the same (21% each).

5.3.3. Age, Age at the Time of Marriage, the Duration of Engagement, Marriage, and Dating

The following table presents the information about age, the duration of engagement, marriage, and dating of the sample.

Table 5.3: Age, Age at the Time of Marriage, Duration of Engagement, Marriage, and Dating

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Groups</i>			<i>Level of sign. (t-test, two tailed)</i>
	<i>Married</i>	<i>Divorced</i>	<i>Total</i>	
	<i>n=34 %</i>	<i>n=47 %</i>	<i>n=81 %</i>	
Age				
M	35.76	34.53	35.04	.486
SD	5.49	5.54	5.52	
Age at the time of marriage				
M	25.11	24.04	24.49	
SD	3.16	4.13	3.77	
Duration of marriage (in years)				
M	11.7	7.1	9.05	.127
SD	6.1	5.5	6.22	
Duration of engagement (in months)				
M	8	7	7.46	.771
SD	8.5	10.6	9.75	
Duration of dating (in months)				
M	25.2	19.2	22.66	.034
SD	28.8	20.2	24.73	

As can be seen from Table 5.3, the age of individuals in the sample ranged from 24 to 49 years old, with a mean age of 35. While the mean age of divorced respondents was 34.5, it was 35.7 for married respondents. For the age of marriage, the sample ranged from 15 to 34, with a mean age of 24.49. For the divorcees, the mean age was 24, and for the married respondents, the mean age was 25. The mean length of marriage was 9.05 years for total sample, there did not appear to be a significant difference between the married

(11.7 years) and the divorced (7.1 years) relating to the duration of marriage. On the other hand, the duration of engagement did not also differ in two groups, divorced = 8 months and married = 7 months, while the duration of the dating slightly longer in the married (25.2 months) than the divorced (19.2 months).

5.3.4. Distribution of Occupation

Table 5.4 presents the distribution of professions of the respondents.

Table 5.4: Distribution of Occupation

<i>Occupations</i>	<i>Marital Status</i>		
	<i>Married</i> <i>n= 34 (%)</i>	<i>Divorced</i> <i>n=47 (%)</i>	<i>Total</i> <i>n =81(%)</i>
Teaching/ lecturing	8 (23.5)	11 (23.4)	19 (23.5)
Banking sector	2 (5.9)	8 (17.0)	10 (12.3)
Health professionals	10 (29.4)	6 (12.8)	16 (19.8)
Engineering and technical jobs	5 (14.7)	5 (10.6)	10 (12.3)
Official and administrative	-	5 (10.6)	5 (6.2)
Secretary	2 (5.9)	4 (8.5)	6 (7.4)
Freelance	3 (8.8)	3 (6.4)	6 (7.4)
Other	4 (11.8)	5 (10.6)	9 (11.1)

As shown in Table 5.4, teaching / lecturing is the most common occupation (23.5%) in the sample in both the married and the divorced groups, with health professionals (19.8%) following closely. Banking and engineering sectors were represented equally in the whole sample (12.3%), while official and technical jobs (6.2%), freelance, and secretarial jobs (7.4%) all had similar percentages. On the other hand, 11.1% of the total had other jobs and could not be coded into a particular job category. The banking sector, health professionals, and official and administrative jobs appeared to differ in their frequencies according to marital status.

5.3.5. Income

The following table indicates the income level of the married and divorced respondents.

Table 5. 5: Income (in Million Turkish Liras-TL)⁴

<i>Marital status</i>	<i>Income</i>	
	<i>M</i> (<i>Mean</i>)	<i>SD</i> (<i>Standard Deviation</i>)
Married	29.94	12.60
Divorced	26.40	7.85
$t=1.554$	$df=79$	$p=.124$

As Table 5.5 indicates, there is a slight difference between married and divorced individuals, which is not statistically significant. However, the standard deviation is considerably higher for the married group (12.60). It should be noted that these figures represent the level of income distribution at the time the interviews were carried out.

5.3.6. Children

The number of offspring stemming from the marriage is shown in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6: Distribution of the Children

<i>Number of children</i>	<i>Marital status</i>		
	<i>Married</i> %	<i>Divorced</i> %	<i>Total</i> %
No children	5.9	25.5	42.0
One and two children	94.1	74.5	58.0
$\chi^2=5.323$	$df=1$		$P=.02$

As Table 5.6 shows the greatest number of children for a given marriage is two. According to the table, the number of divorced members without children was larger than

⁴ At the time the research was carried out, the average salary of a teacher was around 18 million Turkish Liras. This figure may give some information as to socio-economic level of the sample (see State Institution of Statistics, 2000).

married members. While 94.1% of married individuals had 1 or 2 children, 74.5% of divorced individuals had 1 or 2 two children.

5.4. Premarital Problems

One of the purposes of this study is to document premarital and marital problems of married and divorced individuals. This section of the findings will depict the premarital problems and the comparison of the main problem areas between the two groups. The same data analysis procedure was followed in order to identify the problem domains for both the premarital and the marital stages.

In the light of the fact that the trends in the data are later investigated using the multivariate methods of discriminant function analysis and log-linear, the multiplicity of significance testing in the present analysis is not addressed. These analyses should be regarded as exploratory and the importance of the findings better seen through the findings of the multivariate analyses.

5.4.1. Divorced Individuals versus Currently Married Individuals

Table 5.7 depicts the results with respect to premarital problems of currently married and divorced respondents.⁵ As can be seen from the table, for each problem category, frequency rates of currently married and divorced respondents are presented and are compared in term of chi-square results. Then, the overall frequency rates of the respondents who reported any of the given categories of problems are shown and married respondents are compared to the divorced respondents. Finally, the information presented in the table is related to total number of problems, which is calculated by adding every complaint made by the interviewees.

⁵ It should be noticed that the statistical analyses carried out here focuses on the marital stability. We compared married females with divorced females and married males with divorced males together with comparison of all married with all divorced individuals. Gender differences are examined in separate analysis, which will be presented in next sections.

Table 5.7: Premarital Problems of Married and Divorced Respondents in Percentages and Comparisons of Married Individuals against Divorced Individuals

<i>Main Problem Domains</i>	<i>All M</i>	<i>All D</i>		<i>MF</i>	<i>DF</i>		<i>MM</i>	<i>DM</i>	
	% <i>n=34</i>	% <i>n=47</i>	χ^2	% <i>n=17</i>	% <i>n=28</i>	χ^2	% <i>n=17</i>	% <i>n=19</i>	χ^2
Social network	23.5	34.0	1.04	35.3	32.1	.04	11.8	36.8	3.00[†]
Attitude differences	20.6	23.4	.09	17.6	21.4	.09	23.5	26.3	.03
Behaviour problems (or personality attributes)	8.8	29.8	5.22*	11.8	28.6	1.72	5.9	31.6	3.78[†]
Communication problems	0	6.4	2.25	0	3.6	.62	0	10.5	1.89
Closeness and sexual prob.	8.8	8.5	.00	11.8	10.7	.01	5.9	5.3	.00
Economical problems	2.9	6.4	.49	5.9	7.1	.02	0	5.3	.92
Excessive control and lack of trust	-	6.4	2.25	0	10.7	1.95	0	0	0
Marriage as an institution	-	6.4	2.25	0	7.1	1.2	0	5.3	.92
Other problems	-	2.1	.73	0			0		
Overall percentage of the respondents who reported problem.	55.9	68.1	1.25	58.8	64.3	.13	52.9	73.7	1.67
Total number of problems	24	76	t	14	42	t	10	34	t
X	.70	1.61	-3.84**	.82	1.50	-1.87[†]	.58	1.78	-3.37**
SD	.79	1.32		.88	1.31		.71	1.35	

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100. Multiple complaints are included.

M = Married; D = Divorced; MF = Married Female; DF = Divorced Female; MM = Married Male; DM = Divorced Male.

Fisher's exact tests are shown in bold characters.

[†] $p < .1$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

As can be seen from the table, domains of premarital problems are presented by marital status and gender, according to frequency. From the table we can see that the most common problem area was related to the social network. Both divorced (23.5%) and married groups (34.0%) stated that they often encountered problems with their families and sometimes with friends, although the difference was not statistically significant. Social network problems took several forms, which is documented in detail in Appendix 2. However, these problems emerged in different proportions for divorced and married. For example, while the divorced subjects (21.3%) most frequently complained about

family opposition to marriage, the married subjects (17.6%) complained most often about issues that were related to family interference. The difference between the married and the divorced with regard to family opposition was statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 5.65$, $p < .05$. However, in terms of family interference the difference was not statistically significant.

As far as the divorced individuals are concerned, the second important issue was the dispute between the divorcees and their in-laws. Although it is not statistically significant, it appeared that the divorced participants (10.6%) complained about it more than the married (2.9%) as shown in Table 5.1. On the other hand, family interference was more of a problem for the married respondents (17.6%) than the divorced (6.6%). The table shows that married individuals were more concerned with intrusion to their union by an outsider than the divorced.

Another main problem domains, which were common among both groups, was attitude differences, 20.6% for married and, 23.4% for divorced. This category included differences in life style, sex-role, political view, and attitudes towards money. Similar to the social network problems, although there appeared to be no major differences in reporting this domain as a problem between married and divorced, there were salient differences in sub-categories of the domain. For instance, sex roles were reported as being of main concern by the divorcees (12.8%) while none of the married mentioned it as problem. Life style differences were concerned similarly by the two groups, 14.7% for married and 12.8% for divorced. On the other hand, money was a concern for both groups with slight differences, married (5.9%), divorced (8.5%).

The third main problem domain relates to personality attributes, which covers a wide range of problems.⁶ The reports of divorced and married respondents about problems relating to the personality attributes did not coincide. That is to say, only 8.8% of the married group mentioned them, while 29.8% of the divorced did, which provided us with

⁶ The detailed information about personality attributes is documented in Appendix 2.

a statistically significant differences between the married and the divorcees ($\chi^2(1) = 5.22$, $p < .01$). The divorced individuals reported that problems relating to personality attributes were highly stressful for them. From the various personality attributes, jealousy (10.6%) and intellectual abilities of their partner (8.5%) were reported as salient concerns for the divorced more than any other sub-categories.

To summarise, the results indicating the frequencies of premarital problem domains between the currently married and the divorced are in line with the expectation that some problem domains will be more frequently cited than others (Hypothesis 4 and 11). Additionally, in relation to the hypothesis that certain problem areas will differentiate between married and divorced respondents (Hypothesis 3), it can be said that personality problems were significantly more common among the divorced respondents than currently married respondents.

In relation to the total number of problems reported for premarital level, t- tests scores comparing currently married individuals ($M = .70$) with divorced individuals ($M = 1.61$) were also significant, $t(79) = -3.84$, $p < .01$. This finding supports the first hypothesis that divorced individuals report more problems than the currently married individuals regarding premarital level.

5.4.2. Married Females versus Divorced Females, and Married Males versus Divorced Males

As it was with the married females, social network problems were also the most common among divorced females for premarital level. This was followed by personality attributes and attitude differences. For the married females, social network problems were most common, followed by attitude differences and then personality attributes. Comparing married females to divorced females, none of the problem domains were significantly different in frequency. On the other hand, personality problems concerned the divorced females twice as much as the married females. Furthermore, as it is evident from Table

5.7, excessive control and lack of trust and marriage as an institution were perceived as problems only by the divorced individuals. Social network and closeness and sexual problems were reported in similar frequencies by the both groups.

For the married males, the most cited problem was attitude differences (23.5%) between partners, followed by the social network problems (11.8). Behaviour problems and closeness were reported by a small proportion of the married male (5.9%). On the other hand, divorced males complained most about social network problems (36.8%), personality attributes (31.6%) and then attitude differences (26.3%) between themselves and their partners. The main difference between married males and divorced males was found in the prevalence of personality attributes, although it was not statistically significant. Similarly, although the difference between married males and divorced males with respect to social network problems were not statistically significant, divorced males (36.8%) were twice as likely to have experienced social network problems during the premarital period than married males (11.8%). Furthermore, while none of the married males reported communication problems, 10.5% of divorced males experienced given problems.

5.4.3. Gender Differences in Relation to Premarital Problems

The research question to be answered in this section was whether there were any differences between female and male individuals in relation to premarital problems. In order to answer this question, the respondents were first divided into two groups according to marital status, and then they were sub-divided according to gender. The respondents who are in the same marital status such as currently married or currently divorced were compared to each other in terms of their gender. In other words, married females were compared to married males, while divorced females were compared to divorced males regarding every problem domain by using chi-square analyses. Furthermore, the comparisons between those given groups were made on the total percentages of problems that were experienced by each group. Also, t- tests were

conducted for the comparisons on the global numbers of problems. The following table presents the results of premarital problems in terms of gender differences.

Table 5.8: Premarital Problems according to Gender (Male versus Female)

Main problem domains	All F	All M	χ^2	MF	MM	χ^2	DF	DM	χ^2
	(%) n=	(%) n=47		(%) n=17	(%) n=17		(%) n=28	(%) n=19	
Social network	33.3	25.0	.66	35.3	11.8	.10	32.1	36.8	.11
Attitude differences	20.0	25.0	.28	17.6	23.5	.17	21.4	26.3	.15
Behaviour problems (or personality attributes)	22.2	19.4	.09	11.8	5.9	.36	28.6	31.6	.82
Communication problems	2.2	5.6	.62	0	0	-	3.6	10.5	.91
Closeness and sexual problems	11.1	5.6	.78	11.8	5.9	.36	10.7	5.3	.43
Economical problems	6.7	2.8	.64	5.9	-	1.03	7.1	5.3	.06
Excessive control and lack of trust	6.7	.0	2.49	0	0	-	10.7	0	2.17
Marriage as an institution	4.4	2.8	.15	0	0	-	7.1	5.3	.06
Other problems	6.7	8.3	.08	-	11.8	2.12	10.7	5.3	.43
Total percentage of respondents who reported problems	62.2	63.9	.02	58.8	52.9	.11	64.3	73.7	.46
			t			t			t
Total numbers of problems	56	44	df = 79	14	10	df = 32	42	34	df = 45
X	1.24	1.22	.08	.82	.58	.86	1.50	1.78	-.73
SD	1.20	1.24		.88	.71		1.31	1.35	

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100. Multiple complaints are included.

M = Males, F = Females; MF = Married Female; DF = Divorced Female; MM = Married Male; DM = Divorced Male.

Fisher's exact test is shown in bold characters.

† p < .1. *p < .05, ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

As Table 5.8 shows, none of the problem domains was significant enough in differentiating the married female from the married male respondents and female divorcees from male divorcees in the present sample as far as chi-square values are concerned. However, it is important to highlight some characteristics of the analysis

presented in Table 5.8. For example, excessive control and lack of trust appeared to be a problem for the divorced females only (10.7%). None of the males in both groups (divorced and married) mentioned it as a problem. At the same time, social network problems were three times as likely to be mentioned by the married females (35.3%) than the married males (11.8%).

The result of the analysis of total percentage scores on all problems also fails to demonstrate a significant difference between sexes. In addition, t-test results for the total number of problems reported did not provide significant differences between sexes for either group as shown in Table 5.8. In conclusion, for the premarital level problem domains, this study did not reveal any substantial differences between sexes as far as the number and percentages of reported problems are concerned. Therefore, we found no support for the hypothesis that females report more problems than males for the premarital period (Hypothesis 5).

5.5. Marital Problems

This study has also been interested in the marital problems of the married and divorced respondents, since it was expected that there was a relevant relationship between the marital problems and marital outcomes. To find out marital relationship problems, the respondents were asked “which kind of problems they came across during their marriage period.” The analysis here focuses on the comparison of married and divorced participants on the whole and on the sex differences for the problems the respondents brought. Table 5.9 demonstrates the findings about marital problem regarding marital status.

Table 5.9: Marital Problems and Comparisons of the Currently Married and Currently Divorced Respondents

<i>Main Problem Domains</i>	All M	All D		MF	DF		MM	DM	
	% n=34	% n=47	χ^2	% n=17	% n=28	χ^2	% n=17	% n=19	χ^2
Behaviour problems (or personality attributes)	35.3	68.1	8.54**	41.2	75	5.14*	29.4	57.9	2.94 [†]
Social network	32.4	36.2	.12	35.3	32.1	.04	29.4	42.1	.62
Attitude differences	35.3	61.7	5.50**	29.4	50	1.83	41.2	78.9	5.38*
Communication problems	26.5	48.9	4.16*	17.6	39.3	2.31	35.3	63.2	2.78 [†]
Closeness and sexual problems	17.6	40.4	4.79*	23.5	42.9	1.72	11.8	36.8	3.00[†]
Economical problems	20.6	29.8	.86	23.5	17.9	.212	17.6	47.4	3.56*
House maintenance	29.4	23.4	.37	35.3	21.4	1.03	23.5	26.3	.03
Excessive control and lack of trust	0	29.8	12.24***	0	35.7	7.80**	0	21.1	4.02[†]
Marriage as an institution	2.9	19.1	4.78*	0	21.4	4.20[†]	5.9	15.8	.89
Other problems	-	8.5	3.04[†]	0	10.7		0	5.3	
Overall percentage of respondents who reported any problem	94.1	100	2.83[†]	100	100		88.2	100	2.36[†]
Total number of problems	122	277	t	57	161	t	65	116	t
X	3.58	5.89	-4.06***	3.35	5.75	-2.88**	3.82	6.10	-2.48**
SD	1.98	3.11		1.86	3.09		2.12	3.21	

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100. Multiple complaints are included.

M = Married; D = Divorced; MF = Married Female; DF = Divorced Female; MM = Married Male; DM = Divorced Male.

Fisher's exact test is shown in bold characters.

[†] p < .1. *p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

As it is evident from Table 5.9, problems that were attributed to the personality qualities were most highly mentioned by both married (35.3%) and divorced (68.1%) respondents. Although both groups reported them most frequently, the difference between married individuals and divorced individuals were statistically significant, $\chi^2 (1) = 8.54, p < .01$, which indicated substantial suffering from personality problems on the side of divorced

individuals. These problems included drinking; jealousy; tiredness, frequent complaints, and unhappiness; partner's being not intellectual and clever; being easily affected by other people; inconsistency; lying and deceiving; having annoying habits; being obstinate; physically aggressiveness; and getting angry easily. Although a high percentage of married participants made complaints about the personality attributes of their partners, this rate doubled among the divorced. Furthermore, variations were observed in the number of the sub-categories of the given problems. These differences might be indicative of severity since some sub-groups of this problem domain could be more salient than the others. For instance, among the divorced, problems relating to drinking, violence, intellectual characteristics, and inconsistency in behaviours were more frequent in comparison to the married respondents, in fact, the differences in these sub-categories were statistically significant (see Table A.19 in Appendix 2). In addition, jealousy, lying, partner's being miserable, obstinate and gullible were slightly higher among the divorced and the married respondents. On the other hand, partners' having annoying habits, and getting angry were similarly prevalent between the two groups.

Following personality attributes, attitude differences were the second most highly reported marital problems with married (35.3%) and divorced respondents (61.7%). Attitude and value differences comprised of life style, preferences of entertainment and goods; female and male roles; political views; child raising; and money spending. According to statistical comparison, the difference between two groups was significant, $\chi^2(1) = 5.50, p < .01$. Looking into the sub-categories of attitude differences, attitude differences in sex roles were most likely to indicate significant differences between married and divorced (see Table 21.A in Appendix 2). In fact, none of the married reported sex role differences as problems, while 36.2% of the divorced individuals reported that they suffered differences in understanding female and male roles in their marriage. According to this result married participants shared similar views in their sex roles. Following the sex roles, life style differences for the divorced respondents were slightly higher in ratio than married respondents. Then attitudes towards money and money spending revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between

divorced and married respondents, $\chi^2(1) = 4.78, < .05$. On the other hand, disagreement about child raising did not reveal any differences between the groups.

After attitude differences, communication problems were among the most frequently mentioned, 26.5% of married and 48.9% of divorced respondents perceived that communication emerged as problem domain between couples as presented in Table 5.9. In the domain of communication, the sub-categories of over-criticism, shouting, partner's lacking in sharing feelings and ideas, sulking, over-sensitivity, partner's lack of listening abilities, and respondents' lack of sharing abilities of feelings and ideas were included. Among those sub-categories, over-criticism was more often cited as a communication problem by married (11.8%) and divorced (19.1%). Although the divorced individuals reported it slightly higher than the married individuals, the difference was not statistically significant. On the other hand, sulking appeared to be exclusive to the married people (11.8%). Contrary to the sulking, only the divorced people reported that they did not want to share their feelings and ideas with their partners (10.6%). Shouting and using bad language, and a partner's unwillingness to share their problems and feelings were slightly higher among the divorced than the married. Over sensitivity and a partner's listening problems were similarly cited by the two groups. In conclusion, the communication problems were significantly more frequent among the currently married than the divorced respondents.

Communication problems were followed by closeness and sexual troubles. For instance, 17.6% of married and 40.4% of divorced respondents mentioned that closeness and sexual matters were problems for them as shown in Table 5.9. This result indicated a statistically significant difference between married and divorced respondents, $\chi^2(1) = 4.79, p < .05$.

In summary, the most important differences that emerged between the divorced and married are in the domains of personality attributes, attitudes differences, closeness and sexual problems, and excessive control and lack of trust. This may suggest that some

problems are more likely to relate to divorced individuals than married ones. For example, none of the married individuals mentioned excessive control as a problem for their marriage, while 29 percent of divorced respondents perceived it as concern for their marriage. Regarding the domain of personality attributes, almost twice as many divorcees (68.1%) as married people (35.3%) reported that they were uneasy with the personal characteristics of their partners. Similarly, attitude and value differences between couples were more problematic for divorced (61.7%) than married respondents (35.3%). These results are in line with our hypothesis that, in some domains, more divorced than married individuals cite problems (hypothesis 7). However, our hypothesis that more divorced than married individuals will cite complaints about attitude differences and house maintenance is partly supported (Hypothesis 10). House maintenance problems were similarly prevalent between divorced and married individuals. Additionally, the hypothesis that social network problems differ between married and divorced individuals was not supported (Hypothesis 11).

In three areas of the problem domains, married and divorced subjects showed a similar frequency level of complaints. These were social network (married 32.4%, divorced 36.2%), economical (married 20.6%, divorced 29.8%) and house maintenance problems (married 29.4%, divorced 23.4%). These issues emerged as the impartial areas of the dispute compared to the other problem domains such as adultery, which might be thought as serious flaw to marital stability and quality. Most married people were occupied by these kinds of problems that were generally referred to as triviality and commonalties for daily life. Therefore, the above problem domains (social network, economical, house maintenance) might not establish a good ground for marital instability.

5.5.1. Divorced Females versus Currently Married Females and Divorced Males versus Currently Married Males

Acknowledging the differences found in the marital complaints in terms of gender by previous research (Levinger, 1966; Cleek & Pearson, 1985; Kitson & Sussman, 1982;

Amoto & Rogers, 1997), it was considered that to make comparisons between married females and divorced females and married males and divorced males would be sensible as well as between whole group of divorced individual and whole group of married individuals. As it was done with premarital stage problems, the respondents were first divided according to current marital status and then gender.

Referring to Table 5.9, among the married females, the most cited problem domain was related to personality attributes (41.2%), followed by social network problems (35.3%) and house maintenance (35.3%). In the third order, attitude differences (29.4%) took place in terms of frequency. Sexual problems and economical problems had similar prevalence among the married females, which was 23.5%, while the communication domain appeared in the last order among the married females. On the other hand, the most problematic domain was personality attributes for the divorced females, similar to the married females. Secondly, closeness and sexual issues (42.9%) came and this was followed by the communication domain (39.3%). The fourth most cited problem domain appeared as excessive control and lack trust, followed by social network problems (32.1%).

With respect to the marital problems, there were some significant differences between married and divorced females. The chi square analysis showed that the most striking significant differences occurred on problem areas of excessive control and lack of trust (Fisher's exact test =7.80, $p < .01$) and personality attributes ($\chi^2 (1) = 5.14, p < .05$), with divorced females twice as likely to nominate personality attributes as a problem and none of the married females nominated excessive control and lack of trust. Moreover, although significant differences were not obtained, the divorced females were almost twice as likely to report on the problems of attitude differences and values, communication problems, closeness and sexual problems. Furthermore, marriage itself as a problem was only perceived by the divorced females. It seemed that all the married females did not have any problem with marriage as an institution. On the other hand, house maintenance,

economical problems, and social network problems were cited slightly higher by the married females in comparison to the divorced females.

As evident from Table 5.9, as far as the married males in the sample are concerned, the most important problem was attitude differences between them and their partners, which constituted 41.2%. The second most common problem area for the married males was communication (35.3%), which was followed by problems with personality attributes (29.4%) and social network (29.4%). Other problems receiving less frequency were house maintenance (23.5%), economical problems (17.6%) and closeness and sexual problems (11.8%). On the other hand, for the divorced males the most highly rated problem area was attitude differences (78.9%), which was followed by communication problems (63.2%). Thirdly, problems with personality attributes were also cited highly, (57.9%). After the personality domain, economical problems, (47.4%) and social network problems were cited in similar frequencies (42.1%). In this ordering, closeness and sexual problems (36.8%) took place in the sixth order for the divorced males. This problem domain was followed by house maintenance (26.3%) and excessive control (21.1%). The problem area that was the least likely to be reported as problematic by the divorced males was marriages as an institution (15.8%).

When married and divorced males were compared, the most striking difference occurred in the area of attitude differences. As Table 5.9 shows in the last column, divorced males were twice as likely to report attitude differences as concerning them than the married males, $\chi^2(1) = 5.38, p < .05$. Similarly, economical problems disturbed divorced males twice as much, compared to the married males, which provided a statistically significant difference, $\chi^2(1) = 3.56, p < .05$. Although statistical analysis did not provide significant differences at the level of .05 or less, divorced males expressed twice as much closeness and sexual problems, along with communication problems in comparison to the married males. Furthermore, while 21.1 per cent of divorced males claimed that they had some trouble regarding excessive control and lack of trust of their partners, none of the married males expressed such a problem.

5.5.2. Gender Differences in Relation to Marital Problems

The present analysis also aims to show gender differences in relation to the nature of the problem, the number of respondents who reported problems and the total number of reported problems. In order to examine sex differences in reported marital problems, the similar grouping procedure was followed for comparisons, as mentioned in the previous section of this chapter. Table 5.10 gives the results related to gender differences in problem awareness during marriage.

Table 5.10: Comparison of Females versus Males in Relation to Marital Problems

	All F % n=45	All M % n=36	χ^2	MF n=17	MM n=17	χ^2	DF n=28	DM n=19	χ^2
Behaviour problems (or personality attributes)	62.2	44.4	2.54 [†]	41.2	29.4	.51	75.0	57.9	1.52
Social network	33.3	36.1	.06	35.3	29.4	.13	32.1	42.1	.48
Attitude differences	42.2	61.1	2.85 [†]	29.4	41.2	.51	50.0	78.9	4.01*
Communication problems	31.1	50.0	2.98 [†]	17.6	35.3	1.36	39.3	63.2	2.58 [†]
Closeness and sexual problems	35.6	25.0	1.04	23.5	11.8	.80	42.9	36.9	.17
Economical problems	20.0	33.3	1.85	23.5	17.6	.17	17.9	47.4	4.70*
House maintenance				35.3	23.5	.56	21.4	26.3	.15
Excessive control and lack of trust	22.2	11.1	1.72	-	-	-	35.7	21.1	1.16
Marriage as an institution	13.3	11.1	.09	-	5.9	1.03	21.4	15.8	.23
Other problems	6.7	2.8	.42	-	-		10.7	5.3	.43
Total percentage of respondents who reported problems	100	94.4	2.56 [†]	100	88.2	2.12 [†]	100	100	-
			t			t			t
Total numbers of problems	218	181	df=79	57	65	df=32	161	116	df=45
X	4.84	5.02	-.28	3.35	3.82	-.69	5.75	6.10	-.38
SD	2.92	2.95		1.86	2.12		3.09	3.21	

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100. Multiple complaints are included.

M = Males; F = Females; MF = Married Female; DF = Divorced Female; MM = Married Male; DM = Divorced Male.

Fisher's exact tests are shown in bold characters.

[†] $p < .1$. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

As can be seen from Table 5.10, for the married females, the most frequently cited problem area related to personality attributes (41.2%), followed by social network (35.3%) and house maintenance (35.3%). For the married males, the top three-problem domain included attitude differences (41.2%), communication problems (35.3%), and social network (29.4%) respectively. As parallel to the married females, for the divorced

females the most reported problem domain was personality attributes (75%). The second most rated problems were related to attitude differences and values (50%), followed by the closeness and sexual problems (42.9%). In the same manner, for the divorced males, the top three problem citations were matched with the married males, which were attitude differences (78.9%), communication problems (63.2%), problems with personality attributes (57.9%) respectively.

The interview data in Table 5.10 indicated that, among the currently married individuals, the female respondents did not differ significantly from the male respondents in any problem area. Neither did significant differences occur in the total percentages of the respondents who cited problems in their marriages, and in the total numbers of the problems between the females and the males. In contrast, among the divorced individuals, in two problem domains, there were significant differences between the females and the males. The divorced males (47.4%) were more than twice as likely as the divorced females (17.9%) to perceive that they had economical problems during their marriages, $\chi^2(1) = 4.7, p < .05$. Moreover, the divorced males (78.9%) tended to notice significantly more marital problems in relation to attitude differences than did the divorced females (50%), $\chi^2(1) = 4.01, p < .05$.

Although the divorced females and males were significantly different in reporting economical and attitude related problems and to some extent communication problems, there were no differences in reporting problems in both total percentage of subjects who mentioned problems and total number of problems mentioned. All individuals from both groups stated that they had problems. Similarly, the mean differences in the number of difficulties reported by the divorced females and males also did not significantly differentiate between the two groups (divorced females and males). This finding is not in line with the established research findings in this area (Levinger, 1966; Eells & O'Flaherty, 1996).

To summarise, although it was evident from the interview data that males from the divorced group were more likely to cite marital problems in the domains of economical difficulties and attitude differences, over all, the data does not suggest great differences between the sexes.

5.6. Continuity of Problems between Stages -from Premarital to Marital Stage

Most people might expect that an institution like marriage, which is supposed to be a lifelong commitment, starts its life without problems. However, previous literature findings suggested that some individuals reported that their marriages started somewhat wrong from the very beginning (Hayes, Stinnett, & DeFrain, 1981). In addition, Thornes and Collard (1979) found that in comparison to married people, divorced people started their marriages with more problems. Furthermore, the break-up process starts as early as the first months, for instance, Burns (1984) stated that 15% of her study sample felt that their break-up process started in the first three months of their marriage. Unless it is a shock bombardment of novel problems of marriage, it is likely that early marriage problems might be carried over from the premarital stage. Therefore, searching for the continuity of problems between the two stages is merited.

As mentioned before, one of the main aims of this study is to depict the relationship between premarital problems and marital problems. In order to accomplish this aim, correlational statistics were obtained for premarital and marital problems for the grouped subjects according to gender and marital status. However, it was not possible to compute a correlational statistic for every problem domain since some of them did not occur at the premarital stage or some groups did not have certain problems. Therefore, some problem domains were omitted in the correlational analysis. For example, house maintenance did not appear at the premarital stage and the data was not available for this domain to compute a correlational statistic. Similarly, excessive control and lack of trust was not a problem for married people at the premarital stage, therefore, it also was not possible to obtain a correlational statistic. The domains that did not have a correlational statistical

result are represented with a dash (-) in Table 5.11. For the computation of the association between premarital and marital problems, the phi coefficient was used since it is an appropriate measure to identify the relationship between two dichotomous variables (Cramer, 1998). For example, in our case correlational computations were carried out between premarital level communication problems and marital level communication problems. This process was repeated for all the problem domains that were cited for both the premarital and marital levels.

It was expected that there would be some differences in the experiences of problem domains between premarital and marital stages of marriage since the level of intimacy and tasks would differ between these two stages. On the other hand, it was also expected that there would be some continuity in relation to problem domains between given stages depending on the indices from previous literature. The following table presents the findings of the study regarding problem continuity between premarital and marital stages via correlations.

Table 5.11: Correlation between Problem Frequencies at Premarital and Marital Stages for Male and Female Divorcees and Married Individuals

<i>Problem areas</i>	<i>All</i>			<i>Married</i>		<i>Divorced</i>	
	<i>Subjects</i> <i>n=81</i>	<i>Married</i> <i>n=34</i>	<i>Divorced</i> <i>n=47</i>	<i>Female</i> <i>n=17</i>	<i>Male</i> <i>n=17</i>	<i>Female</i> <i>n=28</i>	<i>Male</i> <i>n=19</i>
Behaviour problems	.29**	-.01	.34**	-.30	.38 [†]	.36**	.35 [†]
Social network	.60**	.65***	.58***	.74***	.56***	.50***	.67***
Attitude differences	.46**	.53***	.43**	.71***	.38 [†]	.52***	.30
Communication problems	.10	-	.09	-	-	.23	-.09
Closeness and sexual prob.	.07	.12	.05	.22	-.09	.16	-.18
Economical problems	.25 [†]	.34*	.21 [†]	.45*	-	.23	.24
House maintenance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exc. Control, lack of trust	.42**	-	.40**	-	-	.46***	-
Marriage as an institution	.52**	-	.53***	-	-	.53***	.54***
Other problems							

Note: "-" a coefficient could not be computed.

[†]p < .10; *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001,

As can be seen from Table 5.11, the domain of social network did continue to be a problem at the marital stage for the whole group. In other words, premarital and marital frequency levels of this domain were correlated with each other significantly (for married females $r = .74$, $p < .01$, for married males $r = .56$, $p < .01$, for divorced females $r = .50$, $p < .01$, for divorced males $r = .67$, $p < .01$).

On the other hand, “marriage as an institution’ continued as a problem area during marriage for only the divorcees. For both divorced female and male, correlational results between premarital and marital levels of ‘marriage as an institution being a problem’ were significant, for female $r = .53$, $p < .01$, for male $r = .54$, $p < .01$. However, this problem domain was almost exclusive to divorced respondents. This could suggest that problems attributed to marriage itself as an institution continues and differentiates between divorced and married respondents. Similarly, premarital and marital levels of excessive control and lack of trust was significantly correlated for the divorced females only. Since divorced males did not report it as a problem at the premarital stage there was no correlational result.

Another significant finding is related to problems with personality attributes as shown in Table 5.11. However, the correlation was only significant for the female divorcees’ reports of this problem domain ($r = .36$, $p < .05$). Surprisingly, the results indicate a negative correlation between reported premarital and marital problems with personality attributes for the female married respondents.

Also it is important to notice that, “attitude differences and values’ as a problem domain had a strong association between its premarital and marital stage levels for both divorced and currently married females as shown in Table 5.11 (for married females $r = .74$, $p < .01$, for divorced females $r = .52$, $p < .01$). On the other hand, the associations between premarital and marital reports of attitude differences and values for both married and divorced males were not significant. Overall, results of correlation analyses provided

support in relation to the expectation that some premarital problem domains will be associated with marital level problems (Hypothesis 2).

5.7. The Results of Discriminant Analyses Regarding Premarital and Marital Problems

Discriminant function analysis is a multivariate statistical technique that calculates discriminant functions to classify the cases into groups. It also provides the total and individual contribution of the group of predictor variables in distinguishing between grouping variable, and in this case marital status. In this study, we conducted discriminant analyses in order to investigate which problem domains most significantly discriminate between married and divorced respondents. Three separate discriminant analyses were carried out for entire sample, females, and males.

5.7.1. Discriminant Analysis for the Entire Sample

A direct discriminant function analysis was carried out using variables considering premarital and marital level problem areas as predictors of membership in two groups. The predictors were seventeen variables, see Table 5.12, and the groups were married individuals and divorced individuals.

All of the cases participated in the study were used in the analysis and none of the cases was identified as outlier. One discriminant function was calculated, since the grouping variable has only two categories, with a $\chi^2(16) = 35.24, p < .01$. This shows a significant association between groups and discriminative variables. The discriminant function accounting for 100% of variance between groups successfully separated married individuals from divorced individuals.

As can be seen in Table 5.12, the loading matrix of correlations between predictors and discriminant function indicates that the best predictors in distinguishing between married

and divorced individuals were, excessive control and lack of trust ($m = 0$ for the married, $m = 0.29$ for the divorced), problems with personality ($m = 0.35$ for the married, $m = 0.68$ for the divorced), attitude differences and values ($m = 0.35$ for the married, $m = 0.61$ for the divorced), and premaritals behaviour problems ($m = 0$ for the married, $m = 0.29$ for the divorced). The rest of the variables yielded correlations from .32 to .01, which were not considered satisfactory for predictive quality (Tabachnick and Fidel, 1996). Measure of overall central tendencies, or group centroids, are -.93 for the married and .67 for the divorced indicating greater frequencies of problems within related areas in the divorced group. The Wilk's lambda for this analysis is statistically significant (Wilk's lambda=.60, $p < .01$.) showing that 17 variables of premarital and marital problems discriminate well between the divorced and the married groups.

The discriminant function analysis also provided an estimate of correct classification into relevant groups. Overall 79% of the original grouped cases were correctly classified as either divorced or continuously married. Of the 34 married individuals in the study, the analysis classified correctly 27 of them, or 79%, and it correctly classified 37 of the cases as divorced, or 78%.

Table 5.12: Pooled within-groups Correlations between Discriminating Variables and Standardized Canonical Discriminant Functions for Entire Samples

<i>Discriminating variables</i>	<i>Function</i>
	<i>1</i>
Excessive control and lack of trust	.524
Behaviour problems (or personality attributes)	.426
Attitude differences	.335
Behaviour problems (or personality attributes) at premarital stage	.326
Closeness and sexual problems	.312
Problems with marriage as an institution	.311
Communication problems	.289
Excessive control and lack of trust at premarital stage	.210
Communication problems at premarital stage	.210
Problems with marriage as an institution at premarital stage	.210
Social network problems at premarital stage	.142
Economical problems	.129
Economical problems at premarital stage	.098
House maintenance problems	-.084
Social network problems	.049
Attitude differences at premarital stage	.042
Closeness and sexual problems at premarital stage	-.007

5.7.2. Discriminant Analysis for Females

In order to examine whether there were any notable differences in the relations between variables for females (45 cases) and for males (36 cases) in this study, separate discriminant analyses using the same set of predictor variables (all variables used for discriminant analysis) were run for both genders. However, the same set of variables model was not predictive for both groups. Therefore, we carried out the analyses by omitting the less contributing variables to the models for both groups separately. The analysis with eight predictor variables for females and nine predictor variables for males created significant results.

For females, a direct discriminant function analysis with eight predictor variables was carried out. Calculated discriminant function was significant with $\chi^2(8) = 15.41, p < .05$. This shows a significant association between groups and discriminative variables. The discriminant function accounting for 100% of variance between groups successfully separated married individuals from divorced individuals.

As Table 5.13 shows, for the females, the best predictors in distinguishing between married and divorced individuals were excessive control and lack of trust ($m = 0$ for the married, $m = 0.29$ for the divorced), problems with personality attributes ($m = 0.35$ for the married, $m = 0.68$ for the divorced), problems with marriage as an institution ($m = 0.35$ for the married, $m = 0.61$ for the divorced), and communication problems ($m = 0.17$ for the married, $m = 0.39$ for the divorced). The rest of the variables yielded correlations less than .33. Measure of overall central tendencies, or group centroids, were $-.87$ for the married and $.53$ for the divorced indicating greater frequencies of problems with related areas in the divorced group. The Wilk's lambda for this analysis is statistically significant (Wilk's lambda = .67, $p < .05$.) showing that 8 variables of premarital and marital problems discriminate well between the divorced and the married groups. Overall 80% of original grouped cases were correctly classified as either divorced or continuously married. Of the 17 married females in the study, the analysis correctly classified 12 of them, or 79%, and it correctly classified 24 of the respondents as divorced, or 85%.

Table 5.13: Pooled Within-Groups Correlations between Discriminating Variables and Standardized Canonical Discriminant Functions for the Female Respondents

<i>Discriminating variables</i>	<i>Function</i> <i>1</i>
Excessive control and lack of trust	.658
Behaviour problems (or personality attributes)	.516
Problems with marriage as an institution	.461
Communication problems	.334
Excessive control and lack of trust at premarital stage	.306
Attitude problems	.296
Behaviour problems at premarital stage	.287
Closeness and sexual problems	.287

5.7.3. Discriminant Analysis for Males

With regard to male respondents (36 cases), a direct discriminant function analysis with nine predictor variables was carried out. Calculated discriminant function was significant with $\chi^2(9) = 21, p < .01$ accounting for 100% of variance between groups and successfully separated married individuals from divorced individuals.

For the males, the best predictor in distinguishing between married and divorced individuals was attitude and value differences ($m = 0.41$ for the married, $m = 0.78$ for the divorced). The second best predictors were excessive control and lack of trust ($m = 0$ for the married, $m = 0.21$ for the divorced), and premarital personality problems ($m = 0$ for the married, $m = 0.31$ for the divorced). It can be said that in this model, most of the discriminating variables had close correlational values between .34 and .28 (see Table 5.14). Measure of overall central tendencies, or group centroids, were -1.052 for the married and .941 for the divorced indicating greater frequencies of problems with related areas in the divorced group. The Wilk's lambda is statistically significant (Wilk's lambda = .48, $p < .01$) and indicates that 9 variables of mixed premarital and marital problems discriminate well between the divorced and the married groups. Overall 80% of original grouped cases were correctly predicted as either divorced or continuously

married. Of 17 of married males, 13 of them (76%) were correctly classified as married, and 16 (84%) out of 19 divorced cases were classified correctly as divorced.

Table 5.14: Pooled Within-Groups Correlations between Discriminating Variables and Standardized Canonical Discriminant Functions for Male Respondents

<i>Discriminating Variables</i>	<i>Function</i> <i>1</i>
Attitude differences	.410
Excessive control and lack of trust	.347
Behaviour problems (or personality attributes) at premarital stage	.335
Economical problems	.324
Closeness and sexual problems	.295
Social network problems at premarital stage	.295
Behaviour problems (or personality attributes)	.292
Communication problems	.283
Communication problems at premarital stage	.230

To summarise, it can be said that the results of discriminant function analyses supported the results that were obtained via chi-square analyses. Through chi-square analyses, significant differences between divorced and currently married individuals were found in the problem areas of excessive control and lack of trust; personality attributes; attitude differences; closeness and sexual problems; and communication problems for the marital level, (respectively from higher to lower significance). Through chi-square analyses, we also found that the premarital level personality problems differed significantly between married and divorced analysis. In relation to gender differences excessive control and lack of trust, personality problems (or behaviour problems) were best predictors for females. On the other hand, attitude and value differences could be considered as the most important predictors in discriminating married males from divorced males. However, other predictor in the analysis seemed to be contributing to the model in similar degrees for males. Among the premarital level problem domains personality attributes as problems made most contributions to the models in distinguishing between married and divorced for the entire sample and the males, also to less extent to females. The problem

domains that may indicate compatibility between marriage partners were generally found to discriminate between currently married and divorced individuals.

5.8. Loglinear Analyses

In some situations, when expected cell frequencies are inadequate, use of Pearson χ^2 may inflate Type 1 error rate (see Tabachnick & Fidel, 1996). Therefore, in addition to chi-square analyses, loglinear analyses have been also conducted in order to overcome this problem. Relationships more than two categorical variables can be analysed through loglinear analyses (Knoke & Burke, 1980). One form of loglinear analyses is called hierarchical loglinear analysis. Hierarchical loglinear models can determine the existence of statistically significant relationships among the several variables.

In order to see the relationships among the three variables (gender, marital status, and one problem domain) a series of hierarchical loglinear analyses were carried out. Each loglinear analysis was conducted using three variables, namely marital status, gender, and a problem domain (problem area). Chi square analyses results were used as a guidance which problem domain would have possible associations with gender and marital status.

Chi-square analyses indicated that there were significant differences between divorced and currently married individuals in some problem areas, namely excessive control and lack of trust, premarital personality attributes, marital personality attributes, attitude and value differences, closeness and sexuality, and communication. When female divorcees were compared with male divorcees, there were also significant differences in some problem domains, namely economical problems and attitude and value differences. According to these results, attitude problems are involved in differences regarding both gender and marital status. Therefore, we first wanted to investigate attitude differences, gender, and marital status by using loglinear analysis.

A three-way frequency analysis was carried out to develop a hierarchical model of attitude and value differences and gender in currently married and divorced individuals.

Stepwise backward elimination of effects through hierarchical log-linear produced a model that included one interaction effect of marital status and attitude differences. The model had a likelihood ratio $\chi^2(4) = 6.43$, $p = .16$, indicating a good fit between observed and expected frequencies generated by the model. Sixty one per cent of divorced individuals had attitude differences compared with 35% married individuals. Similar analyses were carried out with several problem domains as follows

b) For the hierarchical loglinear analyses that were carried out with gender- marital status-control problems; gender-marital status-premarital behaviour problems; gender-marital status-closeness and sexual problems; gender- marital status- marriage problem as an institution; gender-marital status-communication did not provide adequacy of expected frequencies in the cells. That is why the results were not reported here since statistical power would be substantially reduced (see Tabachnick & Fidel, 1996). Furthermore, the model including gender- marital status and economical problems did not yield any interaction effect other than a main effect for economical problems.

The hierarchical models with gender, marital status, and behaviour problems; and with gender, marital status, and communication problems were also tested. Regarding behaviour problems, the best fitting model created by hierarchical loglinear contained a significant relationships between marital status and behaviour problems (marital status X behaviour problems). Gender effect was not retained in the final model. The relationship between marital status and behaviour problems had a likelihood ratio chi-square change of 8.67, and it was significant at $p < .01$. And the model had a good fit between the observed and expected frequencies with the value of $\chi^2(4) = 3.76$, $p = .43$.

The hierarchical loglinear model analysis that was conducted with gender, marital status, and communication problems also yielded a two way significant interaction effect between marital status and communication problems, likelihood ratio chi-square change was 4.26, $df = 1$, $p < .05$. This model also provided a good fit between observed and expected frequencies, $\chi^2(4) = 5.76$, $p = .22$.

To summarise, the overall loglinear analyses that were included in this section supports our hypothesis that there are relationships between some problem domains and the marital status. These findings also corresponds with our chi-square results. However, the hypothesis that there are gender differences on the some problem domains was not supported by the loglinear analyses. At this point chi-square results and loglinear analyses do not correspond.

5.9. Problem Solving

Having given the findings of the study regarding premarital and marital problems, the results with respect to problem solving styles of married and divorced individuals are presented in this section. Firstly, the coding categories are depicted. Then, the results of frequency analysis about premarital problem solving and marital problem solving styles are presented in Table 5.15, Table 5.16, Table 5.17, and Table 5.18.

5.9.1. Procedure and Categories

Respondents' ways of dealing with problems were coded into four categories, which are widely used in problem solving literature (Kurdek, 1994a). During coding the entire account of a participant's response to one specific question was taken as a basis. The statements were examined one by one and placed in the suitable categories. These categories are as follows:

1. Positive Problem Solving: This includes paying attention to understand what the problem really is, listening to the partners' feelings about it, exploration of what ones own contribution to the problem was, searching for ways of solutions, discussing about ways of solution, compromising, and convincing the partner.

Example:

We had a conflict over what kind of accommodation we were going to have. Her preference did not appeal to me at all. I wanted a very simple house, she wanted everything proper. Neither hers nor my preferences were realised. We found a way in between. (a 41-year-old married female)

2. Compliance: This category of problem solving comprises giving in favour of the opposite side, doing little or nothing for ones own rights, accepting whatever is offered by the partner.

Example:

In fact, before marriage we had lots of differences, our views of the world were very different these things were a problem for me. But my husband was so persistent on marriage I could not say 'no' so as not to upset him. I accepted whatever was offered to me. In fact, I did not fight for anything to change, I did not care much. (a 36-year-old female divorcee)

3. Avoidance: Trying to escape and not face the problem, changing the topic whenever it is on the agenda, not talking about it with the other partner, trying to forget, clearing it from the mind, remaining silent, shutting down, refusing to talk any further, and acting distant and not interested were included in the avoidance category.

Example:

I did not give any importance to the problems we encountered. I thought that it would pass in time and these sort of things would happen in any marriage. (32 years old, married male).

4. Negative Conflict Engagement: It includes becoming angry with the partner on the problematic issue and shouting, showing aggression, blaming other side, rejecting any responsibility for the problem, exploding and loosing control.

Example:

To solve our problems what did we do? We had raws. After raws we separated several times. He was very stubborn with fixed ideas. This made me crazy. I was shouting, screaming at him and he was too at the time of a raw. (a 37-year-old female divorcee)

5.9.2. Premarital Problem Solving

Related to the main aims of the study, we attempted to demonstrate the premarital problem behaviour of currently married and divorced individuals in this section. With respect to this, currently married and divorced individuals were compared in terms of their premarital problem solving behaviour. In order to determine the problem solving styles, the individuals who took part in this study were asked to describe “what they did when they had any problems during their premarital relationship”. Their detailed answers were coded into four categories explained in the previous section. Then chi-square analyses were conducted between divorced and currently married individuals for each category of problem solving. Since well-established gender differences have been reported in previous literature (see Julien et al., 1997), comparisons were made between married and divorced females, and between married and divorced males in relation to marital stability. Moreover, to explore gender differences, married females were compared with the married males and divorced females were compared with divorced males. The results relating to marital stability are shown in Table 5.15, starting with married and divorced individuals in the first two columns and married and divorced females in the fourth and fifth columns, with married males and divorced males in the seventh and eight columns. After each comparison group, the chi-square results are presented.

Table 5.15: Premarital Problem Solving

	<i>All</i>		χ^2	<i>females</i>		χ^2	<i>Males</i>		χ^2
	<i>M</i>	<i>D</i>		<i>MF</i>	<i>DF</i>		<i>MM</i>	<i>DM</i>	
<i>Problem solving styles</i>	<i>n=19</i>	<i>n=32</i>		<i>n=10</i>	<i>n=18</i>		<i>n=9</i>	<i>n=14</i>	
	%	%		%	%		%	%	
Positive problem solving	68.4	34.4	5.54**	70.0	27.8	4.67*	66.7	42.9	1.24
Avoidance	36.8	51.6	1.26	40.0	55.6	.62	33.3	50.0	.61
Compliance	10.5	43.8	6.11**	20.0	33.3	.56	0	57	7.88**
Conflict engagement	42.1	37.5	.10	30.0	27.8	.01	66.6	50.0	06

M = Married; D = divorced; MF = Married Female; DF = Divorced Female; MM = Married Male; DM = Divorced Male.

†p < .10. *p < .05. **p < .01.

Fisher's exact tests are given in bold characters

As explained in Chapter 3, the previous research reviews have clearly stated that there were differences between the problem solving behaviours of satisfied and dissatisfied married couples (see Schaap, 1984; Weiss and Heyman, 1990, Weiss and Heyman, 1997). Furthermore, marital stability has been predicted by using problem solving behaviours of the couples (Gottman, 1993, 1994). The ratio of negative behaviours during problem solving was associated with marital instability. Drawing on the findings of previous literature, the present study expected that there were differences between married and divorced individuals in relation to self reported premarital and marital problem solving behaviours.

To draw a general picture, as shown in Table 5.15, a substantial majority of married applicants (68.4%) reported positive problem solving behaviour than the divorced (34.4%) applicants. This difference in scores was found to be statistically significant as can be seen from Table 5.15, $\chi^2(1) = 5.54$, $p < .01$. Avoidance of problems was less likely with married subjects (36.8%) than the divorced (51.6%). However, the difference was not statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 1.26$, $p < .26$. The divorced subjects of the sample defined themselves as significantly more compliant (43.8%) than the married

(10.15 %), $\chi^2(1) = 6.11$, $p < .01$. Both the married (42.1%) and the divorced (37.5%) reported conflict engagement in similar figures.

More specifically, the married females were more than two times as likely to report positive problem solving behaviours than the divorced females at the premarital level. Statistical results also indicated the significant difference. On the other hand, although currently married males mentioned more positive problem solving behaviour than the divorced males, Fisher's exact test (two tailed) did not give a significant difference between divorced and married males. Compliance appeared to be another problem solving style that differed between the divorced and married respondents generally. However, when the respondents were compared with their same sex counterparts, the results were significant only for males. That is, while none of the married males reported using the compliance type of problem solving behaviour, 57 percent of divorced males stated that they complied with their partner during the time before their marriages. On the other hand, married and divorced females differed only slightly from each other in reporting compliance. In relation to avoidance and conflict engagement there did not appear to be a considerable difference between married and divorced individuals for both sexes. However, divorced males and females reported slightly higher levels of avoidance from the problems.

Consequently, in relation to four ways of problem solving at the premarital stage, we observed significant differences in only two types of problem solving, positive problem solving and compliance. Furthermore, positive problem solving significantly differentiated only between currently married females and the divorced females. On the other hand, compliance appeared to be significantly different among the males, divorced males were more likely to be compliant in their problem solving relationships than the married males in the premarital stage (see Table 5.15).

5.9.3. Gender Differences in Premarital Problem Solving

The literature on problem solving makes it clear that problem-solving styles vary according to gender as well as marital status (See Julien et al., 1997). Thus, the next phase of the study involved separate analysis of gender using three groups: all respondents, the married and the divorced.

In order to examine the gender differences, self-reported problem solving behaviours of female and males in the same marital status were cross-tabulated and compared using chi-square analyses. The results are presented in Table 5.16. Firstly, columns one through three showed the results relating to all respondents; secondly, the results for the married in the middle columns, and lastly, findings related to the divorced subjects were exhibited in the last three columns of the table.

Table 5.16: Gender Differences in Problem Solving at Premarital Stage

<i>Problem Solving Styles</i>	<i>All</i>			<i>Married</i>			<i>Divorced</i>		
	<i>Female</i> <i>n=28</i>	<i>Male</i> <i>n=23</i>	χ^2	<i>Female</i> <i>n=10</i>	<i>Male</i> <i>n=9</i>	χ^2	<i>Female</i> <i>n=18</i>	<i>Male</i> <i>n=14</i>	χ^2
Positive problem solving	42.9	52.2	.43	70.0	66.7	.02	27.8	42.9	.79
Avoidance	50.0	43.5	.21	40.0	33.3	.09	55.6	50.0	.09
Compliance	28.6	34.8	.22	20.0	0	2.01	66.7	42.9	1.81
Conflict engagement	28.6	52.2	2.95 [†]	30.0	55.6	1.26	27.8	50.0	.65

[†]p < .10. *p < .05. **p < .01.

It was assumed that the frequency of certain problem solving styles would change according to gender. Although comparisons between females and males did not show great significant differences in any group of analyses (as a whole group of respondents, the married, and the divorced), the largest difference in figures appeared to be in conflict engagement between females (28.6%) and males (52.2%) in general.

Also for the females in the married group, the most frequently resorted problem solving style was positive problem solving (70%) as can be seen from the Table 5.16. This was

followed by avoidance (40%), conflict engagement (30%), and compliance (20%) respectively. For the males in the married group, a slightly different pattern was observed in the reported frequency of the problem solving behaviours: positive problem solving (66.7%), conflict engagement (55.6%), and avoidance (33.3%) in this order. The comparisons of the married females and males indicated only the slightest differences in positive problems solving and avoidance. However, 55.6% of married males resorted to conflict engagement, as opposed to 30% of married females. Furthermore, none of the married females stated that they made use of compliance when a problem arose. On the other hand, none of the results were in the range of showing statistically significant differences.

In a parallel fashion, in the divorced groups, the comparison of the two sexes did not yield statistically significant results. However, the frequency rates of problem solving styles slightly differed between female and male divorced individuals: compliance (66.7%) was the number one problem solving style for the divorced females whereas avoidance (50%) and conflict engagement (50%) were for the divorced males. Moreover, as is in the case of married females, compliance was more common among the divorced females than the divorced males.

5.9.4. Marital Problem Solving

As mentioned before, one of the main aims of the study was to explore marital problem solving styles and compare the married individuals with the divorced. In order to explore styles of problem solving behaviour, the respondents were asked the same question for the marital stage. This time the question asked was “What did they do when they had any problem during their marriage?” The answers were analysed by using the same problem solving categories, which were used for the premarital stage, originally borrowed from Kurdek (1994). Also, the same analysis sequences were carried out. Table 5.17 shows the results obtained for the marital stage problem solving styles. The first two columns present the percentages of problem solving styles for all the married and all the divorced; fourth and fifth columns present the percentage scores for married females and divorced females; lastly the seventh and eighth columns show the percentage scores of the married males and divorced females. As shown in Table 5.17, the chi-square results were presented after every two-comparison group.

Table 5.17: Problem Solving at Marital Stage

Problem solving styles	All group			Females			Males		
	<i>M</i> <i>n=32</i>	<i>D</i> <i>n=47</i>	χ^2	<i>MF</i> <i>n=17</i>	<i>DF</i> <i>n=28</i>	χ^2	<i>MM</i> <i>n=15</i>	<i>DM</i> <i>n=19</i>	χ^2
Positive problem solving	87.5	78.7	1.00	94.1	85.7	.75	80.0	68.4	.57
Avoidance	43.8	34.0	.76	29.4	32.1	.03	60.0	36.8	1.80
Compliance	18.8	40.4	4.13*	5.9	46.4	8.11**	33.3	31.6	.01
Conflict engagement	68.8	55.3	1.44	70.6	46.4	2.50	66.7	68.7	.01

M = Married; D = divorced; MF = Married Female; DF = Divorced Female; MM = Married Male; DM = Divorced Male.

†p < .10. *p < .05. **p < .01.

Fisher's exact tests are given in bold characters

For the all divorced and all the married, positive problem solving style was found the most frequently resorted way of problem solving, followed by conflict engagement. While compliance was the least preferred by the married individuals, avoidance was the least reported problem solving method used by the divorced individuals. On the whole,

only compliance differed significantly between the group of all married individuals and the group of all divorced individuals.

The chi-square results comparing the married females and divorced females showed that the only significant difference existed in compliance. Although conflict engagement was highly rated by the married females compared to the divorced females, the statistical analysis did not yield a significant difference. On the other hand, none of the statistical comparison on the problem solving styles significantly differentiated the married males from the divorced males.

In summary, only female compliance was found to differ significantly between married females and divorced females. Although married females resorted to conflict engagement substantially more frequently than the divorced females, and the married males stated somewhat higher rates of avoidance than the divorced males, the statistical analysis failed to indicate significant differences.

5.9.5. Gender Differences in Marital Problem Solving Styles

In the previous section, reported marital problem solving behaviours of the respondents were compared and described in relation to marital status. In this section, the comparisons were carried out in relation to gender. Males and females were compared according to their problem solving reports for the marital stage. In Table 5.18, the first two columns were allocated for all females' and males' frequency rates in the four problem-solving styles and chi-square results are presented in the third column. Then, married females and males were compared, and lastly, the frequency scores of divorced females and males in problem solving behaviour were presented.

Table 5. 18: Gender Differences in Marital Problem Solving

Problem Solving Styles	All		χ^2	Married		χ^2	divorced		χ^2
	Female n=45	Male n=34		Female n=17	Male n=15		Female n=28	Male n=19	
Positive problem solving	88.9	73.5	3.13 [†]	94.1	80.0	1.45	85.7	68.4	2.02
Avoidance	31.1	47.1	2.09	29.4	60.0	3.02	32.1	36.8	.11
Compliance	31.1	32.4	.01	5.9	33.3	3.94*	46.4	31.6	1.03
Conflict engagement	55.6	67.6	1.18	70.6	66.7	.05	46.4	68.4	2.21

[†]p < .10. *p < .05. **p < .01.

To summarise Table 5.18, females and males had highly similar patterns of problem solving styles on the whole. There appeared to be slight differences between sexes in relation to positive problem solving, avoidance, and conflict engagement. The females reported approximately 15% more positive problem solving behaviour than the males. On the other hand, the males cited almost 15% more avoidance and 10% more conflict engagement than do the females. As can be seen from the table, none of the chi-square analyses that compared all the males with all the females on problem solving styles showed statistically significant differences.

Females and males differed significantly only in compliance as far as the married group is concerned, $\chi^2 (1) = 3.94$, $p < .05$. Although frequency differences were considerably visible in avoidance between married females and males (29.4%, 60% respectively), the finding fell out of the limit of the acceptable statistical significance level. Similarly, whereas 94.1% of the female cited positive problem, 80% of the males did so.

On the other hand, none of the comparisons on problem solving behaviour between divorced females and males revealed a statistically significant finding as shown in Table 5.18. However, in positive problem solving and compliance, females from the divorced group appeared in higher frequency levels than the males in the same group: for positive problem solving, 85.7% of females versus 68.4% of males; for compliance, 46.4% of females versus 31.6% of males. On the contrary, the divorced males were found to be

more likely to report conflict engagement than the divorced females (female 46.4%, males 68.4%).

In conclusion, among the results, the only statistically significant difference was found to be in the area of compliance between married females and males. Similarly, between married females and married males, avoidance was reported at different rates, in spite of the fact that the statistical result was not significant.

5.10. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have presented our numerical results and compared married and divorced groups and the two sexes on premarital and marital problem awareness and problem solving behaviours. The results of the total number of problems encountered during premarriage and marriage indicated that there is a significant difference between married and divorced individuals for premarital problem awareness. This difference is obvious between divorced men and married men, and is slight between divorced females and married females. For the marital problem awareness, it has been found that there is a significant difference between the married and divorced individuals. Also, these differences existed when both divorced females and married females, and divorced males and married males were compared. As most strikingly, in total numbers of problem identification, there was not any differences in relation to gender for premarital and marital problem identification. This finding is not in line with previous research results that females tend to be aware of more problems in number than males (e.g., Goode, 1956; Amato & Rogers, 1997). As expected, fewer numbers of problems were found at the premarital stage than the marital stage.

For the premarital stage, the most frequently reported problems were related to social network. However, only personality attributes as a problem area significantly differed between currently married and divorced individuals. Premarital personality attributes were also found among the four best discriminating problem domains between married

and divorced using discriminant analysis ($r = .326$ with discriminant function). For premarital stage, there was no statistically significant difference in problem domains between sexes.

For the marital stage, the most frequently cited problems were in the domains of personality, attitude differences, communication and closeness. At the same time these domains were discriminative between all married and all divorced individuals together with excessive control and lack of trust. Regarding gender, the total number of reported problems did not differ between the sexes, contrary to the established research findings. Furthermore, significant differences only appeared in the attitude differences, and economical problems between divorced males and divorced females using chi-square analyses. However, the results concerning the differences between the females and the males should be viewed cautiously since these differences were not verified by using loglinear analysis.

In relation to problem continuity between premarital and marital levels, most domains of complaints appeared to be correlated. For example, social network and attitude differences, and marriage as institution were correlated between premarital and marital stages for all divorced and married, and also for married females and divorced females.

The results with respect to premarital problem solving highlighted that divorced females significantly more often engaged in positive problem solving than the divorced females during the premarital stage. Furthermore, the divorced males were found to be more compliant than the married males. At the premarital level, there did not seem to be any difference between females and males in perceptions of problem solving styles. For the marital stage, in contrary to premarital stage divorced females defined themselves significantly more compliant than married females. In this stage, only gender differences existed between married males and females that married males found themselves more compliant than married females. In conclusion, compliance during marriage had

deleterious effects on the marital stability for females and during premarital stage, had the same effect for males.

CHAPTER 6

Discussion

6.1. Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the results of categorisation and statistical analyses that followed a chronological order arranged into the premarital stage and the marital stage. This chapter has the task of evaluating the results in reference to previous studies and their implications. The remainder of the chapter is organised as follows. Firstly, the findings related to premarital problem and marital problem awareness are discussed. This is followed by an evaluation of the correlational relationship between given problems. Finally, premarital and marital problem solving results are discussed.

6.2. Premarital Stage

It has been deemed that the premarital stage is important for the subsequent marriage due to its preparatory role. Since early times, this preparation period has been taken extremely seriously and practised at a ceremonial level of solemnity by civilisations. According to historical and cultural contexts, courtship has taken many forms (Cate & Lloyd, 1992). Historically, in Western culture, it has changed from a kinship event to a more individualistic enterprise (Murstein, 1974, cited in Cate & Lloyd, 1992, p.13). In Turkey, as in the western world, preparation for marriage has undergone a rapid change with individuals choosing their own partner and making decisions for their own relationship. However, this should not imply that the family circle and other social network relations are totally eliminated from the premarital relationships of couples. And the degree of freedom in choosing and taking decisions about one's own individual relationship is heavily dependent on gender, rural/urban origin, and socio-economical level (Atalay et al., 1992).

6.2.1. Premarital Problems

Although previous research has provided comprehensive documentation of the marital problems of divorced and separated people (Goode, 1956; Levinger, 1966; Kitson & Sussman, 1982; Burns, 1984; Bloom et al., 1985; Cleek & Pearson, 1985; Amato & Rogers, 1997), the same attention has not been paid to premarital problems. Actually, some studies did involve premarital problems to some extent. However, they mainly dealt with premarital problems as part of their wider concerns and variables, such as communication behaviour (e.g., Markman, 1979). In this context, the present study appears to be the first one that pays attention to premarital problems in detail and their relation to divorce.

Thornes and Collard's study (1979) has been influential in identifying various variables, which can be associated with divorce. In their study, a section was devoted to courtship and premarital conflict. However, the implication of identifying the specificity of the problems, and their continuity between the pre-marital and marital stages in understanding the divorce was not particularly focused on. They found that while 29 % of divorced respondents experienced serious difficulties premaritally, only 19 % of those who remained married had difficulties. Similarly, Hayes et al. (1980) reported that 15 % of 138 female and male divorced respondents perceived that their marriage was wrong from the beginning. As a parallel to the Thornes and Collard's study, Hayes et al. did not aim to reveal premarital problems of divorcees but rather studied marital problems of divorced individuals.

Another group of studies that have had some implications on premarital problems dealt with problem solving behaviours of couples (see Markman, 1979). This group of studies measured premarital problems in order to observe premarital problem solving and its relation to marital satisfaction and stability. Once again the focus was not on the content of the area of conflict but on the style of conflict resolution. In addition, other studies have focused on premarital and marital problem domains. However, they chose marital

satisfaction (e.g., Storaasli & Markman, 1990) or relational satisfaction (e.g., Kurdek, 1994) as a dependant variable rather than divorce.

Specifically, the task of this section was to discuss the findings relating to the nature of the premarital problems of married and divorced subjects, and that to what extent currently married and divorced subjects differed in their reports of premarital problems (in nature, the number of problems and the percentages of respondents who report the problems). This study appears to be the first of its kind to examine the perceived premarital problems in detail from the perspective of both married and divorced respondents. Regarding this, we discuss the results of our study in the following subsections.

6.2.2. Premarital Problem Areas

Various problems of married and divorced individuals were clustered into nine main categories that represented areas of the social network; attitude and value differences; personality attributes; communication; closeness and sexuality; finance; excessive control and lack of trust; marriage as an institution; and finally other problems. A close examination of differences between whole groups of married individuals and divorced individuals on the prevalence of the premarital problems only revealed significant results for personality attributes. As mentioned in Chapter 5, when the groups were further subdivided by gender, no statistically significant differences between currently divorced and married individuals (married female versus divorced female, and married males versus divorced males) were found to exist. However, it should be noted that divorced females reported more than twice as many personality related problems as married females. Furthermore, divorced males were three times more likely to report social network problems and almost five times more likely to report personality attributes as problems than married males.

Consistent with our expectation that social network problems will be commonly experienced by the partners, the results of frequency analyses showed that social network problems were the most widely experienced ones at the premarital level as far as the problem domains are concerned. This finding is generally in agreement with the findings of Storaasli and Markman's study (1990) and with the assertion that relationships with kins may affect the spousal relationships depending on cultural context by Hortacsu and Oral (1994). Since family ties are strong in Turkey (Kagitcibasi, 1990), relatives were expected to be highly involved with the relationships of partners at the premarital level as well as marital level. Since the sample of this study is expected to be in the middle class range with modern views towards marriage (see Imamoglu & Yasak), it is also expected that the intrusion coming from relatives would be considered more disturbing. In relation to this argument, Hortacsu (1997) found that individuals with higher levels of education showed lower levels of involvement with family.

Not surprisingly, the problems relating to personality attributes have been found to be rated more frequently by the divorced than the married respondents. Also, this problem domain was among the first four most contributing variables in discriminating between currently married and divorced respondents according to the results of discriminant function analysis. This may indicate that personality problems might be very long term, therefore, it might have been plausible to expect them to be detected at the premarital level of the relationships. And also, individuals are expected to pay attention to qualities of the partner to evaluate his/her suitability for marriage. As far as the divorced individuals are concerned, given problems might have protected their potentially disturbing characteristics for a long time. It should be added that personality problems are among the problems most frequently cited in previous research for being responsible for marital break-ups (e.g., Goode, 1956; Kitson & Sussman, 1988).

Similarly, the ability to identify gross attitude and value differences earlier would be expected, since these problems could evoke substantial conflict, particularly at the beginning of a new undertaking such as marriage, which requires frequent decision

making. In the present study, attitude and value differences constituted the second most frequently reported problems by all married respondents, and the third most frequently reported problems by all divorced respondents. However, the differences between all groups are not statistically significant. Furthermore, the overall frequency differences are not statistically significant, but a closer inspection of the responses could shed some light on this issue. While married people have differences of life-style, preferences for particular goods and forms of entertainment, divorced people also have these difficulties and, in addition, they have differences relating to gender role expectations. None of the married individuals expressed any difficulty with their partners in relation to gaps in gender role expectations. These findings are perhaps most easily interpreted with regard to the concept of the attitude's centrality and deep-rootedness, which, in turn, could define the ideology of marriage and make compromising difficult. As Fitzpatrick (1988) asserted, marriage ideology was a major factor in guiding the judgements of the marital outcomes of individuals.

6.2.3. The Number of Problems and Overall Percentages of Problem Reporting Individuals

In terms of overall numbers of problems reported, the study found a significant difference between divorced respondents and married respondents. This difference remained significant when the married males were compared with divorced males. However, the difference was not significant when married females were compared with divorced females although there were a seemingly high number of problems reported by divorced females. On the other hand, the comparison of overall percentages of respondents who reported a problem did not differ significantly in the groups either.

Overall, low level percentages of individuals who reported a problem at the premarital level could be due to several reasons. First of all, a methodological shortcoming of this study might be involved since the premarital stage is in the distant past, relatively, when compared to the marital stage as far as remembering all of the events in detail is

concerned. Secondly, none of the participants in the study reported cohabitation prior to marriage. Indeed, although the average dating period appears to be adequate for this study (see methodology section), the interaction level could be highly restricted for most of the research respondents, especially for the divorcee group. As a 35-year-old divorced male put it (secondary school teacher):

We had a 7-year dating period, which seems long. But I spent 2 years in military service during that period. Other than that, before the engagement we would only say a few words to each other, and would mainly write to each other because we were in a narrow society, and her family would not approve of this kind of relationship. When we became engaged we were supposedly free to talk but we always had somebody chaperoning us.

Thirdly, in conjunction with the second reason, the actual setting of the premarital level relationship might not help reveal each partner's entire behavioural repertoire.

A 32-year-old divorced chief executive made the following comment:

When you are dating you actually see your partner in pleasant places doing pleasant things and you are occupied with sexual desires towards each other. You are not able to see the real sides of yourselves because you are not in a real situation like marriage.

Given the very low level of communication related problem reports, this does not come as a surprise.

The high number of problems experienced by the divorced respondents might indicate the magnitude of the problems with this group, which is in line with the Thornes and Collard's (1979) finding that more divorced individuals had started their marriages with more serious problems than the married ones.

6.2.4. Gender Differences in Premarital Problem Statements

The present findings examining gender differences with respect to premarital problems did not reveal a great deal of discrepancy between the sexes. Neither the total number of

problems nor the total percentage of respondents who reported a problem differentiated between both sexes. These findings are not in line with the established research findings that females complain more than males do in their marital relationship and the findings by Hill, Rubin, and Peplau (1976) that females tended to report more problems during premarital break-ups. However, the established research findings for gender differences, with respect to the number of complaints, relate to the marital stage rather than the premarital stage. In addition, the study by Hill et al. examined premarital break-ups, whereas the present study examines premarital problems in relation to subsequent marital break-ups.

In relation to the premarital problem domains, the present study did not find any statistically significant differences either. However, some problem areas emerged as being heavily dominated by one sex in percentage terms. For example, none of the male informants mentioned problems involving excessive control and lack of trust, and social network problems were mentioned three times more frequently by females than by males. As far as the former is concerned, these findings are most easily interpreted with regard to the cultural context in which the premarital interactions take place. First of all, it is still not generally acceptable for girls to have many boyfriends before marriage. Despite rapid changes in values, it is still quite a common belief that females should be virgins at the time of their marriage. It should be noted that the premarital stage in the present study could stretch as far back as 15 years. That is to say that the relationships would be expected to be more conservative in the past (the Turkey of 15 years ago). In this context, some males might have a tendency to think that they should choose the "purest" girl for marriage and protect her from possible relationships with the other males whom the females would label only as friends. In summary, one reason for this problem might be the rapid social change and the discrepancy between female and male partners regarding females' relationships with males. This theme was exposed by some respondents. As a 28-year-old female divorcee expressed it:

Everything was all right till we started dating. He was in our group and was a friend just like the other male friends. When we started dating, he changed and started to restrict my relations with other

male friends. For example, he would not like me to go out with them in a group any more... and this left me feeling bad about myself... we left our group of friends because of him... I separated from him for this reason several times.

6.3. Marital Problems

This section is devoted to the discussion of this study's findings for the marital problems of married and divorced respondents. Early empirical studies in marriage have identified the most commonly problematic issues in their participants' marriages. Goode (1956) found that non-support, excessive authoritarianism, drinking, gambling, infidelity and personality problems were the most common areas of conflict that emerged from his female sample. A decade later, Levinger (1966) classified the divorcing couples' problems with the inclusion of the gender element into his study. He reported that abuse by the husband, financial problems, drinking, neglect of the children, and lack of love were the most common problem areas for females, whereas sexual incompatibility and in-law related problems were most common with males. Similarly, Kitson and Sussman (1982) stated that, for their sample, the two most problematic marital issues were concerned with personality and home life. Furthermore, communication problems were cited as a leading problem area in a study by Cleek and Pearson (1985).

The research findings summarised in the previous paragraph were all obtained through retrospective accounts of divorced, separated or divorcing individuals. Thus, these studies were not able to compare the problems of married and divorced people. In their recent study, Eells and O'Flaherty (1996) included married individuals in their sample. They found that, regardless of gender, communication issues were rated as problematic by both married and separated/divorced respondents. Furthermore, their analysis revealed that separated and divorced individuals perceived communication problems to be more serious than the currently married individuals. Another recent study (Amato & Rogers, 1997) also investigated marital problems and their impact on the subsequent divorce. In contrast to the other studies mentioned in this section, Amato and Roger's study was conducted longitudinally. Despite its methodology being different, the study shared

similar findings with retrospective studies. According to the findings of this study, sexual infidelity, jealousy, drinking, spending money, moodiness, lack of communication and anger increased the prevalence of divorce.

The findings from the present investigation demonstrated that other than matters concerning social network, economical problems, and house maintenance, the differences between all of the married and all of the divorced respondents were statistically significant in almost every area of the problem domains. That is to say, in the problem domains of personality, attitude differences and values, communication, closeness and sexual problems, excessive control and lack of trust, and marriage as an institution, significantly more divorced informants reported problems than the married informants. The most striking differences reflected on personality attributes and excessive control and lack of trust as problems between married and divorced respondents. Furthermore, the number of the problems cited by divorced individuals was significantly higher than that of married individuals.

However, when the respondents were further sub-divided by gender (female divorcees were compared with female married individuals, and male divorcees were compared with married males), the findings obtained from the comparisons showed different patterns. In this case, it was found that divorced females differed from married females only in the areas of personal attributes, and excessive control and lack of trust. On the other hand, comparisons between divorced males and married males showed that the differences reached a statistically significant level only in the domains of economic problems and attitude differences and values. However, these findings were not supported by multivariate frequency analyses (hierarchical loglinear analyses). Therefore, one should be careful when interpreting the gender related findings of this study about problem domains.

As Storaasli and Markman (1990) put it, problems are inevitable in marriages. As with divorced individuals, married individuals reported problems in their marriages in nearly

all of the areas of problem domains defined by the present study. The only domain of problems that married people remained silent on was excessive control and lack of trust. However, the number of the problems and the number of the respondents who cited at least a particular problem differed according to their marital status. According to these results, it could be said that there are certain problem areas that can pose a larger threat to marriages. Overall, this research showed that excessive control and lack of trust; problems relating to personality; attitude differences and values; closeness and sexual problems; and communication problems respectively, would be considered to have more influence on marital stability. It should be stressed that these domains emerged to be significant in all three types of statistical analyses unanimously (chi-square, loglinear, and discriminant function). The findings regarding excessive control and lack of trust, attitude differences and values, and closeness and sexual problems could well be explained by findings of a Turkish study by Imamoglu and Yasak, (1997). They found that egalitarianism and attaching importance to sexuality were components of marital satisfaction. They pointed out that the feeling of trust seemed to be related to having more egalitarian attitudes towards sharing the gender roles (in our study included in the attitude differences category), and the prospect of an egalitarian marriage could lead to feelings of insecurity and threat if there is no trust. In this context, the findings of this study are consistent with Imamoglu and Yasak' findings and arguments, despite the fact that they studied marital satisfaction.

Even though one should exercise caution when comparing the results of this study with those of the previous research, because of the methodological differences, some commonalties can still be highlighted between the studies. On the whole, the findings of the present study were generally in line with those of previous research. However, communication was not the main problem shown by the present research, unlike the established research findings (Eells & Flaherty, 1996) but it was still highly rated by the divorced.

Theories in the marital domain focused on one aspect of relationships at a time, according to the prime tendencies of the researchers. One could think that various problem areas are covered by various theoretical approaches giving the social exchange theory wider coverage since this group of theories could accommodate a wide range of variables in its body. The theory of interdependency (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) posits that conflict, in our case problems, is a cost to any relationship. Following in the footsteps of the social exchange theory, the behavioural theory of marriage (see Karney & Bradbury, 1995) also suggests that negative behaviours proffer a negative impact on global perception of the marital quality, eventually graduating to divorce. Outnumbering the married individuals' problems, the divorced individuals are more likely to be overwhelmed by their problems.

In conclusion, the results of this study on marital problems in relation to marital stability were in tandem with the findings from previous research regarding marital stability. The number of problems and certain areas of the problem domains differentiated between married individuals and divorced individuals. That is, on the whole, divorced people had more problems. Furthermore, divorced people tended to have more problems in the domains of excessive control and lack of trust, personality, closeness and sexual problems, attitude differences, and communication problems.

6.3.1. Gender Differences in Marital Problems

In this section, the findings obtained through comparisons between married females and married males and between divorced females and divorced males are discussed. The previous section was concerned with comparisons between married and divorced females and between married and divorced males.

Earlier research regarding gender differences with respect to marital complaints has provided us with insightful information. The main findings of the previous research in this area can be summarised as follows:

a) Compared to males, females tended to identify more problems (Eells & Flaherty, 1996, Kitson & Sussman, 1982, Levinger, 1966, Amato and Rogers, 1997). In Burnett's (1990) and Honeycutt's (1993) reviews, females appeared to monitor their relationships more than males.

b) Men and women tend to cite different domains of marital problems. Female individuals are more likely to complain about their spouses' personality, drinking (Bloom et al., 1985), sexuality related problems, and infidelity. Male individuals are more likely to complain about relatives (Storaasli & Markman, 1990; Kitson & Sussman, 1982).

The findings of the present research differ from the existing knowledge of the gender differences regarding marital problems. First of all, there appears to be no support for the assertion that females cite more problems than males as far as the results of this study is concerned. Indeed, contrary to earlier research, although there were no significant differences between sexes in terms of the cumulative numbers of reported problems, male participants reported slightly more problems than the females participants. One reason for this finding could be that, the males from this study, unlike their working class, less educated counterparts, would be more receptive to the popular idea that 'talking is good for your emotional health', since the sample employed in this study only consisted of well-educated professionals. The unusual result of males reporting slightly more problems in comparison to females could also be due to a combination of male disclosure characteristics and the face-to-face interviewing technique used in the research, since it may have facilitated male disclosure. In an earlier research by Rubin (1974), it was reported that female airline travellers were more willing to disclose in same sex interactions, and on the contrary, male travellers were more enthusiastic to disclose in opposite-sex interactions. Likewise, Derlega, Winstead, Wong, and Hunter, (1985) found that male college students disclosed less than female students during interactions with the same-sex, but disclosed more than females during opposite-sex interactions. For the present study, the female interviewer might have had an effect on males in the direction of increasing the amount of disclosure and problem reporting. Furthermore, according to

the findings of a study conducted in Turkey, males and females were found equally expressive (Gurbuz, 1988). This is also reflected in the accounts of interview contents as it was understood that male respondents needed to talk over their divorce and marital problems.

For example, a 34-year-old divorced male engineer reported that:

You cannot talk easily about your divorce with female friends at work, they may misunderstand that you are implying something else, also male friends are not very enthusiastic about talking about divorce. So I think it is more difficult for men than women to be a divorcee... I am glad that somebody listened to me about my divorce.

The results relating to the nature of the problems did not show major differences between females and males either. However, between divorced males and females, significant differences were found in the problem domains of attitude and value differences, and financial problems. It is difficult to make interpretations about why the males paid extra attention to the problems of attitude and value differences. These differences were particularly obvious for life-style, entertainment and preferences over the choice of goods. This would suggest that these domains of problems might be more related to control and decision-making for frequently emerging issues, and compromise would be especially challenging for the traditionally drawn strong male role in these issues even though the research sample is highly educated and more receptive to change. Furthermore, as explained in the previous section, both sexes in the divorced group reported that problems regarding sex roles in their marriage occurred very frequently (see Appendix 2). As Fisek (1991) pointed out, based on her research findings with high socio-economic level married couples, there was a rapid change and a blurring of the definitions of authority, power, and status, which, in turn, become extreme. Similarly, economic problems could affect male respondents more due to society's high economic expectancies from males as traditional bread-winners. It is a well-known fact that females look for career prospects, namely economic and social power, in their partners more than their male counterparts (Buss et al., 1990; Archer, 1996).

6. 4. Problem Continuity between Premarital and Marital Stages

Previous research in the marital domain indicated that the problems leading to divorce could be identified as early as at the beginning of the marriage (see Amato & Rogers, 1997; Hayes et al., 1981). Furthermore, some theorists believe that from the outset it is possible to tell that whether a relationship would survive or not.

As far as divorced individuals of this study are concerned, the overall results showed that in the areas of personality, social network, attitude differences, excessive control and lack of trust and problems with marriage as an institution, there was a significant correlation between the premarital and the marital stages. On the other hand, with regard to all married individuals, social network, attitude and value differences were found to be correlated. When the respondents were further divided by gender, the same pattern existed for married females as for the group of all married individuals, while, for married males, only the social network problems were correlated between the premarital and marital stages. Similarly, for divorced females, the same picture of the correlational relationships as for the group of all divorced individuals emerged, while for divorced males, only two problems areas were found to be correlated, social network and marriage as an institution.

It could be said that the results from this study revealed a difference between females and males in the identification of consistently problematic issues in the early stages of their relationships. Regardless of marital status, the problems reported by females were found to be correlated for the premarital and marital levels in more problem domains than those reported by the males. This may suggest that, for males, the types of problems change with time more markedly than for females. This finding is in accordance with Rand's study (1988, cited in Attridge, Berscheid, & Simpson, 1995). According to Rands study females were quicker than males in detecting marital problems, which eventually led to divorce. However, the same finding is not in line with a recent study by Amato and Rogers (1997). According to their study's findings, females' and males' early problem

reports (as early as 10 years) are equally predictive for the consequent divorces. Our finding, in addition, is not in line with the findings of Kurdek (1993) that females' and males' reports on relationship break-ups did not differ in predicting the dissolution of relationships. Kurdek found that greater relationship stability was predicted by both the husbands' and the wives' relationship assessments made as newlyweds. However, it should be noted that Amato and Rogers', and Kurdek's studies used early marriage level problems rather than premarital level problems, contrary to the present study. Also, both studies are prospective in data collection methods in contrast to Rand's and the present study, which both used retrospective data collection methods.

Consequently, the occurrences of some problems are more overwhelming than others. Along with the other features, the persistency of a problem could contribute in a negative direction to its solution. In addition, some problems could be contextually and personally very sensitive and could occur extraordinarily, demanding quick solutions, and usually resulting in the end of the relationship. Attitude and value differences, and personality attributes could form an example of persistent problems. Adultery, crisis in financial situation, sexually related illnesses etc. could be examples of contextually and personally sensitive problems.

6.5. Premarital Problem Solving

It has been asserted that longitudinal predictors of marital success differ from its concurrent correlates. Several studies have supported this hypothesis. Gottman and Krokoff (1989) found that conflict engagement predicted concurrent dissatisfaction, however, it increased subsequent satisfaction in the long run. Negativity predicted subsequent dissatisfaction as shown in studies by Markman (1981), and for the female respondents, the negativity predicted later satisfaction in the study conducted by Noller et al. (1994). On the other hand Huston and Vangelisti (1991), and Smith, Vivian, and O'Leary, (1990) have reported that there was also a correlation between negativity and concurrent satisfaction. Consequently, there is a controversy over whether early problem

solving predicts later satisfaction, as well as relates to concurrent satisfaction and, thus, stability. Weiss and Heyman (1997) reviewed the related findings and regarded them as being open to dispute. Gottman (1993) himself refuted the earlier assertion made in his 1989 study and added that negative behaviours were also deleterious for the long term stability of marriage. However, it should be noted that Gottman's 1989 and 1993 studies were carried out using different dependent variables - marital satisfaction and marital dissolution respectively. Likewise, the present study employs divorce as a dependent variable.

The summarised findings of previous research provide a good grounding for the expectation of differences between currently married and divorced individuals in relation to their premarital level interactions. Therefore, we predict that currently married individuals will report more positive problem solving than divorced individuals, and less negative conflict engagement, along with less avoidance and compliance.

The present study found that currently married individuals were engaged in more problem solving behaviours with regards to the females and less compliant behaviour with regards to the males when compared with divorced individuals. That is to say that married individuals preferred more active ways of dealing with problematic issues.

The findings of the present study are primarily in line with previous research. However, these findings showed that negative conflict engagement did not have discriminative power between divorced and married individuals at the premarital stage. This may be because premarital level interaction would be limited in terms of negative conflict engagement, especially in the case of divorced individuals. This theme was raised by the divorced individuals especially, by the divorced males. A 39-year-old geophysicist divorcee said that:

Although we both married in recent years (I was 32 years old), we had seen each other in a very limited manner before marriage. She was an engineer and modern looking girl. Our families did not interfere with our dating because they were not living in Ankara. However, we had these formalities

in our minds, especially her. We were seeing each other in a very formal manner. We would meet in a restaurant and perhaps would talk about some impartial issues, such as, who was elected for government, or which film we saw. We never had the chance to be informal or vulgar. Perhaps, in fact, we were never boyfriend and girlfriend. We were just two candidates for marriage partners. I would call it modern traditionalism. Not society or family, but you yourself are the limiting factor.

The rates of conflict engagement seemed to be higher between married females and males in comparison to the divorced individuals. This may seem surprising, especially when it is considered that conflict engagement represents hostility and previous research findings state that unhappily married couples are more hostile towards each other. However, according to Gottman (1993), conflict engagement is not necessarily dysfunctional for marital stability as long as negativity is balanced by positivity. The findings relating to positive problem solving are also significantly high for married individuals, and this is similar to some of the findings of previous marital success prediction research (e.g., Markman, 1981). Furthermore, a close inspection of the accounts from the interviews show that currently married people were not discouraged from engaging in conflict. A married male respondent stated proudly:

We discussed everything for hours. Sometimes these discussions became so heated that we would shout at each other unpleasantly. We even threatened each other with finishing the relationship, but we never gave up talking over our problems even at the times we agreed on a mutually acceptable solution. We never swept matters under the carpet.

On the other hand, the accounts from the divorced individuals' interviews are plagued with stories of avoidance of their former partners. The divorced individuals stated that they were uncomfortable talking about some of their problems with their partners since their partner might feel offended, or they might even lose their intended partner.

A divorced individual stated that:

If it was now, I think I would talk freely with her about what annoyed me. For example, she was obsessively cleaning everything. I was aware of it before marriage, perhaps I had even thought that it might annoy me after we were married. However, I wanted to marry her, as she was a beautiful girl,

so I kept it to myself thinking that she would get hurt and the relationship would be damaged. However, when you marry you cannot hide your annoyance forever, especially as it happens everyday. When I stated my annoyance at home she blamed me for not being honest because I did not tell her before the marriage. Perhaps I could not change her behaviour but I hoped we could both accept the situation and seek help. It did not work out in this way she would get defensive.

This may also explain why compliance is particularly higher with divorced males rather than married males. Divorced males are less confrontational compared to married males. Less positive problem solving, more avoidance, less conflict engagement and statistically significant higher compliance were more characteristic in divorced males. Although compliance as a problem solving style smoothes the atmosphere temporarily preventing escalation of the conflict or the problem situation, it is far from being a functional solution in the long run. At the same time, it is perhaps one of the most self-harming behaviours when the person feels forced to comply. Allan and Gilbert (1997), in their review, stated that involuntary submission or compliance provokes unpleasant feelings about one's self, such as, worthlessness, and loss of self-esteem. In addition, it leaves the compliant person with hostile and angry inner talk, building resentment against their partner.

As a 26-year-old male divorcee reported:

She never compromised. Many times, I just had to accept what she wanted. For example, I accepted her being irresponsible towards housework, and put up with her inappropriate friends, one of her friend was a prostitute. I tried to do more housework to keep the house organised but I did not feel like I was a real man and somebody who was worthy of respect in our home.

6.5.1. Gender Differences in Premarital Problem Solving

The data obtained, for premarital problem solving behaviours, from both females and males did not reveal any statistically significant differences due to gender (see Chapter 5). However, surprisingly, the males were generally found to be reporting more conflict engagement than the females. This result is very difficult to explain since it is completely

at odds with the mainstream beliefs and stereotypes connected with female and male conflict resolution behaviour. Furthermore, it does not fit in with the findings (e.g., Christensen, 1988) that, in divorced couples, males avoid and females engage in conflict. One reason for this could be that females tried harder to appear socially acceptable. According to Amato and Rogers' findings (1997), males are more honest than females in retrospective accounts even though females are honest 'enough' in their reports.

6.6. Marital Problem Solving

The relationship between marital success and problem solving styles of partners has also found support in cross-sectional studies. Baucom et al. (1990) reviewed cross-sectional observational research and stated that spouses in distressed relationships show more disagreement, were more critical of their partners, and showed more contemptuous behaviour towards each other than spouses in happy marriages. Similarly, in their review, Weiss and Heyman (1990) concluded that distressed couples emitted higher levels of global negativity and enacted several negative behaviours including criticism, hostility and displeasure, put-downs, and complaints. Both observational and self-report data provided valuable insights into the interactions of satisfied/dissatisfied and stable/divorced couples. For most studies, negativity and positivity were used to define communication behaviours broadly. The negativity in problem solving behaviours of individuals or couples made a negative impact on the trajectory of marriage. In a more recent study, Noller et al., (1994) found that when positivity was low, and disengagement (withdrawal) and destructive processes were high, both partners were less satisfied in their marriages. They added that the more confrontational individuals were the happier they were in both the short run and the long run. In addition to an adverse relationship between marital satisfaction and behavioural negativity, some researchers have also shown similar findings between negative problem solving approaches and marital dissolution. Christensen and Shenk (1991) found that clinic and divorcing couples evidenced more mutual avoidance of problem discussions and more demand/withdraw communication during problem discussions than their non-distressed counterparts.

Consequently, relying on previous research results, we could expect that currently divorced individuals would be more prone to negative-problem solving styles than currently married individuals.

This study's findings clearly showed that married and divorced individuals differed only in their compliance type of problem solving behaviour. After further analysis, this finding was only found to be related to females, that is, only female divorcees reported highly significant rates of compliance. None of the other results were significantly different between divorced and married individuals. However, a close examination shows that married females are involved in conflict engagement more than divorced females. In addition, married males reported more avoidance than currently divorced males.

It should be noted that there are difficulties in comparing the findings from the present study to the research summarised earlier since methodological differences are present. The current study does not include both partners of divorced individuals. Therefore, it does not have two partners' data, which could enable sequential analysis, or the identification of reciprocal dysfunctional conflict resolution styles such as wife-demand/husband-withdrawal. On the other hand it could still allow for comparisons on the basis of the negativity - positivity dimension. In our opinion, this is the common factor in problem solving research.

In conclusion, within its limitations, this study reveals a link between negative problem solving and marital dissolution for female individuals. Clearly, in the present sample, divorced females reported more compliance than married females.

Once again, compliance (willingness to give in) presents itself more in divorced than married female individuals. It may lead us to think that compliance is related to the perceived magnitude of the problem, and may suggest the helplessness felt by people facing the problem. Thus, one might feel overwhelmed and think that there is no way other than to give in. When female respondents' interview accounts were examined, one

of the most striking facts was that they had tried other ways of problem solving such as talking, and offering new solutions. However, either their talking did not work or they were not actually listened to, and when they were listened to, nothing, in fact, changed at the behavioural level. Consequently, they decided to do nothing about the problems and the unpleasant situation lasted till they decided to divorce.

A 43-year-old divorced female reported that:

I remained married for 20 years, because I did not want my children reared in a broken family. From the very beginning I started having problems with him, such as dealing with housework on my own, not being listened to at all, being put down. He has always been in a competition with me somehow. At the beginning, I tried talking about being made responsible for everything at home, and about his listening habits, but he never changed even the slightest bit. I do not remember when I totally gave up trying to change his behaviours ... I just put up till the children had grown up... I divorced him eventually.

6.6.1. Gender Differences in Marital Problem Solving

In the previous section, differences between divorced and married individuals were discussed in terms of both sexes. In this section, differences between female and male in both marital statuses (married/divorced) are discussed.

As a salient factor, the gender differences between the two marital status groups were examined. Although there do not seem to be enormous differences, compliance was found to be significantly different between married females and males. This suggests to us that females are not compliant, whereas males could be compliant in intact marriages. Combined with the result that divorced females were more compliant than married females, compliance emerges as the main discriminative power between divorced and married females and, also, between females and males in relation to marital stability as far as this sample is concerned. Furthermore, although the difference is not statistically significant, married males cited more avoidance than married females in problem solving interaction. Male avoidance in problem solving can be functional for stable marriages. In

fact, in interview accounts, knowing when to avoid and when to discuss appeared to be an important topic for both divorced and married males.

A 33- year-old divorced male care worker reported that:

She never knew when to discuss the sensitive things that had always been a problem between us. If she could have waited for the proper times to talk, I would be more receptive. I knew I was putting a wall between us when she started complaining about a wrong behaviour of mine as soon as I came in from work, very tired, so those times I learned not to listen to her to prevent myself from getting angry. As a result she would get furious.

A 35-year-old, male married schoolteacher reported that:

I could talk about everything with her but when she was angry I would rather avoid talking about problems with her because it does not help. Rather it makes things worse. I think she does the same thing when I am angry and not capable of listening to her properly.

Perhaps, it should be concluded that, refraining from total avoidance but using it functionally can be beneficial for stable marriages preventing the escalation of negative discussions.

These results could be related to our samples' characteristics. Compliance was a discriminative characteristic between divorced and married males recalling the premarital problem solving results discussed earlier. It would seem that compliance before marriage for males, and after marriage for females, is not functional for stable marriages involving middle class professional individuals in Turkey. The females at this socio-economic level are uneasy with compliance in their marital life. It should be noted that there appear to be some differences between female compliance and male compliance, despite the fact that there is no statistically significant difference between divorced females and males. According to frequency distribution, divorced males are compliant before marriage and they put up with the situation believing that it will change, or that they are going to change their partners after marriage. On the other hand, divorced females report that they

become compliant after marriage. In conclusion, male compliance at the premarital level carries a hope that they will convert, or at least influence or educate, their future wives. On the contrary, female compliance appeared to emerge out of hopelessness (as in one of the above interview examples). Here are some examples from interviews depicting male behaviour before marriage.

I was aware of her shortcomings but I thought that I could change her interests in trivia. I would teach her how to enjoy life, how to interpret political events, perhaps to help her gain an ideology. I tried a lot during marriage but I understood that some personality characteristics do not change at all. (a 31-year-old divorced male)

She did have some superstitious or perhaps religious beliefs which I tended to get annoyed with but I thought I could educate her, and I could influence and change her. (a 39-year-old divorced male clerk in health business)

She had these ideas about equality between females and males, and would decide what to wear herself and who to talk to, and so on... I did not think that these things would severely disturb our relationship causing rows every so often ... I thought that when she was married she would consider her role in a different perspective, in fact I believed that I would have more influence on her. (a 36 year-old, divorced businessman)

6.7. Summary

In this chapter, the findings of the present study have been discussed. According to the results, a plethora of problems and various problem solving styles were used by the respondents. Both the married and divorced respondents were able to detect domains at the premarital stage, which would be problematic at the marital stage. However, divorced and married people differed in the total number and nature of the problems that they experienced, with the divorced having more personality related problems at the premarital level and all areas of problem at the marital stage, other than problems related to social network, finance and house maintenance. This finding was in line with previous research (Goode, 1956; Kitson & Sussman, 1982).

The expectancy that females would complain more in their relationships was not supported by the present study. This finding is at odds with the previously established research results about females' problem awareness (e.g., Eells & O'Flaherty, 1996; Levinger, 1966).

In relation to the problem solving behaviour of partners, male divorcees at the premarital stage and female divorcees at the marital stage reported more compliance as a method of problem solving than their married counterparts. In considering compliance as a negative problem solving way, it could be said that these results support the early research findings.

The present study has extended previous research in several aspects. First of all, the study is novel in examining premarital level problems in detail in relation to marital breakdown. Secondly, it has used a non-forced self-report data collection method to study premarital and marital problem solving styles. This provides us with an understanding of the actors' point of view of problem solving. Lastly, the study has investigated Turkish individuals as opposed to the more frequently studied western groups.

CHAPTER 7

Qualitative Analysis

7.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the qualitative aspects of the data have been analysed. Regarding quantitative analysis, the interview data has been coded and analysed by using various statistical techniques.¹ The focus of the quantitative analysis was to examine premarital and marital problem experiences and problem-solving styles among both the divorced and married individuals. On the other hand, the focus of the qualitative analysis is to make sense of the respondents' spontaneous accounts as to: why respondents failed to detect the problems in their premarital relationship? And why currently divorced individuals continued towards marriage despite the fact that they were aware of problems in their premarital relationships. In contrast to quantitative analysis, all cases were not included into the qualitative analysis since the accounts that were the subject of this chapter were voluntarily brought about by the respondents.² In this analysis, only ten currently married and ten divorced individuals who did not report any premarital problems and provided voluntary accounts pertaining to premarital experiences were included from the whole sample. Also, the accounts of seventeen divorced individuals who reported premarital problems and married despite those problems were analysed.

With regard to quantitative analysis, it was found that 45% of married and 32% of divorced respondents did not report any problem relating to their relationship before marriage. This may be due to respondents' failure to monitor problematic aspects of their premarital relationships or may be that they carefully monitored their relationship and actually believed that it was working well. In relation to this, the content of the spontaneous reasons given in the interviews was analysed in order to find out the

¹ See Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 for details.

² The details about sampling and interview procedure are given in Chapter 4.

underlying mechanisms of lack of problem reporting.

During the interview, I tried to make sure that the respondents answered all the questions as to whether they had any problems or not; if the answer was yes, I tried to find out what kind of problems they were; and to find out how they solved them. However, other than required answers, respondents had their own views regarding why they were not aware of the problems early enough. Thus, the qualitative analysis focused on these accounts in the hope that it would shed light on what circumstances they were in when they decided to marry.

In this chapter, no attempt was made to quantify the emerging themes. Instead, specific quotes were abstracted from the transcripts that best represent the individual themes. It is hoped that this chapter may clarify the perceived premarital atmosphere, in which problem experiences and premarital problem solving behaviour took place. Regarding this, firstly, the analysis of the divorced individual's accounts is presented in this chapter. Then, the analysis of currently married individuals' accounts is given. Finally, I present the analysis of the reasons given by currently divorced individuals for their continuation into marriage despite premarital relationship problems or perceived incompatibility in personalities.

7.2. Fieldwork

7.2.1. Divorced Individuals and Reasons Given for Lack of Early Awareness of Problems

Pressurised into Getting Married

It seemed that an array of influences including family pressure, social pressure, and economical pressure affected currently divorced individuals' marriage decisions. The impression was given that some respondents did not have an adequate chance to get to

know each other well so that they could judge the suitability of their partners. In other words, it can be said that their marriages were a product of some circumstantial difficulties. These difficulties led the respondents to rush into marriage and prevented them from realising how well they got along on a day-to-day basis and from detecting possible problem areas in future.

Uncomfortable living arrangement for females seemed to be a form of force to marriage even though the prospective bride had an income:

I was living with my aunt. I had lost my family earlier. She had her own children as well at this time. Then it was not quite acceptable to hire a flat and just live own your own as an unmarried young girl. I was feeling a little bit like an outsider in my aunt's home even though she was kind towards me. I think I was missing my own house and hurried into marriage with my ex husband. I did not think too much about his behaviours and about the future of our relationship. (a 38-year-old, female, divorced teacher)

Another divorced female reported pressure and discomfort resulting from living with her family and she saw marriage as a refuge:

Mine was an escape from my family. I wanted to go somewhere away from the family but my job happened to be in Ankara...My family was living in Ankara as well. When I could not go to a remote place, away from the family, I then accepted my husband's marriage proposal without much consideration. I had many proposals but, then, he was the most insistent one around, so I picked him. (a 42 year-old, divorced female)

The accounts given above implied that if some respondents had seen any alternative way to live their life as they desired then, they would not have got married in a hurry at least for a while. The same respondent expressed:

If I had had today's circumstances, I could have moved out and have started living alone instead of marrying someone to move out of family home. (She stayed married for 16 years)

Although the divorced individuals' partners were not present in my sample, in a

complimentary fashion, the male divorcees had reported they were uncomfortable with restrictions coming from the partner's (ex wife) family or social ties in premarital period. They could not live their romance or their relationships without constraints so they married. A 33-year-old male, clerk divorcee claimed: ³

Before the engagement we would only say a few words to each other... because we were in a very narrow society...when we became engaged we were supposedly free to talk but we always had somebody chaperoning us.

In the words of a 30-year-old, male, schoolteacher divorcee:

We got married before she went to the university and married to be able to see each other without any restriction...we lived in a small town and in fact meeting her was very problematic. During courtship, when I returned from the university (He was at the university in a big city) we used to meet in a café secretly. If her family had heard we were dating, we could not have seen each other since she would not be let out so easily. (His wife got a university degree after their marriage)

In addition to societal pressure on females towards marriage, males have also felt pressurised towards marriage especially after a certain age. A 37-year-old, late married, divorced male indicated the pressure by his friends, family, and work environment.

I married at a very late age for Turkish standards (31 year old). Social pressure, my family's pressure in the direction of marriage made me fed up and I decided to marry whomever comes up next...And I think my decision was a bit hurried in my ex wife's case...it is very difficult to live a healthy relationship out of marriage, with a female. Everybody interferes with your business (he means his intimate life), even your friends whenever they see you ask 'when are you getting married', your family makes you feel suffocated by their questioning as to when you are going to marry and have children... your colleague gossip about you if you are female ever worse.

Superficial Interaction

Some individuals talked about a superficial interaction process before the marital period.

³ Some of these excerpts were also used in discussion chapter.

According to them, marriage is very different from dating or engagement that is why the real problematic issues cannot be seen. During the engagement or the courtship, couples meet each other in cafes or family settings. This kind of meeting does not give the opportunity to see the real self of the partner. This group of individuals also complained about that their partners hiding their negativity by presenting themselves in their best possible way. In this group, respondents are generally introduced to their marriage partner by their social milieu in the hope that a marriage would occur. This should not be mixed with arranged marriages in which families chose marriage partners for their children when they are considered of marital age.

People do not have much opportunity to experience problems before marriage. You do nice things, such as, going out, romantic and sexual stuff. In my opinion people should share a house before they get married to see real personalities. (a 35-year-old, male, divorced teacher)

A 31-year-old female divorced banking clerk complained about her ex husband's hiding his real face.

For me the man I knew before marriage was totally different from the man I got married to... Before marriage he was so kind so generous and clean... now I think that it is very difficult to know some one before you live very close to him. He looked pretty rich before marriage but I learned that they were just OK money wise, he accepted my working as a teacher before marriage but after marriage he changed his mind... however I did not investigate very well, I trusted him.

In line with the above account a 34-year-old female stated that:

Before marriage, during the engagement we did not have any problems. We were 90 % likeminded. We had the same political ideologies and did not let our families interfere with our marriage... however you think similarly; you are both different human beings. These differences do not come to the surface before marriage, for example, I did not expect him to create any problem over sharing housework but it happened.

The above accounts are in line with Levine's (1982) views on contradictory behaviours of couples' being due to conflicting values between differentiated roles of urban and rural

society. According to Levine traditionally, egalitarianism in female and male roles is not the predominant value in rural societies. He adds, in Turkey, during courtship males act more egalitarian in comparison to the marital stage, while females act more freely during courtship than marriage. However, after marriage men and women easily fall back on traditional roles that they are socialised into at early stages of their lives.

7.2.2. Married Individuals and Reasons Given for Lack of Early Awareness of Problems

Superficial Interaction but Positive Partner

Although married individuals are also talking about limited interactions at the premarital stage, the theme of being forced to marry did not appear to be the case with married individuals. Perhaps, it can be said that they implied a less eventful period of dating or engagement as divorcees did.

A 34-year-old, female, married respondent:

People show their real faces or personalities during some important events... before marriage we did not have any serious events or crisis so we knew each other actually after marriage.

A 39-year-old, male, married respondent also made the same point:

Before you got married you could see your fiancée or girl friend in certain occasions. You could go out for a meal or you could go to a cinema. But it is difficult for one to know other partner in these places...but again everything was normal for us, nothing seemed problematic.

Even though the thinking about relationship or interaction level has been seen as inadequate in comparison to those of today's relationships, talking about positive properties of a partner has been noted. A 38-year-old, married female:

Perhaps, I did not think then as much as I could think if I get married right now... But he was very humane, trustworthy, and had a good personality...I do not remember anything unpleasant about him.

My own Deliberate Choice

For the married individuals, it was important to emphasise that the marriage is their own free choice in contrast to divorced individuals. They did not provide the accounts of circumstantial forces that caused them to marry, or prevent them from researching carefully about the partner, such as pressure from society, families or a partner in need.

A 42-year-old, divorced male:

I did not get married for the sake of being married or I did not act with the thought that, in society, a person who is in my age, university graduate and with a job should get married. I got married because I saw somebody whom I would tie my life as a wife... if I marry again I would marry her.

A 34-year-old, married male:

Due to my character, I want to do the best of everything. It is the same with my marriage. I got married when I said I found somebody who suits me. Before her I had several girlfriends but none of them I wanted to marry.

A 32-year-old, married male:

I knew my wife, I loved her and I wanted to be together with her.

Knowing Each Other Well

Currently married individuals expressed that they had known their partners reasonably well. Even some respondents did not report any problems before marriage in their relationships. However, it seemed that this was not due to limited interaction, which was the case in divorcees. Instead, they perceived that they knew their partners well and thought that there were not any real problems. This may indicate a high level of perceived compatibility among married individuals.

A 32-year-old, married male:

We had known each other for eight years. We thought that we were suitable for each other. I was able to see her character.

A 34-year-old, married female:

There was not any problems, I knew him well...They used to live on our street and we went to the same high school. After University we met again and decided to marry.

A 34-year-old, married male:

If I did not know her, I would not marry. I assume that I knew her well. I thought OK, I found someone who I would be happy with.

To summarise the accounts of married individuals, one can say that the main focus is on the free choice, relational compatibility, and positive aspects of partners. Regarding this, the present study is in line with the work of Surra and Hughes (1997) on classification of commitment decisions to wed. Surra and Hughes identified two commitment processes, namely, relationship driven and event driven. Relationship driven partners explain their relational changes over time relying on shared activities and time together. On the other hand, event-driven partners account for the change in their relationships relying on sharp up and downturns, (e.g., conflicts, negative network believes). Related to this, the relationship driven partners were found more compatible compared to event driven partners on some aspects of relationships. Regarding the findings of the present study, one can say that married individuals' explanations for a decision to wed resemble the relationship driven commitment style identified by Surra and Hughes.

In addition, it can be noted that married individuals also saw or perceived marriage as a social task or as something that should be done at one stage of their life. This theme is mentioned by two respondents, however, it did not give the impression that these individuals actually are against marriage and they were pushed towards it. Instead, they accepted normative aspect of marriage and it guided them towards marriage. At the same

time, they believed in marriage.

7.2.3. Reasons Given by Divorcees Why They Married Despite Being Aware of Problems

Some divorcees were aware that they had some problems about their relationships but maintained their relationships towards marriages. Two groups of individuals emerged; the one who found the problems were not serious and the ones who knew their problems were really serious for a relationship like marriage. For the former two sub themes emerged. Some believed that the problems would disappear over time, and some thought that they would change their partners' problematic characteristics. For the latter it seemed that circumstantial reasons for commitment decisions to wed was their main theme.

Undermining the Severity of Problems

1. Problems would Disappear Spontaneously

A belief that the problems were circumstantial described some divorcee's perceptions. Especially problems related to jealousy were perceived as not pertinent but circumstantial. If partners marry, the problem will be dissolved spontaneously. Females rarely reported premarital jealousy.

A 31-year-old, divorced female with a four-year-old child stated that:

I felt that his excessive jealousy is stemming from his circumstances. He was in a school belonging to the army and I was at the university. His school was quite strict and he was not always able to attend to activities outside with me in my circle of friends. That is why I thought he was so jealous and restricted my activities. I believed that this would change when we get married.

Another 30-year-old, divorced female said that:

I knew that before marriage he was pretty jealous and he was telling me who I should see or not see...I interpreted it as a sign of love towards me. (This was reported to be the main problem leading

to divorce by this female)

A 27-year-old, divorced male:

Just before we married she, on some occasions, got upset when we came across friends (his female friends) and talked to them. This sometimes annoyed me, you could not believe, but I sometimes found it amusing...I did not take it serious. (When they were married she phoned him every so often even during job meetings to control or check on him)

2. Partner can be Converted

Some divorcees reported that they would change or influence their partner after getting married. In general, they believed that they would overcome the problems, particularly related to political differences or the choice of spare time activities, by influencing their partner. Generally, this theme seemed to be present in the accounts of male divorcees.

A 36-year-old, male divorcee stressed relatively less severe problems, which could easily be manageable by changing the partner.

The problems, which gave us headache, were apparent before our marriage. For example, her being excessively worried about her health, being tidy, or her lack of interest towards more important issues like politics... then I was very confident that I would get into her head I would change her thinking' her interests... I got so tired of trying to convince and to teach or to tell her...then I realised that some of the things are in nature and you cannot change them by outside efforts... so I gave up.

A 42-year-old, divorced, male, health administrator reported that:

I did not enjoy the same films that she enjoyed, but she used to go to the cinema with me. Also, she did not enjoy reading etc., but I cannot go without it...I cannot say that I was not annoyed with these from time to time. Then, I was very confident that I could make her change. But it did not happen.

Being Pushed into Marriage

Some of the divorced individuals, who were aware that they were having problems in their premarital relationships, reported that they were concerned about the negative outcomes of continuing with marriage. However, they could not see any way out other than marriage. They were pushed into marriage, because they had premarital sex, the partner had an unfortunate time, or their families insisted they marry. Once again divorced individuals blamed the circumstantial occurrences for their commitment for marriage.

A 31-year-old, female divorcee reported that she married not to hurt the feelings of her partner:

I was against marriage. We were happy without being married. I had my own flat and he was able to come and stay over. Duties involved in marriage especially towards the families for me were meaningless and I did not think that I was able to meet... But we had to marry because my ex husband (now my boy friend) wanted to marry he felt he would be more secure by getting married. I did not want him to be hurt so I accepted marriage.

In the words of a 39-year-old, male divorcee:

She was very young when we got married. I loved her. From time to time, I thought that her being very young would create some problems because she was pretty childish ...I saw very irritating scenes of her being very agitated, but I could not finish the relationship because I had some kind of a tie, perhaps love. I took a pity for her as well since her circumstances were very difficult for her. She was an orphan and living with her elder sister and having a very conflicting relationship with them...I wanted to take her out of this stressful life and we got married in theses circumstances.

According to another female divorcee's account

When I decided to break-up with him, he got ill (tuberculosis). Then I thought that I would feel guilty if I left him in this position.

A young, female, computer engineer divorcee reported that:

I got married when I was at the University. I would not have married so early if my family had not forced me to get married because I was dating someone. If it were now I would not tell them. As soon as they heard it, they came over to Ankara (her family originally lived in Adana, a large city in the south) and they wanted to know who he was and his family. Soon after we became engaged...during engagement, we had a lot of conflict and I did not want to go further and marry him but my family forced me not to break up and marry him. My family said that: "you cannot put fire and gun powder together."⁴ So they would not let me finish it off... Their fear was that I had lost my virginity and my honour. They thought that if I did, I could not find a proper husband any more...I wanted to divorce since the first day of my marriage. (a 30 year-old, female divorcee, she and her ex husband are both computer engineers)

Another female divorcee reported that:

Since we knew each other for three years prior to marriage, I was well aware that he was not the person I would marry. Nonetheless, at that time, I felt that I had to marry because I had sex with him before marriage. I think the majority of my friends were thinking that sex was only acceptable, if you plan to marry eventually ...in fact these things were not talked about openly perhaps my perception was in this way. (a 33 year-old, female, divorced, social worker)

Continuing towards marriage despite serious problems may seem somewhat absurd. Such a life long commitment is expected to be starting with reasonably less problematic status. However, actually some divorcees reported that they got married to divorce. As a 31-year-old, male divorcee put it:

I could not leave her (talking about premarital stage)... I went to bed with her. I thought that I would marry her and later on I will get divorced.

This type of reason for marriage could well be related to cultural pressure on female virginity. Both male and female respondents gave premarital sex related accounts for their marriage.

⁴ It is a Turkish saying which implies that when females and males are together they can not go without engaging in a sexual activity.

It seems that the divorced individuals took marriage decisions despite the fact that they recognized the problematic nature of their relationships. Although they sounded unhappy with their relationship, they stayed in it anyway. This may be best explained by Johnson's (1991) commitment framework. Johnson divides commitment into three distinct types: In personal commitment individuals want to stay in a relationship; in moral commitment individuals feel morally obliged to stay in a relationship; and in structural commitment individuals feel constrained to stay in a relationship. In the case of the present study, the divorced individuals who generally attributed marriage decisions to external factors could well be considered under structural and moral types of commitments. These two types of commitment may be affected by cultural or sub cultural contexts. Regarding this, family intervention is a common phenomenon in the traditional Turkish cultural context where interdependence is the predominant value (Kağitcibasi, 1990). Also, Hortacsu (1997) found that responsibility towards family among the prospective Turkish marriage partners is quite high regardless of education level that was considered an important index of modernity. Therefore, one might say that familial pressure on the decision procedure for marriage despite the existence of serious premarital problems could be related to the obedient nature of some divorcees. Obedience in children also is a traditionally predominant value in the Turkish family system (Kagitcibasi, 1990).

7.3. Conclusion

Using qualitative methodology, the main aim of this chapter was to provide a better understanding of how currently married and divorced individuals perceived their decision making process to marriage that the quantitative analysis did not explore. Regarding this, first, we investigated the reasons why respondents failed to detect the problems in their premarital relationship. Second, the reasons why currently divorced individuals pursued to marry despite being aware of problems in their premarital relationships were explored.

The results of the qualitative analysis revealed that while divorced individuals focused on the circumstantial or outside forces that pushed them into marriage without careful

evaluation of the partner and the relationship, currently married individuals focused on their efforts to choose a partner for marriage well matched on key characteristics (or suitability). According to the accounts of the currently married individuals in this study, it appears that they well monitored their relationships and considered themselves as being more compatible with their partners in comparison to divorced ones. In comparison to divorced individuals, the currently married individuals seemed to be more enthusiastic and more inquisitive about the onset of their marriage, and took every opportunity to know their partner well before their marriage. Furthermore, the accounts of premarital relationships of respondents gave the impression that currently married individuals started their marriage better planned compared to divorcees. On the other hand, the divorced people's lack of premarital problem awareness seemed to stem from lack of opportunity to evaluate their prospective spouse and the relationship, as they were pressurised to get married by circumstantial or outside forces.

The results also indicate that divorced individuals attributed their marriage to circumstantial pressures. It should be expressed that the currently married individuals were not included for the analysis regarding the reasons why the individuals got married even though they had premarital problems, since none of them mentioned any serious premarital problems. Regarding the analysis of courtship experiences of divorced individuals who proceeded into marriage despite premarital problems, two main themes appeared. The first one was to take the problems less serious and the second one was to be forced into marriage by various factors, such as having sex before marriage, partners' being ill, in need or strict family atmosphere.

Furthermore, the results show that both the currently married and divorced individuals complained about the familial or societal constraints, which limited the interaction level between spouses prior to their marriages. These constraints might have interfered with the identification of possible problem areas in their premarital period. As a result, they may have encountered some unpleasant surprises about their partners at the early stages of their marriage. In addition, individuals in such circumstances practised little problem

their marriage. In addition, individuals in such circumstances practised little problem solving interaction and entered into marriage being relatively less experienced.

In general, these findings are in line with the premises of compatibility theories of mate selection and marriage (see, for example, Huston & Houts, 1998; Houts, Robins, & Huston, 1996). According to these theories partners establish commitment decisions depending on how well they suited each other. To quote from Huston and Houts "The less well matched partners are, the more negativity they are likely to express toward each other, the more ambivalence they are likely to feel about their relationship, and the more turbulent their relationship is likely to be" (1998, p. 121). Furthermore, the interplay between partners' dispositions may surfaces in early stages of relationships and continues to persist in the later stages (Huston, 1994; Surra, 1990). This indicates the importance of the premarital stage in understanding successful marital outcomes.

It has been also asserted that short duration of courtship might lead to a premature commitment and failure in filtering negative information regarding the spouse (Raschke, 1987). In addition, as the results of the qualitative study revealed, it can be said that the level of interaction is also important. Regarding this, the qualitative analysis shows that although some spouses knew each other for quite a long time, they did not interact extensively (e.g., they saw each other in limited social settings such as at school, in cafes, or at family visiting). In order to know the spouse better, one can say that an expansive and deeper interaction process should be practised so that one can observe the variety of behaviours in prospective spouse.

The results of the qualitative study might also be evaluated in relation to cultural settings. In other words, individuals' expectation of marriage, strategies followed and patterning of courtship relationships could well be culturally mediated. While independent youth culture in the west places a premium on personal choice of romantic matters (Hill & Peplau, 1998) the base culture provides young individuals with required means to exercise free will. On the other hand, in traditional Turkish culture in which relatedness is

emphasised (Kagitcibasi, 1989) the choice of a marital partner and getting married are more of a societal issue. It is regulated by well-defined rules. And in the rapid changing societal context these rules sometimes conflicts with the young generations' needs. According to the accounts of respondents in this study, the cultural context restricts the level of interaction between prospective spouses. This is perhaps due to differences between young members of society and their families in their perception of accepted forms of male-female relationships. In a study conducted by Kandiyoti (1978) among the upper socio-economic status university students, it was found that female students scored higher than their mothers in independence and self-decisiveness. Also, among the younger individuals modern indices of marital relationships were found more prevalent in comparison to older individuals (Atalay et al., 1992).

To summarise, the results of this chapter demonstrated that circumstantial pressure on making decisions perceived to make a deleterious impact on marital stability. Considering that the sample of this study could be regarded in the more modern range of social strata in Turkey, societal or familial constraints on the premarital relationships seemed still to be heavily felt by the divorced individuals.

CHAPTER 8

Summary and Conclusion

In this thesis, a retrospective self-report study was carried out in order to identify premarital and marital problems, and the styles of their resolutions in relation to marital stability, among married and divorced professionals in Ankara, Turkey. A combination of two research traditions has been used in an attempt to understand the divorce phenomenon. One of these traditions involves self-report problem studies of divorce that examine the complaints of individuals for the purpose of identifying the reasons for divorce and marital dissatisfaction. The other research tradition relates to the studies of conflict resolution (problem solving) styles of individuals and couples in relation to marital dissolution. The former approach puts special importance on the role of nature and the severity of problems associated with marital dissolution. In contrast, the latter approach emphasises the crucial role played by the problem solving styles of individuals in determining marital success.

According to the findings of the present study, care should be taken to avoid making claims that every problem could be solvable. The data analysis indicated that problems exist whose solutions are perceived as either impossible or very difficult, such as physical characteristics of partners and adulterous experiences. Such situations seem to be irreversible. Likewise, it is understood that some problems could be so deeply rooted that even after constructive communication, or conflict resolution, or problem solving sessions, disagreeable behaviour tends to continue and come to the surface in an obnoxious way. For example, jealousy, certain behavioural characteristics, and incongruity between partners over the ideology of marriage (e.g., sex roles) could be thought of as being in this group. The correlational relationships between premarital and marital versions of problems confirmed that certain areas of problems are highly correlated regardless of marital status (e.g., personality attributes, attitude and value differences, social network problems, lack of trust and excessive control). This result

implies that given problems are likely to linger on with individuals for a long time. In addition, this result implies that it is possible to detect the problems before marriage takes place.

This study also showed that divorced individuals and married individuals perceived their problems differently in several aspects. Firstly, the problems of divorced respondents were both intensive and extensive. That is, they have reported more problems and their problems tend to cover wider aspects of relationships. There have also been differences between married and divorced individuals in relation to problem domains. For example, other than social network problems and house maintenance related problems, the other domains of problems were found to occur more frequently in divorced respondents than married respondents implying that house maintenance and social network problems are less serious problems for individuals. Combining the results relating to the differences between married and divorced individuals in the problem domains with the results relating to correlations between premarital problems and marital problems, it could be concluded that divorced people may have more difficult tasks to perform than the currently married people.

It should also be added that chi-square analyses, loglinear analyses and qualitative analysis all indicated that the problems that might be related to compatibility between marriage partners (personality, attitude differences, excessive control) were more prevalent among the divorced than married individuals. These problems also had more power in discriminating divorced respondents from currently married. In addition to this, qualitative analysis indicated the problematic nature of the premarital relationship screening among the divorcees.

The current study could also be considered as being supportive of the widespread assumption that conflict is ubiquitous and not always deleterious in marriages as an important form of close relationships (Duck, 1999), and that it might actually be beneficial for providing experience and consequent competency in problem solving. As a

parallel to this view, almost all respondents defined some problems with their marital relationships (married 88.2 %, divorced 100 %) in the present study. However, the findings in relation to problem solving styles differed between married and divorced individuals with married using more positive problem solving styles (for the premarital level) and less compliance (for both the premarital and marital levels) than the divorcees.

To summarise, differences experienced between married and divorced individuals, in number and in nature of problems, may be evaluated as an indication of serious incompatibilities. On the other hand, married individuals have a more active problem solving style, both in the positive and the negative sense. For example, married individuals are more likely to engage in conflict (negative active) and also to engage in positive problem solving behaviour. In this context, this study is in line with the view supported by Christensen and Shenk (1991). They offered marriage literature an alternative model that embraced incompatibility, together with a communication deficit approach. They argued that, in marital discord, as well as communication variables, marital compatibility plays an important role. According to their view, a discrepancy in partners' desires to be close could make difficulties deeper and would require more communicational effort to solve problems. Furthermore, talking matters over would not be easy for incompatible couples when compared to compatible couples. In line with Christensen and Shenk's approach, the high number of premarital and marital problems, and the serious nature of problems associated with divorced would require more communicational skill, and more patience, on top of their dysfunctional communication styles.

8.1. Strengths

The retrospective interviewing that has been employed in this study is an appropriate way of investigating the change that takes place in a relationship and has been used successfully by a number of relationship researchers to date (e.g., Lloyd & Cate, 1985; Surra, 1985). Although certain limitations may be involved with any methodology (also

to be addressed in the limitations section) face-to-face interviewing provided valuable insight into premarital and marital problems and their resolutions by supplying rich descriptive data. By employing this method of data collection, detailed information has been gathered without forcing predetermined problem categories onto respondents.

Most of the studies to date have usually concentrated on divorced or separated individuals' complaints of marital problems in their investigations. Although personal accounts are perceived to be useful and stimulating, without a comparison group of married individuals they cannot show us which of these factors lead to divorce (White, 1990). The present study is rare in that it asked both married and divorced individuals to give accounts of their marital and premarital problems. Furthermore, in the present study, comparisons between divorced and married individuals have also been made of groups of individuals of the same sex (e.g., divorced females versus married females or divorced males versus married males) in addition to the comparisons made of mixed sex groups (e.g., all divorced respondents versus all married respondents) in order to identify the differences between married and divorced individuals. In this way, it is believed that differences stemming from gender were prevented from interfering with those of marital stability.

Furthermore, it is believed that the study fulfils an important gap by documenting premarital problems of divorced and married people in detail since, to the best knowledge of the researcher, there seemed to be a lack of research exploring this issue in relation to divorce.

It is the first time that this type of study has asked respondents about their behaviour of problem solving without imposing a structured questionnaire with categorised answers. It is believed that, in this way, the difference in the perception of problem solving behaviour between observers (or researchers) and respondents could be revealed. In this study's case, results obtained via this mode of data collection, were quite similar to those

obtained from problem solving studies that were carried out with structured measurements, or using observational methods.

8.2. Limitations

Several limitations of this study should be noted. The first is a general one, which is shared with other studies that employed retrospective individual explanations for divorce. Some concerns have been raised regarding the reliability of retrospective accounts of divorced individuals since they would serve as either self justification or partner-blame and quickly constructed at the time of the interview, involving memory biases (see also Amato and Rogers, 1997; Sudman, Bradburn, & Schwars, 1996). However, such criticisms relating to retrospective self-report studies, the present study included, have been, in part, unjustified. A recent longitudinal study by Amato and Rogers (1997) was able to show that people whose marriages were eventually broken were aware of their problems as early as 9-12 years prior to the actual divorce. These authors concluded that since the awareness of marital problems preceded divorce by a considerably long time, the reported problems were not a "*post-hoc justification*"¹ for finishing their marriages. Also, Wagenaar (1986) has proposed that the recall of significant events may not necessarily be weak in contrast to insignificant events. There should be no doubt that relationship problems are among the most important events in individuals' lives.

Another possible limitation stems from the recruitment method of the sample. The sample has not been chosen randomly and does not cover the whole stratification of society in Turkey and, consequently, results should be interpreted carefully. However, this study is a PhD thesis and to be able to gather a nationally representative sample would be beyond the time and effort a PhD student could provide, particularly in sensitive topics such as divorce.

¹ The expression is used by the authors

Furthermore, the study has not been able to gather data from both partners of intact and divorced marriages. It is difficult to gather data from both divorced partners for the reasons mentioned in the section methodology concerning respondents' accounts. Although this may limit the researcher's ability to check the reliability of answers, there has been some evidence to demonstrate agreement between both partners' problem solving reports (Christensen, 1988).

8.3. Implications

Deleterious outcomes of divorce have been summarised in the first chapter. There is no doubt that a dysfunctional marriage could be as distressing as a divorce. In some cases, divorce may be seen as a more viable option. However, in both cases, distressed marriages and divorce, circumstances could lead to unwanted outcomes, such as inflicting depressive symptoms upon the involved individuals and costly arrangements for society. Consequently, the efforts to reduce the misery of humanity in relation to marital outcomes should be welcomed at every level.

In this line of thought, amid the discussions of whether divorce should be prevented or not, it is believed that the findings of this study could serve for both practitioners who intend to plan premarital programs to prevent distress and contribute to the relationship quality and stability, and for the lay persons who are in search of understanding more about close relationships in Turkey. It could be thought that practitioners were already aware of the problems of their clients in distressed marriages, however, the findings of the general population could differ from those who seek help from professionals, or from people who enrol for the prevention programs (Sullivan & Bradbury, 1997). In this case, the sample of this study could be considered as being closer to the normal population than the clinical samples. Thus, the findings could have more relevance for the extensive education programs (e.g., television, radio and other media outlets) aiming at ordinary members of the public, and for law making bodies in relation to the family regulations.

If marriage is considered as a main and popular expression of close relations worldwide, for marriage candidates or even married people, it is important to be aware of the problems of normally functioning, dysfunctioning or broken marriages. The findings of this study would provide them with a gauge that they could use to evaluate their own problems. In this way, they may search for better ways for problem solving or they may make decisions for the future of their relationships.

Furthermore, the findings of the present research may be used to develop more structured problem-checklists, or measurements that enable researchers or clinicians to carry out different research projects relating to marital problems or satisfaction levels of individuals in Turkey. This would be particularly useful for epidemiological screening in relation to the topic of marriages.

8.4. Future Research

Future research may investigate relationship problems and their resolutions with individuals covering a broader cross-section of society, since this study only included professionals with a university level education living in Ankara. Thus, a more complete picture of premarital and marital problems in Turkey could be drawn. Although there is an abundance of research published in western culture, there is little known about the research documenting the problems of ailing relationships from the wider context of other areas of the world. Perhaps it could be useful to see the diversity or the convergence of findings from multicultural samples in relation to perceived problems.

Previous research corresponding to problem solving behaviour in close relationships has extensively examined the relationship between relationship satisfaction or stability and problem solving behaviour. It is suggested, therefore, that future research should investigate whether there is an interface between the nature of the problems and problem solving patterns since this area has been ignored by past research. Furthermore, there could be a relation between the longevity of problems and problem solving styles, since

respondents suggested different solution methods according to the freshness of the problems.

Lastly, the results associated with gender differences for the total number of problems are at odds with the established research findings that females tend to complain more about their relationships than males. In order to see whether it is a methodological artefact or a characteristic of the Turkish respondents, the study should be replicated with the gender of the interviewer being controlled since there is a hint of evidence that the gender of the interviewer may influence the disclosure levels of the interviewees (see Brehm, 1992).

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APPENDIX 1

Interview Schedule

I- Introduction

Hello.

Thank you for accepting this interview and being a member of the sample of this study. Through an interview, I am trying to learn about the problems you experienced before and during your married life and also, how you solved them. My project aims to understand the link between premarital problems and marital problems and their link to divorce.

I would like to make clear several issues about the interview and what the information will be used for.

Firstly, I will be recording the whole interview if you do not have any objections. This will be convenient for me since, if I had to write everything down, I would not be able to keep up with the conversation. In addition, the information will be accurately secured. We may need to listen to the recorded piece together to remind ourselves of the problems so that we can talk about problem solving methods.

Secondly, I would like to explain about what I mean by "problem" and "problem solving" both of which I will be refer to during the interview. "A problem" is anything that you thought disturbed or affected you and your relationship at premarital and marital stages. "Problem solving" is what you simply did to get rid of, or eliminate the problem. It involves all types problem solving efforts.

Thirdly, I would like to give details about what will happen to the information I obtained from you. The information provided by individuals will be used in my writings for my PhD thesis. I may use your answers in the thesis as "excerpts" as they appear during the interview, without revealing your name, but your marital position, your age, and profession will be made known. The interview content may be looked at by my colleagues for the purpose of supervision, or for scientific discussions.

In addition, you as in interviewee and I as an interviewer do have some rights. I may interrupt you to refocus on the questions if the topics discussed wander away from the point. You can refuse to answer any question, and you can end the interview at any time.

Lastly, I would like to remind you that there are no right or wrong answers to my questions. The best is that you answer my questions according to your real life experiences. If you cannot talk about your real life experiences, please feel free not to be a part of our research sample.

Thank you, again, for your cooperation. It is time to start the interview, if you are ready.

II-General information

1. What is your date of birth?
2. Gender (all heterosexuals)

Female

Male

3. What is your education level?
4. What is your occupation and income (acceptable to ask in Turkey)
5. What is your marital status?
6. What is your date of marriage?
7. How strongly religious are you?
Atheist Mildly religious Very religious
8. Do you have any children? Yes/ No
9. (If Yes) How many children do you have?

Premarital Level Questions

10. At what age did you get married?
11. Was/is this your first marriage?
12. Did you know each other before marriage? Yes/No
(If yes) For how long was it?

Probe: How did you spend this time together?

13. Did you have engagement period?
(If yes) How long was it?

14. Could you try to remember events you experienced before marriage, did you have any problems in your relationships at that stage? Yes/ No

Explanation: (If the response is no) if you happen to remember anything related to this question over the course of interview, you could tell me we could include in the answers).

15. (If the answer is yes to question 14) What types of problems did you have?

For each problem

Clarification: Could you explain a little bit more about it?

Probe: Why was it a problem?

Probe: Was it also a problem for your future husband/Wife?

Summary: Could we summarise how many problems you told me and what they were?

16. (If the response is yes to question 14) Could you tell me what exactly did you do to solve each problem?

Clarify: I am not sure I understand what exactly you mean, could you explain a little further, please?

Probe: How effective was your behaviour in solving the problems?

Probe: What do you think of your partner's behaviour in relation to problem solving?

Probe: Did you have any help from outsiders (family, friends, counsellor) to solve the problems?

Probe: Had the problems been solved before marriage or did you start your marriage with or without problems?

III- Marital Level Questions

17. So, you became married, can you remember the early days of your marriage and then later, what kinds of problems you had in your marriage?

For each problem

Probe: When did the first problem started?

Clarify: Could you tell me a little more about it? (If necessary)

Probe: Why do you think it was a problem?

Probe: Was it also a problem for your husband/wife?

Summary: Could you briefly go over it again? Exactly, how many problems did you tell me?

18. Could you think about each of your problems again, and tell me please, exactly what you did to solve the problems?

(Similar probes are also used for marital level problem solving)

Clarify: Could you tell me what exactly you mean by that?

Probe: How effective was your behaviour in solving the problem?

Probe: What do you think of your partner's cooperation in relation to problem solving?

Probe: Did you have any help from outsiders to solve the problems?

19. (For married respondents only) Despite the problems, you have not divorced. Why?

APPENDIX 2

A Tabulation of the Premarital Problems According to Current Marital Status and Gender: Statistical Tests are Given for Marital Status

Table A2.1: Behaviour Problems (or Personality Attributes as Problems)

	All M % n=34	All D % n=47	χ^2	MF n=	DF n=	χ^2	MM n=	DM n=	χ^2
Overall	8.8	29.8	5.22*	11.8	28.6	1.72	5.9	31.6	3.78†
Has drinking problem	0	2.1	.73	0	3.6	.62	0	0	-
Jealous	2.9	10.6	1.70	5.9	10.7	.30	0	10.5	1.89
Tired, miserable, always complains	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	-
Not clever, not intellectual, and not questioning	2.9	8.5	1.05	5.9	3.6	.13	0	15.8	2.99
Easily manipulated by others	0	4.3	1.48	0	0	-	0	10.5	1.89
Inconsistent	0	2.1	.73	0	3.6	.62	0	0	-
Lies, deceives	2.9	4.3	.09	0	3.6	.62	5.9	5.3	.00
Obstinate	0	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	-
Resorts to physical power	0	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	-
Has annoying habits other than drinking	0	2.1	.73	0	3.6	.62	0	0	-
Easily angered	0	4.3	1.48	0	3.6	.62	0	5.3	.92
Other personality attributes	0	2.1	.73	0	0	-	0	5.3	.92

Table A2.2: Problems with Social Network

	All M % n=34	All D % n=47	χ^2	MF n=17	DF n=28	χ^2	MM n=17	DM n=19	χ^2
Overall	23.5	34.0	1.04	35.3	32.1	.04	11.8	36.8	3.00
Family opposition to marriage	2.9	21.3	5.65*	5.9	17.9	1.31	0	26.3	5.19*
Family interference	17.6	6.4	2.53	23.5	10.7	1.3	11.8	0	2.36
Dispute between partners and in-laws	2.9	10.6	1.70	5.9	10.7	.30	0	10.5	1.89
Friends	0	2.1	.73	0	0	-	0	5.3	.92

Table A2.3: Problems Stemming from Attitude Differences

	M n=34	D n=47	χ^2	MF n=17	DF n=28	χ^2	MM n=17	DM n=19	χ^2
Overall	20.6	23.4	.09	17.6	21.4	.09	23.5	26.3	1.03
Life style differences, different preferences about goods, and entertainment	14.7	12.8	.06	11.8	3.6	1.14	17.6	26.3	.39
Different understanding of female and male roles	0	12.8	4.68*	0	10.7	1.95	0	15.8	2.92
Different political views	0	2.1	.732	0	3.6	.62	0	0	-
Differences about money spending (towards money itself)	5.9	8.5	.19	5.9	7.1	.02	5.9	10.5	.25

Table A2.4: Communication Problems

	M n=34	D n=47	χ^2	MF n=17	DF n=28	χ^2	MM n=17	DM n=19	χ^2
Overall	0	6.4	2.25	0	3.6	.62	0	10.5	1.89
Partner does not share problems	0	2.1	.73	0	3.6	.62	0	0	-
Over-sensitivity	0	4.3	1.48	0	0	-	-	10.5	1.89

Table A2.5: Closeness and Sexual Problems

	All M % n=34	All D % n=47	χ^2	MF % n=17	DF % n=28	χ^2	MM % n=17	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	8.8	8.5	.00	11.8	10.7	.01	5.9	5.3	.00
Infidelity	0	6.4	2.25	0	7.1	1.27	0	5.3	.92
Inadequacy of Affection	8.8	4.3	.71	11.8	3.6	1.14	5.9	5.3	.00

Table A2.6: Economical Problems

	All M % n=34	All D % n=47	χ^2	MF % n=17	DF % n=28	χ^2	MM % n=17	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	2.9	6.4	.49	5.9	7.1	.02	0	5.3	.92
Economic hardship	2.9	2.1	.05	5.9	3.6	.13	0	0	-
Joblessness	0	2.1	.73	0	0	-	0	5.3	.92
Frequent Job-Changing	0	2.1	.73	0	3.6	.62	0	0	-

Table A2.7: Excessive Control and Lack of Trust

	All M % n=34	All D % n=47	χ^2	MF % n=17	DF % n=28	χ^2	MM % n=17	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	0	6.4	2.25	0	10.7	1.95	0	0	-
Control	0	4.3	1.48	0	7.1	1.27	0	0	-
Trust	0	4.3	1.48	0	7.1	1.27	0	0	-

Table A2.8: Problems Stemming from Opposition to Marriage

	All M % n=34	All D % n=47	χ^2	MF % n=17	DF % n=28	χ^2	MM % n=17	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	0	6.4	2.25	0	7.1	1.27	0	5.3	.92
Marriage kills romanticism	0	6.4	2.25	0	7.1	1.27	0	5.3	.92

Table A2.9: Other Problems

	All M % n=34	All D % n=47	χ^2	MF % n=17	DF % n=28	χ^2	MM % n=17	DM % n=19	χ^2
Other problems (virginity)	0	2.1	.73	0	0	-	0	5.3	.92

Gender differences

B Tabulation of Sub-Categories of Premarital Problems According to Current Marital Status and Gender: Statistical Tests are Given for Gender Differences.

Table A2.10: Behaviour Problems (Or Personality Attributes as Problems)

	All F % n=45	All M % n=36	χ^2	MF n=17	MM n=17	χ^2	DF n=28	DM n=19	χ^2
Overall	22.2	19.4	.09	11.8	5.9	.36	28.6	31.6	.82
Has drinking problem	2.2	0	.81	0	0	-	3.6	0	.69
Jealous	8.9	5.6	.32	5.9	0	1.03	10.7	10.5	.00
Tired, miserable, always complains	0	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	-
Not clever, not intellectual, and not questioning	4.4	8.3	.52	5.9	0	1.03	3.6	15.8	2.17
Easily manipulated by others	0	5.6	2.5	0	0	-	0	10.5	3.07
Inconsistent	2.2	0	.81	0	0	-	3.6	0	.69
Lies, deceives	2.2	5.6	.62	0	5.9	1.03	3.6	5.3	.07
Obstinate	0	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	-
Resorts to physical power	0	0	-	0	0	-	0	0	-
Has annoying habits other than drinking	2.2	0	.81	0	0	-	3.6	0	.69
Easily gets angry	2.2	2.8	.02	0	0	-	3.6	5.3	.07
Other personality attributes (bride was not a virgin)	0	0	-	0	0	-	0	5.3	1.50

Table A2.11: Problems with Social Network

	All F % n=45	All M % n=36	χ^2	MF % n=17	MM % n=17	χ^2	DF % n=28	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	33.3	25.0	.66	35.3	11.8	.10	32.1	36.8	.11
Family opposition to Marriage	13.3	13.9	.00	5.9	0	1.03	17.9	26.3	.48
Family interference	15.6	5.6	2.02	23.5	11.8	.80	10.7	0	2.17
Dispute between partners and in-laws	8.9	5.6	.32	5.9	0	1.03	10.7	10.5	.00
Friends	0	2.8	1.2	0	0	-	0	5.3	1.50

Table A2.12: Problems Stemming from Attitude differences and Values

	F % n=34	M % n=47	χ^2	MF % n=17	MM % n=17	χ^2	DF n=28	DM n=19	χ^2
Overall	20	25	.28	17.6	23.5	.17	21.4	26.3	.15
Life style differences, different preferences about goods, and entertainment	6.7	22.2	4.12*	11.8	17.6	.23	3.6	26.3	5.25
Different understanding of female and male roles	6.7	8.3	.08	0	0	-	10.7	15.8	.26
Different political views	2.2	0	.81	0	0				
Differences about money spending (towards money itself)	6.7	8.3	.08	5.9	5.9	.00	7.1	10.5	.16

Table A2.13: Communication Problems

	All F n=45	All M n=36	χ^2	MF n=17	MM n=17	χ^2	DF n=28	DM n=19	χ^2
Overall	2.2	5.6	.62				3.6	10.5	.91
Partner does not share problems	2.2	0	.81	0	0	-	3.6	0	.63
Over-sensitivity	0	5.6	2.56	0	0	-	0	10.5	3.07

Table A2.14: Closeness and Sexual Problems

	All F % n=45	All M % n=36	χ^2	MF % n=17	MM % n=17	χ^2	DF % n=28	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	11.1	5.6	.78	11.8	5.9	.36	10.7	5.3	.43
Infidelity	4.4	2.8	.15	0	0	-	7.1	5.3	.06
Inadequacy of affection	6.7	5.6	.04	11.8	5.9	.36	3.6	5.3	.07

Table A2.15: Economic Problems

	All F % n=45	All M % n=36	χ^2	MF % n=17	MM % n=17	χ^2	DF % n=28	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	6.7	2.8	.64	5.9	0	1.03	7.1	5.3	.06
Economical hardship	4.4	0	1.64	5.9	0	1.03	3.6	0	.69
Joblessness	0	2.8	1.26	0	0	-	0	5.3	1.50
Frequent job-changing	2.2	0	.81	0	0	-	3.6	0	.69

Table A2.16: Excessive Control and Lack of Trust

	All F % n=45	All M % n=36	χ^2	MF % n=17	MM % n=17	χ^2	DF % n=28	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	6.7	0	2.25	0	0	-	10.7	0	2.17
Control	4.4	0	1.64	0	0	-	7.1	0	1.41
Trust	4.4	0	1.64	0	0	-	7.1	0	1.41

Table A2.17: Problems Stemming from Opposition to Marriage

	All F % n=45	All M % n=36	χ^2	MF % n=17	MM % n=17	χ^2	DF % n=28	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	4.4	2.8	.15	0	0	-	7.1	5.3	.06
Marriage kills romanticism	4.4	2.8	.15	0	0	-	7.1	5.3	.06

Table A2.18: Other Problems

	All F % n=45	All M % n=36	χ^2	MF % n=17	MM % n=17	χ^2	DF % n=28	DM % n=19	χ^2
Other problems (virginity)	0	2.8	1.20	0	0	-	0	5.3	1.50

C Tabulation of Sub-Categories of the Marital Problems According to Current Marital Status and Gender: Statistical Test are Shown for the Marital Status.

Table A2.19: Behaviour Problems (or Personality Attributes as Problems)

	All M % n=34	D % n=47	χ^2	MF % n=17	DF % n=28	χ^2	MM % n=17	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	35.3	68.1	8.54**	41.2	75.0	5.14*	29.4	57.9	2.94 [†]
Has drinking problem	2.9	17.0	3.96*	5.9	28.6	3.40	0	0	-
Jealous	11.8	19.1	.79	11.8	25.0	1.15	0	10.5	.01
Tired, miserable, always complains	2.9	10.6	1.70	5.9	7.1	.02	0	15.8	2.92
Not clever, not intellectual, and not questioning	0	10.6	3.85*	0	3.6	.62	0	21.1	4.02
Easily manipulated by others	0	6.4	2.25	0	0	0	0	15.8	2.92
Inconsistent	2.9	25.5	7.47**	5.9	28.6	3.40	0	21.1	4.02 [†]
Lies, deceives	2.9	10.6	1.70	0	10.7	1.95	5.9	10.5	.25
Obstinate	2.9	8.5	1.05	0	3.6	.62	5.9	15.8	.89
Resorts to physical power	0	12.8	4.68*	0	21.4	4.20 [†]	0	0	-
Has annoying habits other than drinking	8.8	10.6	.07	11.8	7.1	.279	5.9	15.8	.89
Easily angered	5.9	6.4	.00	0	7.1	1.27	11.8	5.3	.49
Other personality attributes (clean obsessively, involved in a crime)	2.9	2.1	.05	0	3.6	.62	5.9	0	1.14

Table A2.20: Problems with Social Network

	All M % n=34	D % n=47	χ^2	MF % n=17	DF % n=28	χ^2	MM % n=17	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	32.4	36.2	.12	35.3	32.1	.04	29.4	42.1	.62
Family interference	26.5	19.1	.61	23.5	17.9	.21	29.4	21.1	.33
Dispute between partners and in-laws	8.8	14.9	.67	11.8	14.3	.05	5.9	15.8	.89
Family opposition to marriage	2.9	6.4	.49	5.9	0	1.6	0	15.8	2.92
Friends	0	6.4	2.25	0	7.1	1.27	0	5.3	.92

Table A2.21: Problems Stemmed from Attitude Differences and Values

	M n=34	D n=47	χ^2	MF n=17	DF n=28	χ^2	MM n=17	DM n=19	χ^2
Overall	35.3	61.7	5.50**	29.4	50.0	1.80	41.2	78.9	5.38*
Life style differences, different preferences about goods, and entertainment	23.5	36.2	1.47	23.5	25.0	.01	23.5	52.6	3.19†
Different understanding of female and male roles	0	36.2	15.56	0	39.3	8.83**	0	31.6	6.44**
Different political views	2.9	12.8	2.41	0	10.7	1.95	5.9	15.8	.89
Differences about child raising	11.8	10.6	.02	11.8	7.1	.27	11.8	15.8	.12
Differences about money spending (towards money itself)	2.9	19.1	4.78*	0	14.3	2.66	5.9	26.3	2.69

Table A2.22: Communication Problems

	M n=34	D n=47	χ^2	MF n=17	DF n=28	χ^2	MM n=17	DM n=19	χ^2
Overall	26.5	48.9	4.16*	17.6	39.3		35.3	63.2	2.78†
Criticises, insults, and put- down	11.8	19.1	.79	0	14.3	2.66	23.5	26.3	.03
Shouts, and uses bad language	5.9	14.9	1.62	0	14.3	2.66	11.8	15.8	.12
Partner does not share problems	5.9	14.9	1.62	11.8	14.3	.05	0	15.8	2.92
Sulks	11.8	0	5.81**	5.9	-	1.68	17.6	0	3.65†
I don't share my problems	0	10.6	3.85*	0	3.6	.62	0	21.1	4.02†
Over-sensitivity	5.9	8.5	.19	0	3.6	3.6	11.8	15.8	.12
Partner doesn't listen	5.9	8.5	.19	11.8	14.3	.05	0	0	-

Table A2.23: Closeness and Sexual Problems

	All M % n=34	All D % n=47	χ^2	MF % n=17	DF % n=28	χ^2	MM % n=17	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	17.6	40.4	4.79*	23.5	42.9	1.72	11.8	36.9	3.00
Infidelity	5.9	25.5	5.32*	11.8	28.6	1.72	0	21.1	4.02†
Inadequacy of affection	5.9	14.9	1.62	5.9	14.3	.75	5.9	15.8	.89
Sexual difficulty	8.8	8.5	.00	5.9	14.3	.75	11.8	0	2.36

Table A2.24: Economical Problems

	All M % n=34	All D % n=47	χ^2	MF % n=17	DF % n=28	χ^2	MM % n=17	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	20.6	29.8	.86	23.5	17.9	.212	17.6	47.4	3.52*
Economic hardship	20.6	19.1	.02	23.5	10.7	1.32	17.6	31.6	.92
Joblessness	2.9	8.5	1.05	0	0	-	5.9	21.1	1.72
Frequent job-changing	0	4.3	1.4	0	7.1	1.27	0	0	-

Table A2.25: House Maintenance

	All M % n=34	All D % n=47	χ^2	MF % n=17	DF % n=28	χ^2	MM % n=17	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	29.4	23.4	.37	35.3	21.4	1.03	23.5	26.3	.03
Inadequate support for housework, child-care	23.5	12.8	1.59	29.4	14.3	1.51	17.6	10.5	.38
Neglecting house financially	-	10.6	3.85*	-	17.9	3.41	-	-	-
Frequent absence from house	8.8	17.8	1.12	11.8	14.3	.05	5.9	21.1	1.72

Table A2.26: Excessive Control and Lack of Trust

	All M % n=34	All D % n=47	χ^2	MF % n=17	DF % n=28	χ^2	MM % n=17	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	0	29.8	12.24**	0	35.7	7.80**	0	21.1	4.02†
Control	0	17	6.42**	0	25.0	5.03*	0	5.3	.92
Trust	0	19.1	7.32**	0	17.9	3.41	0	21.1	4.02†

Table A2.27: Problems Stemming from Opposition to Marriage

	All M % n=34	All D % n=47	χ^2	MF % n=17	DF % n=28	χ^2	MM % n=17	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	2.9	19.1	4.78*	0	21.4	4.20†	5.9	15.8	.89
Marriage kills romanticism	2.9	10.6	1.70	0	14.3	2.66	5.9	5.3	.00
Marriage as a depletor of personal development	2.9	12.8	2.41	0	14.3	2.66	5.9	10.5	.25

Table A2.28: Other Problems

	All M % n=34	All D % n=47	χ^2	MF % n=17	DF % n=28	χ^2	MM % n=17	DM % n=19	χ^2
Other problems (partner is involved in a criminal act, living in different cities for certain reason)	0	8.5	3.04	0	10.7	1.95	0	5.3	.92

Gender Differences

D Tabulation of Marital Problems According to Current Marital Status and Gender: Statistical Test Results are for Gender Differences.

Table A2.29: Behaviour Problems (or Personality Attributes as Problems)

	All F % n=45	All M % n=36	χ^2	MF n=	MM n=	χ^2	DF n=	DM n=	χ^2
Overall	62.2	44.4	2.54	41.2	29.4	.51	75.0	57.9	1.52
Has drinking problem	20.0	0	8.10**	5.9	0	1.03	28.6	-	6.54**
Jealous	20.0	11.1	1.17	11.8	11.8	.00	25.0	10.5	1.53
Tired, miserable, always complains	6.7	8.7	.08	5.9	0	1.03	7.1	15.8	.89
Not clever, not intellectual, and not questioning	2.2	11.1	2.72	0	0	-	3.6	21.1	3.63*
Easily manipulated by others	0	8.3	3.98 [†]	0	0	-	0	15.8	4.72*
Inconsistent	20.0	11.1	1.17	5.9	-	1.03	28.6	21.1	.33
Lies, deceives	6.7	8.3	.08	0	5.9	1.03	10.7	10.5	.00
Obstinate	2.2	11.1	2.72	0	5.9	1.03	3.6	15.8	2.17
Resorts to physical power	13.3	0	5.18*	0	0	-	21.4	0	4.66*
Has annoying habits other than drinking	8.9	11.1	.11	11.8	5.9	.36	7.1	15.8	.89
Easily angered	4.4	8.3	.52	0	11.8	2.12	7.1	5.3	.06
Other personality attributes (cleans obsessively, involved in a crime)	2.2	2.8	.02	0	5.9	1.03	3.6	0	.69

Table A2.30: Problems with Social Network

	All F % n=	All M % n=47	χ^2	MF % n=	MM % n=17	χ^2	DF % n=28	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	33.3	36.1	.06	35.3	29.4	.13	32.1	42.1	.48
Family interference	20.0	25.0	.28	23.5	29.4	.15	17.9	21.1	.07
Dispute between partners and in-laws	13.3	11.1	.09	11.8	5.9	.36	14.3	15.8	.02
Family opposition to marriage	2.2	8.3	1.59	5.9	0	1.03	0	15.8	4.72*
Friends	4.4	2.8	.15	0	0	-	7.1	5.3	.06

Table A2.31: Problems Stemming from Attitude Differences and Values

	F n=45	M n=36	χ^2	MF n=17	MM n=17	χ^2	DF n=28	DM n=19	χ^2
Overall	42.2	61.1	2.85 [†]	29.4	41.2	.51	50.0	78.9	4.01*
Life style differences, different preferences about goods, and entertainment	24.4	38.9	1.95	23.5	23.5	.00	25.0	52.6	3.74*
Different understanding of female and male roles	24.4	16.7	.72	0	0	-	39.3	31.6	.29
Different political views	6.7	11.1	.50	0	5.9	1.03	10.7	15.8	.26
Differences about child raising	8.9	13.9	.50	11.8	11.8	.00	7.1	15.8	.89
Differences about money spending (towards money itself)	8.9	16.7	1.11	0	5.9	1.03	14.3	26.3	1.05

Table A2.32: Communication Problems

	All F n=45	All M n=36	χ^2	MF n=17	MM n=17	χ^2	DF n=28	DM n=19	χ^2
Overall	31.1	50.0	2.98 [†]	17.6	35.3	1.36	39.3	63.2	2.58
Criticises, insults, and puts-down				0	23.5	4.53*	14.3	26.3	.303
Shouts, and uses bad language	8.9	13.9	.50	0	11.8	2.12	14.3	15.8	.88
Partner does not share problems	13.3	8.3	.50	11.8	0	2.12	14.3	15.8	.88
Sulking	2.2	8.3	1.59	5.9	17.6	1.13	0	0	-
I don't share my problems	2.2	11.1	2.72	0	0	-	3.6	21.1	3.63*
Over-sensitivity	2.2	13.9	3.96 [†]	0	11.8	2.12	3.6	15.8	2.17
Partner doesn't listen	13.0	0	5.18 [†]	11.8	0	2.12	14.3	0	2.96

Table A2.33: Closeness and Sexual Problems

	All F % n=45	All M % n=36	χ^2	MF % n=17	MM % n=17	χ^2	DF % n=28	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	35.6	25.0	1.04	23.5	11.8	.80	42.9	36.9	.17
Infidelity	22.2	11.1	1.72	11.8	0	2.12	28.6	21.1	.33
Inadequacy of affection	11.1	11.1	.00	5.9	5.9	.00	14.3	15.8	.02
Sexual difficulty	11.1	5.6	.78	5.9	11.8	.36	14.3	0	2.9

Table A2.34: Economic Problems

	All F % n=45	All M % n=36	χ^2	MF % n=17	MM % n=17	χ^2	DF % n=28	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	20.0	33.3	1.85	23.5	17.6	.17	17.9	47.4	4.7*
Economic hardship	15.6	25.0	1.12	23.5	17.6	.17	10.7	31.6	3.18
Joblessness	0	13	6.66**	0	5.9	1.3	0	21.1	6.4**
Frequent job-hanging	4.4	0	1.64	0	0	-	7.1	0	

Table A2.35: House Maintenance

	All F % n=45	All M % n=36	χ^2	MF % n=17	MM % n=17	χ^2	DF % n=28	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	26.7	25.0	.02	35.3	23.5	.56	21.4	26.3	.15
Inadequate support for housework, child-care	20.0	13.9	.52	29.4	17.6	.65	14.3	10.5	.14
Neglecting house financially	11.1	0	4.26 ¹	0	0	-	17.9	0	3.79*
Frequent absence from house	13.3	13.9	.00	11.8	5.9	.36	14.3	21.1	.36

Table A2.36: Excessive Control and Lack of Trust

	All F % n=45	All M % n=36	χ^2	MF % n=17	MM % n=17	χ^2	DF % n=28	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	22.2	11.1	1.72	0	0	-	35.7	21.1	1.16
Control	15.6	2.8	3.66 ¹	0	0	-	25.0	5.3	3.12
Trust	11.1	11.1	.00	0	0	-	17.9	21.1	.07

Table A2. 37: Problems Stemming from Opposition to Marriage

	All F % n=45	All M % n=36	χ^2	MF % n=17	MM % n=17	χ^2	DF % n=28	DM % n=19	χ^2
Overall	13.3	11.1	.09	0	5.9	1.03	21.4	15.8	.23
Marriage kills romanticism	8.9	5.6	.32	0	5.9	1.03	14.3	5.3	.94
Marriage as a depletor of personal development	8.9	8.3	.00	0	5.9	1.03	14.3	10.5	.14

Table A2.38: Other problems

	All F % n=45	All M % n=36	χ^2	MF % n=17	MM % n=17	χ^2	DF % n=28	DM % n=19	χ^2
Other problems (partner involved in a criminal act, living in a different city)	6.7	2.8	.64	0	0		10.7	5.3	.43

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100. Multiple complaints are included.

M = married, or male; F = female; D = divorced; MF = married female; DF = divorced female; MM = married Male; DM = Divorced Male.

The significance levels evaluated in accordance with to Fisher's Exact Test are shown in bold characters.

† p < .1, *p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

