

Health



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The Relationship between Marital Satisfaction and Children There have been different studies that aim to determine if there is a direct link between couples sustaining a happy married life when children come. More clearly, social workers, psychologists and child development practitioners have delved into determining if marital life becomes more meaningful, happy, and rewarding as a result of having to raise children. In this regard, I chose to write this paper on the topic of the effect of raising children in marital satisfaction because I would like to find out, using interview method, if there is indeed a link between the two. The findings from the interview would be summarized to respond to the following question: " Does marital satisfaction decrease with children?

Two different sets of married couples were interviewed. One set had been married for more than five years and have three children. The other set of couples had been married for seven years but they did not have any children. The results of the interview are presented in tabular format as shown below:

Interview Questions

Couple with Children

Couple without Children

What is the impact of having (or not having) children in your marital life?

Happy, fulfilling, tiring, challenging, costly.

We have all the time devoted for ourselves; least costly; could be boring at times.

What can you do before that you cannot do now with children around?

Going out on vacation more often; pursuing personal interests; having more time for rest and leisure.

Planning for own self-interests; having more leeway to create schedules taking into consideration only one's spouse.

Do you think you would be more fulfilled with children?

Yes, definitely.

Yes and No. Yes, life would have been more challenging but happier; and No, we have accepted the fact that we can still be happy without kids.

What is the greatest advantage of having children?

There would be someone to support us when we grow old.

Someone to continue our heritage and genealogy.

What is the greatest disadvantage of having kids?

Lesser time for selves, lesser funds, more effort needed to support and sustain the family.

Having to support added people other than ourselves entailing more time, money and effort to do that.

If given the chance, would you change the situation regarding deciding on having children?

No. We are happy as we are now despite the challenges and difficulties of supporting them.

No. We have accepted that fact that we could not have kids; but if given the chance, we would welcome having children, anytime.

Comparative Analysis of Results

From the results of the interview, it could be deduced that marital satisfaction does not only depend on the factor of raising children. For both sets of couples, it could be observed that both were relatively happy and satisfied (with or without children). It is therefore evident that couples indeed would have wanted to have children, if given the chance. For the couples

without children, it was relayed that they wanted to raise them but since the wife was already in her late or mature age when they got married, biological reasons prevented them doing so. As such, they learned to accept the fact that they could not have children and it was evident from their relationship that their satisfaction and happiness was not diminished by not having children.

For the couple with three children, it was noted that children provided them with happiness that strengthened their marital bond. There were challenges in terms of meeting financial obligations and supporting the needs of the children; but this was accepted to be part of life. It was noted to have actually helped in striving to work harder to support the children's needs and to try as much as they can to avail of much entertainment, leisure and relaxation as they could possibly accommodate.

Overall, the interview results indicated that although children could have significantly contributed to providing happiness and a sense of fulfillment to married couples, this is not the sole factor that determines marital satisfaction. Even couples who do not have children learned to have a satisfying and successful married life through commitment and dedication to their marital vows.