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DE LA SALLE UNIVERSITY

**SOCIO-CULTURAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL
FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH
MARITAL SEPARATION AMONG MUSLIM COUPLES**

**A Dissertation Presented
to the Faculty of the Graduate School
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ABSTRACT

This study focused on the investigation of socio-cultural and selected psychological factors which the researcher hypothesized to be influencing married Muslim couples.

The specific questions that this study sought to answer were the following:

1. What are the profiles of separated and not separated husbands and wives in terms of the psychological factors such as:

- a. emotional maturity
- b. sense of responsibility
- c. interpersonal relationship
- d. self-confidence
- e. sexual conflict
- f. life style themes

2. Do separated couples differ significantly from not separated couples in terms of the psychological factors studied?

3. Do wives differ significantly from their husbands in terms of the psychological factors studied?



4. What are the socio-cultural factors associated with marital separation among Muslim couples as obtained from the three cases under study?

In the light of the stated problems, the following research hypothesis were formulated:

1. There is significant difference between separated and not separated couples in terms of the psychological factors studied.

2. There is significant difference between husbands and wives in terms of the psychological factors studied.

Fifty separated and not separated couples were the subjects of study for the first part and three case studies for the second part. The couples were selected according to the criteria set by the researcher.

The comparative-descriptive research design was used and projective techniques such as the Sack's Sentence Completion Test (SSCT), the Life Style Interview Guide (LSIG), and the Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis (T-JTA) were utilized. A



personal data checklist and interview were employed for the three case studies.

The statistical treatments used to test the significant difference of separated and not separated couples were the Two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and F-test.

The results of the study showed the following:

1. Separated husbands were emotionally immature while not separated husbands displayed some tendencies of immaturity. Separated wives indicated deeper emotional problems of instability and not separated wives also indicated tendencies of immaturity.
2. For sense of responsibility, separated and not separated husbands indicated the lack of sense of responsibility, while separated and not separated wives have sense of responsibility.
3. In interpersonal relationship, separated husbands were found to be good in this factor, except the factor on relations with women and guilt feelings, where majority of the respondents fell under the severely disturbed, while not separated husbands have satisfactory relationship. Unlike the separated



husbands, the separated wives indicated poor interpersonal relationships whereas the not separated wives indicated satisfactory relationships in the Sack's Sentence Completion Test (SSCT) but poor in this factor in the Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis (T-JTA).

4. Separated husbands indicated lack of self-confidence in the Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis. For the separated and not separated wives, both groups were found to have self-confidence.

5. For sexual conflict, separated husbands were experiencing this problem while the not separated showed no conflict in this area. While separated wives were experiencing sexual conflict, they were able to have strong self-control which enabled them to experience lesser problems in this area. Not separated wives posed no difficulty in sexual impulses as indicated by the T-JTA and SSCT results.

6. Two dominant life style themes: Baby and Avoids Feelings were manifested by separated husbands while not separated husbands have life style theme of Avoids Feelings. Two life style themes



emerged for the separated wives; Victim and Opposed to Everything. Not separated wives have life style themes of Driver and Avoids Feelings.

7. Socio-cultural factors such as polygamy, social standing and maratabat (pride) which has branched out to several conflicts were the usual causes of marital separation.

Based on the results, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The results of the study showed much similarities of both separated and not separated couples in psychological factors of emotional maturity, sense of responsibility, interpersonal relationship, self-confidence, and sexual conflict.

The dissimilarities of separated husbands and wives and the not separated husbands and wives in the psychological factors account for the non separation. While the husbands displayed the lack of it, the wives compensated it by their strong and dominant personalities.

2. The life style themes of couples justified the outcome of their relationships.



3. Psychological as well as socio-cultural factors could affect marital relations as confirmed by the statements of the three couples interviewed/ included in the case study.

4. Certain Muslim customs/practices seemed to be factors that impede the growth of a lasting relationship and development of some of the married couples.

5. The results of the case studies seemingly justify the fact that socio-cultural practices were more associated with marital separation than the selected psychological factors studied.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the study the following recommendations are given:

1. That marital counseling program should take into consideration the psychological/social factors yielded by the study, and implemented for use among husbands and wives, so that possible reconciliation be effected among separated couples.



2. That not separated husbands and wives be encouraged to seek marital counseling or marriage enrichment programs when they have problem so that possible disintegration of marital relations can be prevented.

3. That the psychological, sociological characteristics and life style themes of single husbands and wives be determined and interpreted to couples seeking marital counsel so that they would understand the possible effects of these factors on their relationship.

4. That this research be replicated on a larger population to validate current findings.

5. That other variables included in both instruments be closely examined in order to have a more complete and integrated profile of the subjects to be investigated.



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