CORRELATES OF SUBJECTIVE GLOBAL MARITAL SATISFACTION IN WOMEN

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Seven hundred and seventy marriage couples in the city of Zagreb were included in the study of potential predictors of marriage satisfaction. Marriage satisfaction was defined as a global feeling of satisfaction in marriage (measured by 1-item 5-point scale), and only wife's marital satisfaction was measured. Seventy seven potential predictors grouped in 5 blocks were entered into hierarchical and step-wise hierarchical regression. The blocks were: premarital partners' characteristics, both partners' perception of marital processes, objective and subjective economic status of the family, objective marital characteristics and out-of-marriage influences. Five blocks of predictors explained 47% of dependent variable variance, with the block marriage processes contributing the most. The most important predictors of wife's global marital satisfaction proved to be wife's perception of sexual intimacy in marriage, love for husband, feeling of being loved by husband but also husband's perception of sexual intimacy in marriage, and his less participating in raising children and strategic decision making.

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Marital quality or marital satisfaction is an important topic both from the theoretical and practical point of view. It is needless to elaborate how important it is for both society and individuals to understand psychological processes going on in marriage and family, and especially the spouses' perception of those processes. So the study of causes or at least correlates of husbands' and wives' perception of marital processes, marital quality and satisfaction should be of utmost theoretical and

practical importance. According to the cascade model of divorce (Devine & Forehand, 1992) poor marital quality leads to marital strain and dissatisfaction which in turn results in marital dissolution. And indeed the marital quality is a central research topic in all the studies concerning the factors contributing to marriage stability. The wives' perception of marital quality proved to be the first and most important factor leading to or preventing the "cascading toward divorce"(Devine & Forehand,1996).

THE CONCEPT OF MARRIAGE QUALITY

Definition of marriage quality varies in nature and in consequent measurement methods and is recently undergoing considerable change. There are many different approaches in conceptualizing marital quality, but for the purposes of this paper we shall classify all of them in two major groups only: objective and subjective one. According to the objective approach, marital quality can be defined as an objectively existing cluster of desirable characteristics of the ideal marriage such as: maintaining feelings of mutual love and respect, fair sharing of duties and responsibilities, making decisions together, mutual sharing of interests and mutual agreement on important issues. Consequently, objectively defined marital quality should be conceived as a multidimensional variable. Several arguments are supporting such a multidimensional concept of marital quality. Firstly, it gives better, a more precise insight in the very nature of psychological processes in marriage and family. Secondly, the multidimensional approach makes it possible to measure marital quality by instruments of satisfying reliability and validity, producing more accurate assessment than global measures obtained by one single statement or item. According to the second, subjective approach , marital quality represents spouses' overall marital satisfaction. It disregards the importance of any actual or perceived behavior, partners' characteristics or dyadic marriage processes, identifying marriage quality exclusively with partners' feelings of satisfaction or happiness. According to this view, objective marriage quality, one that conforms to the ideal marriage characteristics, is not important for the individual and so it is not relevant for his future behavior – staying in marriage or leaving it. What matters for each marriage partner is his/her own feeling of satisfaction or happiness with the marriage which can but does not need to be closely connected to the actual or even perceived characteristics of the partner and/or dyadic marriage processes. There is some evidence that "positive marital illusions" are necessary for maintaining marital happiness (Fowers et al., 1996), so the perception of the actual situation should be positively or "idealistically distorted" and not perfectly objective. Also, on the methodological side,

the representatives of subjective approach (Hawkins, 1968; Anderson et al., 1981; Fincham & Bradbury,1987; Heyman et al.,1994) consider the multidimensional evaluations difficult to interpret, because the partner can describe/report some negative aspect of his/her marriage at the same time not being overly concerned with it, or he/she can perceive some positive ones which do not change his/her general negative attitude towards own marriage. What is needed then should be the partners' general evaluation of his/her marriage, when everything good and bad is taken into account according to his/her own more or less distorted perception and willingness or ability to disregard either bad or good aspects of his/her marriage.

It is interesting to note that subjective approach in conceptualizing marital quality appeared first (Hawkins, 1968) with many research efforts to explain marriage quality in terms of marital satisfaction. But soon it became much criticized on theoretical and methodological grounds (Levinger, 1976) as being unable to fathom the essence of marital satisfaction and measure it adequately. In conclusion we might say that in a way the circle is closed now, because the subjective approach which appeared first and was heavily criticized and abandoned is becoming popular again and used more and more frequently in contemporary research. It should be emphasized though that each of the approaches has some positive and some negative characteristics and its appropriateness depends mainly on the goals of the research.

MEASUREMENT OF MARRIAGE QUALITY

The objective approach is starting with the marriage quality being defined by experts as various dimensions of an ideal cluster of marital transactions and partners' behaviors. Then different scales for measuring each of the dimensions or concepts given by experts should be developed assuring satisfying reliability and validity of the measurement giving at the same time precise and in-depth insight into the nature of marriage quality (Snyder, 1979). But new trends in measuring this important variable follow the shift from objective to subjective definition of marriage quality, and change from omnibus, multidimensional measures to one-dimensional ones. These are tapped by 3, 2 or even one item asking for subjective evaluation of global, overall feelings of satisfaction one gets from his/her marriage disregarding daily fluctuations or even possible ambivalent attitudes (Fincham & Linfield, 1997) toward some particular characteristics of the partner or dimension of the marital processes. The measures of marital quality are exchanged for or identified with the measures of global marital satisfaction or happiness. But even the measures of global marital satisfaction/happiness often are not completely clear

DRUŠ. ISTRAŽ. ZAGREB
GOD. 9 (2000),
BR. 1 (45),
STR. 41-65

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concepts. For instance, marital happiness measure in Johnson et al.. study (1991) is composed of individual's global feeling about the marriage (overall happiness) and the person's feeling about the specific aspects (amount of understanding received, amount of love and affection received, degree of mutual agreement, sexual relationship etc.) (Johnson et al., 1991). It is again the researcher's bias assuming that some positive marital interactions define marital happiness, while we can easily assume that a spouse can be perfectly happy in marriage while not being concerned with any of these processes or perceiving them positively distorted in the light of his/her global feeling of satisfaction or happiness. If the factors that cause or are highly correlated with marital happiness are to be assessed and not to be confounded with some a priori definition of marital happiness, we have to define marital happiness as a single item, a straightforward answer to the question "Frankly, all things considered, could you state that you are generally happy in your marriage".

In this study we shall use the subjective approach and limit the definition of marriage quality to the spouse's subjective global evaluation of his/her marriage. We shall treat this measure as a referent or a proxy for marital satisfaction, being fully aware of all possible advantages and pitfalls of this approach.

PREDICTORS OF MARITAL SATISFACTION

Proposed determinants, correlates or predictors of marital satisfaction are numerous. The newest, five-dimensional model of relationship quality (Kurdek, 1998) proposes five determinants which represent forces outside or in the relationship that promote happiness of each partner. These forces are: intimacy (merging the self and the partner), autonomy (maintaining a sense of self separate from the relationship), equality (having equal power and investment in the relationship) and constructive problem solving (negotiating and compromising). The fifth are the outside forces influencing relationship. In a study of 100 couples of long marriage duration (Kaslow & Robinson, 1996) the characteristics of above average satisfied married couples which authors named "the ingredients essential for marital satisfaction" were identified in the following order of prevalence (from 82% for "love" to 50% for "shared interests in their children"): (1) love, (2) mutual trust, (3) mutual respect, (4) mutual support, (5) corresponding religious beliefs, (6) loyalty and fidelity, (7) mutual give and take, (8) similar philosophy of life, (9) enjoyment of shared fun and humor, (10) shared interests, (11) shared interests in their children. It seems that in marital partners' perception of "good marriage" only the elements of intimacy are predominant with some elements of equality of Kurdek's (1998) categorization.

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A well-known model of determinants of marriage quality and their interaction during time is the Vulnerability-stress-adaptation model offered by Karney and Bradbury (1995) based on the meta-analysis of 115 longitudinal studies representing over 45,000 marriages. Although the relationships between the variables are complicated by their interactions containing several feedback loops, the model proposes in essence two main sources of determinants of marital quality: enduring vulnerabilities (background and traits that partners bring into the relationship) and stressful events (circumstances external to couple such as workload, financial and job difficulties, parental duties and other events in daily life that bring about continuing stress). Both of these two types of determinants affect marital quality indirectly, through couple's adaptive processes (the ability of couple to overcome stressful events through their own interaction, i. e. styles of resolving or avoiding conflict). So the marriage quality will be the partners' subjective interpretation of the objective marital processes depending both on the quantity of stress put on marriage and the resilience of partners resulting from their past experience and present qualities.

A host of specific variables was studied separately and found to be determinants of marital satisfaction: perception of fairness in the division of household labor (Wilkie et al., 1998; Milkie & Peltola, 1999); perception of marriage locus of control (Myers & Booth,1999; Ehrensaft et al., 1999; Camp & Ganong,1997) and distribution of marital power (Jaris Tichenor, 1999); distribution of power influences of social and kin networks and treatment by in-laws (Bryant & Conger, 1999; Julien et al., 1999), sexual gratification (Young et al., 1998), influences of women's economic independence (Heckert et al., 1998; Ono, 1998); coping strategies when facing marital difficulties (Bouchard et al., 1998); communication skills (Burleson & Denton,1997) and personality of the partners (Bouchard et al., 1999).

Some moderator variables. i.e. marriage characteristics are known to impact various determinants of marital satisfaction, the main being the duration of marriage, the family life-cycle and the presence of children (Glenn, 1998; Devine et al, 1996; Glenn & McLanahan, 1982). Especially interesting are the research data on the gender of the spouse as the moderator variable of marital satisfaction. Generally gender did not prove to impact the determinants of marital satisfaction, i.e. the research points to the fact that similar factors determine marital satisfaction in men and women with consistently higher marriage satisfaction found in men than in women (Devine & Forehand, 1996; Schumm et al., 1998) and that low marital quality affects women more adversely than men, causing more often depression in women (Dehle & Weis, 1998). This could be the consequence of differential male and female socializa-

tion, causing women to derive their self-worth from the quality of their relationship, being more likely than men to identify relationship problems, to seek help when problems occur, to try to resolve the problems and to take a larger share of household duties. In contrast, men have a tendency to maintain independence and self-sufficiency in the relationship, contribute less to the maintenance of the relationship and tend to withdraw from verbal resolution of conflict (Kurdek, 1998). It seems that women invest more and also expect more from the relationship than men, so they could be more prone to feel dissatisfied and start the "cascade toward divorce". It was indeed shown that wife's marital dissatisfaction is more predictive of marital instability than husband's (Conger et al., 1990, Lorenz et al., 1991). So the wife's marital satisfaction could be more critical for marital stability and the determinants of wife's satisfaction should be of primary importance to assess. In our study we disregard the husband's satisfaction and try to assess determinants of wife's marital satisfaction as expressed in her general evaluation of her marriage.

It should be taken into consideration that most concepts, measurement and results of marriage quality described up to now are coming from the research in the United States and Western European countries. This poses, of course, a problem of generalizability of these in Croatian cultural context. Many variables are differentiating Croatian cultural context and the countries of the developed West. Primarily these should concern the differences in value systems, expressed primarily in individualistic orientation of Western societies. No systematic studies on contemporary value system in Croatia were performed, so we cannot be sure about these differences. But some indices such as divorce rate (50 divorced couples per 100 new couples in USA and 17 divorced couples per 100 new couples in Croatia) point to the differences not only in marriage stability, but probably also in marriage processes between Croatia and developed Western countries. But the international experience should be used as the starting point for the research in Croatia while in interpreting the data we shall try to take into account some possible cultural influences.

Taking into account research results from contemporary studies performed in different cultures we decided on the following features of our study: (1) we defined marital quality using a global, one-item measure of marital satisfaction; (2) we measured only wife's satisfaction as the more fragile and more important factor of marriage stability and (3) we used 77 potential correlates or predictors of wife's global marital satisfaction that proved significant in earlier studies. The complete list of variables representing correlates or predictors grouped in 5 categories is presented in Table 2.

HYPOTHESES

The following 3 hypotheses were a starting point in our research:

H1 – Group of variables representing partners' perception of marital processes will explain the greatest percentage of the variance of the variable wife's global marital satisfaction, intimacy and sharing being the most important factors, followed by fair distribution of power (Kurdek, 1998; Wilkie et al., 1998; Myers & Booth, 1999).

H2 – Group of variables representing objective marriage characteristics will explain the smallest percentage of variance of the variable wife's global marital satisfaction (Glenn, 1998).

H3 – Variables representing husband's premarital characteristics and his perception of marriage processes will significantly explain variance of the variable wife's global marital satisfaction although in lesser degree than group of variables representing wife's premarital characteristics and her perception of marital processes (Karney & Bradbury, 1995).

METHOD

Participants

⏻ TABLE 1
Basic participants' demographic characteristics

Seven hundred and seventy marital couples were included in the study. The study was performed in 8 counties of the city of Zagreb, capital of Croatia of approximately 1 million inhabitants. Basic demographic characteristics of the participants are given in Table 1.

	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Education		Wife		Husband
Elementary school	70	9.0	48	6.2
High school	492	64.0	460	60.0
College degree	208	27.0	262	33.8
		Wife's father		Husband's father
Elementary school	376	48.8	335	43.5
High school	313	40.6	356	46.2
College degree	81	10.6	79	10.3
		Wife' mother		Husband's mother
Elementary school	551	71.6	559	72.5
High school	199	25.8	184	24.0
College degree	20	2.6	27	3.5
First 18 years spent in:		Wife		Husband
Village (up to 2 thousands)	204	26.5	185	24.0
Small town (up to 20 thousands)	143	18.6	129	16.8
City (20 – 100 thousands)	68	8.8	72	9.4
Big city (more than 100 thousands)	29	3.8	25	3.2
Zagreb	326	42.30	359	46.60

In Table 1 we have presented data on participants in three major variables: level of education, passive socio-educational status and the place they spent the first 18 years of life. We consider these variables as being most important among background-vulnerabilities variables in Karney and Bradbury model (1995) reflecting partners' social background or the type of socialization they were exposed to in childhood. We assumed that marital partners who spent the first 18 years of life in villages or in small town were exposed to traditional gender socialization which will affect significantly their adult life and relationship with marriage partner. As we can see in table 1, most of the partners were of highschool education. The majority of their parents were of lower education and more than 40% of wives and husbands spent their first 18 years of life either in villages or small towns. Approximately the same percentage of wives and husbands spent their first 18 years in the city of Zagreb. The rest of the participants spent their first 18 years of life either in cities or big cities in Croatia. So we can say that the sample of participants was heterogeneous and would probably allow us a good insight into the correlates of woman's global marital satisfaction.

Variables and measures

Two sets of variables were included: correlates or predictors that might be considered as independent variables, and dependent variable woman's subjective global marital satisfaction.

Correlates or independent variables

Five groups of independent variables or correlates were defined: (1) partners' pre-marital characteristics, (2) marriage processes, (3) objective and subjective economic family status, (4) marriage characteristics and (5) out-of-marriage influences.

1. Premarital characteristics

In the group of premarital characteristics we have included three groups of variables: (a) partners' demographic characteristics, (b) perception of early family experience and (c) personality traits.

a. Partners' demographic characteristics (Data were obtained from participants.)

– Age of the marital partners. Variable represents continuous variable.

– Education of the marital partners. Variable represents ordinal scale with 8 levels, from (1) lowest – no education, to (8) highest – university degree.

– Father's education. Variable represents ordinal scale with 8 levels, from (1) lowest – no education, to (8) highest – university degree.

– Mother's education. Variable represents ordinal scale with 8 levels, from (1) lowest – no education, to (8) highest – university degree.

b. Partners' perception of early family experience

– Partners' perception of their parents' relationship. Variable represents 1 item 5-point scale, with minimum (1) relations were very bad, to maximum (5) relations were warm and harmonious.

– Partners' perception of received parental attention. Variable represents 1 item 5-point scale, from minimum (1) Did not get any attention, to maximum (5) Given too much attention by parents.

– Partners' perception of received parental love. Variable represents 1 item 5-point scale, from minimum (1) Parents did not love me, to maximum (5) They loved me excessively.

c. Partners' personality traits

We have assumed that following personality traits are correlates or predictors of woman's marital satisfaction:

– traditionalism – modernism, 32 item scale, reliability $\alpha = .83$ (Gough, 1976); lower scores represent traditionalism, higher scores represent modernism;

– non-sociability – sociability, 32 item scale, reliability $\alpha = .82$ (Gough, 1976); lower scores represent non-sociability, higher scores represent sociability;

– femininity- masculinity , 32 item scale, reliability $\alpha = .84$ (Gough, 1976); lower scores represent femininity, higher scores represent masculinity;

– introversion – extroversion, 24 item scale, reliability $\alpha = .87$ (Eysenck & Eysenck,1993) lower scores represent introversion, higher scores represent extroversion;

– submission – dominance, 24 item scale, reliability $\alpha = .86$ (Eysenck & Eysenck,1993) lower scores represent submission, higher scores represent dominance;

– non-achievement – achievement, 24 item scale, reliability $\alpha = .87$ (Eysenck & Eysenck,1993) lower scores represent non-achievement, higher scores represent achievement;

– non-risk taking – risk-taking, 24 item scale, reliability $\alpha = .84$ (Eysenck & Eysenck,1993) lower scores represent non-risk taking, higher scores represent risk-taking;

– non-aggressiveness – aggressiveness, 24 item scale, reliability $\alpha = .83$ (Eysenck & Eysenck,1993) lower scores represent non-aggressiveness, higher scores represent aggressiveness;

– flexibility – dogmatism , 24 item scale, reliability $\alpha = .84$ (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1993) lower scores represent flexibility, higher scores represent dogmatism.

The first three scales were of yes-no format and the rest of the scales of yes, ?, no format.

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2. Marriage processes

Separate reports from both marital partners were obtained on their perception of following marriage processes:

– perception of sharing goals with partner in raising children, 1-item 4-point interval scale, with minimum from (1) no common goals, to maximum (4) having completely common goals;

– perception of sharing goals in acquiring material goods, 1-item 4-point interval scale, with minimum from (1) no common goals, to maximum (4) having completely common goals;

– perception of sharing goals in out-of-home work, 1-item 4-point interval scale, with minimum from (1) no common goals, to maximum (4) having completely common goals;

– perception of own participation in everyday decisions, 1-item 5-point interval scale, with minimum from (1) never, to maximum (5) always;

– perception of own participation in strategic decisions, 1-item 5-point interval scale, with minimum from (1) never, to maximum (5) always;

– perception of own participation in "woman's" home duties, 1-item 5-point interval scale, with minimum from (1) never, to maximum (5) always;

– perception of own participation in "man's" home duties, 1-item 5-point interval scale, with minimum from (1) never, to maximum (5) always;

– perception of own conflict between domestic duties and out-of-home work, 1-item 5-point interval scale, with minimum from (1) never, to maximum (5) always;

– perception of own conflict between domestic duties and leisure, 1-item 5-point interval scale, with minimum from (1) never, to maximum (5) always;

– perception of being physically abused by spouse, 1-item 4-point interval scale, with minimum from (1) never, to maximum (4) very often;

– perception of being verbally abused by spouse, 1-item 4-point interval scale, with minimum from (1) never, to maximum (4) very often;

– perception of being symbolically abused by spouse, 1-item 4-point interval scale, with minimum from (1) never, to maximum (4) very often;

– partner's love for spouse, 1-item 4-point interval scale, with minimum from (1) Cannot stand him/her, to maximum(4) Feel love and respect;

– perception of being loved by spouse, 1-item 4-point interval scale, with minimum from (1) Cannot stand me, to maximum (4) Feels love and respect;

– perception of marital sexual intimacy, 5-item 4-point interval scale, with minimum from (5) no intimacy, to maxi-

mum (20) complete intimacy. The scale was constructed for the purpose of the study, $\alpha = .84$. As this is a new scale we are obliged to give the information on its factor validity also, in difference to previously described scales of a well-known validity, which were developed by Gough (1976) and Eysenck & Eysenck (1993). The validity of the scale was tested by using confirmatory factor analysis assuming that all items are highly loaded on the same factor. According to the obtained results, although χ^2 was statistically significant, satisfactory validity of the scale was achieved because all fitting indices were very high. We have used discrepancy function GLS/ML $\chi^2 = 30.84$, df=5, p=.01, GFI=.98, AGFI=.95, Bentler-Bonett normed fit index =.99, RMSEA index=.08; RMS standardized residual=.02.

3. Objective and subjective economic family status

– Size of dwelling unit. The variable represents continuous scale of the size of house or apartment in square meters.

– Number of rooms.

– Size of dwelling unit per family member. Variable was continuous scale.

– Partner's satisfaction with family income, 1-item 3-point interval scale, with minimum from (1) unsatisfied, to maximum (3) satisfied with family income.

4. Marriage characteristics

– Marriage duration. Variable represents continuous scale from 1 to 32 years.

– Number of children. Variable represents continuous scale from minimum 1 to maximum 5.

– Marriage order. Variable represents ordinal scale from minimum 1 for the 1st marriage to maximum 3 for the 3rd marriage.

5. Out-of-marriage influences

– Satisfaction with out-of-home work, 1-item 5-point interval scale, from minimum (1) completely dissatisfied, to maximum (5) completely satisfied. Data were obtained separately from both partners.

– Husband's perception of wife's parents' influence, 4-item 5-point interval scale, from minimum (4) very small influence, to maximum (20) very high influence. Scale was constructed for the purpose of the study, $\alpha = .82$. Validity of the scale was tested by confirmatory factor analysis assuming that all items are highly loaded on the same factor. According to the obtained results, satisfactory validity of the scale was achieved using discrepancy function GLS/ML $\chi^2 = 10.04$, df=2, p=.01, GFI=.99, AGFI=.97, Bentler-Bonett normed fit index=.99, RMSEA index=.07; RMS standardized residual=.02.

– Wife's perception of husband's parents' influence, 4-item 5-point interval scale, from minimum (4) very small influence, to maximum (20) very high influence. The scale was constructed for the purpose of the study, α=.82. The validity of the scale was tested by confirmatory factor analysis assuming that all items are highly loaded on the same factor. According to the obtained results, satisfactory validity of the scale was achieved using discrepancy function GLS/ML χ^2=14.62, df= 2, p=.01, GFI=.99, AGFI=.96, Bentler-Bonett normed fit index=.99, RMSEA index=.08; RMS standardized residual=.02.

Dependent variable
One dependent variable in the study was defined: wife's subjective global marital satisfaction. The question was »Generally, how much are you satisfied with your marriage?«. Variable represents single item 5-point interval scale with the response format ranging from minimum (1) completely dissatisfied, to maximum (5) completely satisfied.

Procedure

Research was performed in 8 counties of the city of Zagreb. The field work was performed by psychologists either in companies where marital partners were employed, social welfare centers or in their home.

RESULTS

Means and standard deviations for each independent variable – potential predictor of wife's subjective global marital satisfaction are presented in Table 2, separately for wife and for husband.

○ TABLE 2
Descriptive statistics of potential predictor variables

	Wife		Husband	
	M	SD	M	SD
Partners' premarital characteristics				
Age	33.51	5.80	36.50	6.40
Education	6.79	1.87	6.94	1.89
Place of living in the first 18 years	3.16	1.72	3.31	1.71
Father's education	4.09	2.27	4.18	2.22
Mother's education	2.82	2.15	2.84	2.17
Perception of nature of parents' relationships	3.10	1.28	1.87	.33
Perception of received parental attention	2.90	.68	2.77	.70
Perception of received parental love	2.98	.52	2.92	.49
Traditionalism/modernism	15.49	4.07	16.44	4.02
Non-sociability/sociability	20.85	4.68	19.18	4.82
Femininity/masculinity	14.88	3.31	19.82	3.44
Introversion/extraversion	12.23	4.14	12.87	4.14
Submission/dominance	12.19	3.45	13.39	3.58
Non-achievement/achievement	10.70	3.77	10.87	4.03
Non-risk taking/risk taking	9.72	3.35	11.06	3.82
Nonaggressiveness/aggressiveness	6.91	3.56	8.60	3.83
Flexibility/dogmatism	8.28	2.79	8.65	2.88

Table 2 continuing	Wife		Husband	
	M	SD	M	SD
Marriage processes				
Perception of common goals with husband in raising children	2.88	.88	2.96	.85
Perception of common goals with husband in aquiring material goods	2.67	1.10	2.76	1.05
Perception of common goals with husband in professional activity and advancement	2.33	1.07	2.43	1.07
Participation in everyday decisions	4.00	1.15	3.90	1.03
Participation in strategic decisions	4.02	1.29	4.19	1.07
Participation in »woman's chores«	4.71	.67	3.09	.96
Participation in »man's chores«	2.66	1.08	4.46	.84
Conflict of domestic duties and work role	2.03	1.09	2.17	1.07
Conflict of domestic duties and leisure	2.33	1.21	2.30	1.09
Perception of being physically abused by spouse	1.53	1.77	1.24	.52
Perception of being verbally abused by spouse	2.20	.98	2.03	.87
Perception of being symbolically abused by spouse	2.09	.97	1.96	.84
Love for spouse	3.10	1.07	3.34	.85
Perception of being loved by spouse	2.96	1.13	2.97	1.11
Sexual intimacy	15.00	3.97	14.99	3.95
Subjective economic family status				
Satisfaction with family income	2.02	.68	2.10	.70
Marriage characteristics				
Marriage order	1.05	.23	1.02	.51
Out-of-marriage influences				
Job satisfaction	3.93	1.02	2.10	.71
Perception of spouse's parents' influence	12.00	3.21	6.99	3.60

⊙ TABLE 3
Hierarchical regression: cummulative R², standardized regression coefficients β for equations predicting wives' marital satisfaction

Data on variables common to both partners are as follows: size of dwelling unit: M=68.98, SD=41.06; number of rooms: M=2.25, SD=2.01; size of dwelling unit per family member: M=16.64, SD=8.73; marriage duration: M=9.19, SD=4.96; number of children: M=1.60, SD=.60.

Results representing association between potential correlates/predictor variables and variable wife's global marital satisfaction are given in Table 3.

Correlates or predictors	Equation:	1	2	β 3	4	5
Partners' premarital characteristics						
Wives' characteristics						
Age		.06				
Education		.03				
Place of living in the first 18 years		.01				
Father's education		-.04				
Mother's education		-.02				
Perception of nature of her parents' relationhips		.01				

Table 3 continuing		β				
Correlates or predictors	Equation:	1	2	3	4	5
Perception of received parental attention		.03				
Perception of received parental love		-.01				
Traditionalism/modernism		-.01				
Non-sociability/sociability		.17**				
Femininity/ masculinity		.01				
Introversion/extraversion		.04				
Submission/ dominance		-.03				
Non-achievement/achievement		-.08*				
Non-risk taking/risk taking		.05				
Nonaggressiveness/aggressiveness		.16**				
Flexibility/dogmatism		.08				
Husbands' characteristics						
Age		-.06				
Education		.03				
Place of living in the first 18 years		-.04				
Father's education		.02				
Mother's education		-.05				
Perception of nature of his parents' relationships		.03				
Perception of received parental attention		.02				
Perception of received parental love		-.04				
Traditionalism/modernism		.01				
Non-sociability/sociability		.15**				
Femininity/masculinity		.03				
Introversion/extraversion		.03				
Submission/dominance		.07				
Non-achievement/achievement		-.08*				
Non-risk taking/risk taking		.04				
Nonaggressiveness/aggressiveness		.03				
Flexibility/dogmatism		.08				
Marriage processes						
Wives' report						
Perception of common goals with husband in raising children		.07				
Perception of common goals with husband in acquiring material goods		.02				
Perception of common goals with husband in professional activity and advancement		.08				
Participation in everyday decisions		.01				
Participation in strategic decisions		.06				
Participation in »woman's chores«		-.04				
Participation in »man's chores«		-.01				
Conflict of domestic duties and work role		.03				
Conflict of domestic duties and leisure		-.03				
Perception of being physically abused by husband		-.04				
Perception of being verbally abused by husband		-.04				
Perception of being symbolically abused by husband		-.01				
Sexual intimacy		.10*				
Love for husband		.12*				
Perception of being loved by husband		.13**				

Table 3 continuing				β		
Correlates or predictors	Equation:	1	2	3	4	5

Husbands' report
  Perception of common goals with wife
  in raising children   -.07
  Perception of common goals with wife
  in acquiring material goods   .10
  Perception of common goals with wife
  in professional activity and advancement   -.04
  Participation in everyday decisions   .05
  Participation in strategic decisions   -.05
  Participation in »woman's chores«   -.02
  Participation in »man's chores«   .02
  Conflict of domestic duties and work role   -.04
  Conflict of domestic duties and leisure   .04
  Perception of being physically abused by wife   .01
  Perception of being verbally abused by wife   -.02
  Perception of being symbolically abused by wife   .01
  Sexual intimacy   .12**
  Love for wife   .01
  Perception of being loved by wife   .05

Objective and subjective economic family status
Size of dwelling unit   .06
Number of people per dwelling unit   -.05
Number of rooms   .04
Wives' satisfaction with family income   .14**
Husbands' satisfaction with family income   -.08*

Marriage characteristics
Marriage duration   .05
Number of children   .05
Wives' marriage order   -.01
Husbands' marriage order   -.02

Out-of-marriage influences
Wives' job satisfaction   -.27**
Husbands' job satisfaction   .01
Husbands' perception of wife's parents' influence   -.14**
Wives' perception of husband's parents' influence   -.20**

		1	2	3	4	5
R^2		.13**	.41**	.02*	.01	.17**

Note: N=770; *p<.05.; **p<.01.

      The results in Table 3 are given separately for each of 5 blocks of predictors and the contribution of wife's and husband's premarital characteristics is presented separately. The association is expressed by β-s which is referred as partial correlation between particular predictor and dependent variable controlled for the influence of all other variables included in the block of predictors. In Table 3 equation 1 demonstrates the

relationship between partners' premarital characteristics and dependent variable wife's global marital satisfaction. Following wife's premarital characteristics contributed to the wife's global marital satisfaction: non-sociability/sociability ($\beta = .17$, $p<.01$), non-achievement/achievement ($\beta = -.08$, $p<.05$), non-aggressiveness/aggressiveness ($\beta = -.16$, $p<.01$), and flexibility/dogmatism ($\beta = -.08$, $p<.05$). Only two husband's premarital characteristics contributed to wife's global marital satisfaction: non-sociability/sociability ($\beta = .15$, $p<.01$) and non-achievement/achievement ($\beta = -.08$, $p<.05$). All variables representing premarital characteristics of the part-ners explained 13% of the variable wife's global marital satisfaction.

Equation 2 in Table 3 shows how variables representing marriage processes, reported separately by wife and by husband, are associated with wife's global marital satisfaction. Following wife's perception variables were associated with dependent variable: sexual intimacy ($\beta = .10$, $p<.05$), love for husband ($\beta = .12$ $p<.05$) and perception of being loved by husband ($\beta = .13$, $p<0.01$). Only one marriage process variable reported by husband was associated with the wife's global marital satisfaction: sexual intimacy ($\beta = .12$, $p<.01$). Variables describing partners' perception of marital processes explained 41% of the variance of the variable wife's global marital satisfaction. Equation 3 in Table 3 represents association of the objective and subjective economic family status and wife's global marital satisfaction. Two variables from this group of correlates turned out to be associated with dependent variable: wife's satisfaction with family income ($\beta = .14$, $p<.01$) and husband's satisfaction with family income ($\beta = -.08$, $p<.05$). This group of predictors explained only 2% of the dependent variable. Fourth equation in Table 3 represents association between some objective marriage characteristics and the dependent variable. Contribution of this group of variables was negligible as it explained only 1% of dependent variable. Equation 5 gives the results representing association between out-of-marriage influences and dependent variable. Three out of 4 variables in this group of predictors were associated with dependent variable wife's global marital satisfaction: wife's satisfaction with out-of-home work ($\beta = -.27$, $p<.01$), husband's perception of wife's parents' influence ($\beta = -.14$, $p<.01$) and wife's perception of husband's parents' influence ($\beta = -.20$, $p<.01$). This group of variables explained 17% of the variance of dependent variable. Therefore, most predictive variables for wife's global marital satisfaction were variables representing marriage processes (41% of variance), second was the group of out-of-marriage influences (17% of variance), third were partners' premarital characteristics (13% of variance) while the contribu-

tion of the economic family status and marriage characteristics was negligible.

From the theoretical point of view it is interesting how various groups of predictors are separately associated with dependent variable, as presented in Table 3. But it is also interesting how all these groups taken together are associated with dependent variable. The step-wise hierarchical regression was thus performed and presented in table 4 showing how much the addition of each group of predictors contributed to the variance of dependent variable.

Correlates or predictors	Equation:	1	2	β 3	4	5
Partners' premarital characteristics						
Wives' characteristics						
Age		.06	.06	.06	.08	.08
Education		.03	.03	.02	.02	.02
Place of living in the first 18 years		.01	.04	.04	.05	.05
Father's education		-.04	-.01	.01	.01	.01
Mother's education		-.02	-.01	-.01	-.02	-.02
Perception of nature of her parents' relationships		.01	.01	.01	.01	.01
Perception of received parental attention		.03	.05	.04	.04	.04
Perception of received parental love		-.01	-.07*	-.07*	-.07*	-.07*
Traditionalism/modernism		-.01	.05	.06	.06	.06
Non-sociability/sociability		.17**	.02	.01	.01	.01
Femininity/masculinity		.01	-.01	-.01	.01	.01
Introversion/extraversion		.04	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.01
Submission/dominance		-.03	-.04	-.05	-.05	-.05
Non-achievement/achievement		-.08*	-.04	-.04	-.04	-.04
Non-risk taking/risk taking		.05	.01	-.01	-.01	-.01
Non-aggressiveness/aggressiveness		.16**	.06	.06	.06	.06
Flexibility/dogmatism		.08*	.03	.03	.03	.04
Husbands' characteristics						
Age		-.06	-.04	-.05	-.04	-.04
Education		.03	.01	.01	-.01	-.01
Place of living in the first 18 years		-.04	-.02	-.03	-.02	-.02
Father's education		.02	.01	-.01	.02	.02
Mother's education		-.05	-.01	.04	-.01	-.01
Perception of nature of his parents' relationhips		.03	.01	.01	.01	.01
Perception of received parental attention		.02	.02	.02	.02	-.02
Perception of received parental love		-.04	-.03	-.02	-.02	-.02
Traditionalism/modernism		.01	.03	.02	.02	.03
Non-sociability/sociability		.15**	.02	.01	.01	.01
Femininity/ masculinity		.03	.06	.05	.05	.05
Introversion/extraversion		.03	.02	.01	.01	.01
Submission/dominance		.07	.06	.06	.06	.06
Non-achievement/achievement		-.08*	-.02	-.02	-.02	-.02
Non-risk taking/risk taking		.04	.02	.02	.02	.03
Non-aggressiveness/aggressiveness		.03	-.05	-.05	-.06	-.05
Flexibility/dogmatism		.08*	-.02	.01	-.01	-.01

Table 4 continuing				β		
Correlates or predictors	Equation:	1	2	3	4	5

<u>Marriage processes</u>
Wives' report

	1	2	3	4	5
Perception of common goals with husband in raising children		.08	.08	.08	.07
Perception of common goals with husband in aquiring material goods		.03	.03	.04	.03
Perception of common goals with husband in professional activity and advancement		.07	.07	.07	.07
Participation in everyday decisions		.01	.01	.01	.01
Participation in strategic decisions		.03	.02	.03	.02
Participation in »woman's chores«		-.04	-.03	-.04	-.03
Participation in »man's chores«		.01	.01	.01	.01
Conflict of domestic duties and work role		.04	.03	.04	.04
Conflict of domestic duties and leisure		-.03	-.03	-.03	-.03
Perception of being physically abused by husband		-.02	-.01	-.01	-.01
Perception of being verbally abused by husband		-.03	-.03	-.04	-.04
Perception of being symbolically abused by husband		.01	.01	-.01	-.01
Sexual intimacy		.12**	.13**	.13**	.14**
Love for husband		.14**	.13**	.14**	.13**
Perception of being loved by husband		.12**	.12**	.12**	.12**
Husbands' report					
Perception of common goals with wife in raising children		-.09*	-.09*	-.09*	-.09*
Perception of common goals with wife in acquiring material goods		.12**	.13**	.13**	.13**
Perception of common goals with wife in professional activity and advancement		-.04	-.03	-.04	-.04
Participation in everyday decisions		.06	.05	.06	.06
Participation in strategic decisions		-.07	-.08*	-.08*	-.08*
Participation in »woman's chores«		-.04	-.04	-.04	-.03
Participation in »man's chores«		.03	.03	.02	.02
Conflict of domestic duties and work role		-.04	-.05	-.05	-.04
Conflict of domestic duties and leisure		.03	.04	.04	-.04
Perception of being physically abused by wife		.01	.01	.01	.01
Perception of being verbally abused by wife		-.01	-.01	-.01	-.01
Perception of being symbolically abused by wife		-.01	-.01	-.02	-.01
Sexual intimacy		.12**	.12**	.12**	.12**
Love for wife		-.01	-.01	-.01	-.01
Perception of being loved by wife		.01	.02	.03	.03

<u>Objective and subjective economic family status</u>

	1	2	3	4	5
Size of dwelling unit			.03	.06	.06
Number of people per dwelling unit			-.02	-.04	-.03
Number of rooms			-.06	-.07	-.06
Wives' satisfaction with family income			.08	.02	.01
Husbands' satisfaction with family income			.06	.06	.04

| Table 4 continuing | | β | | | | |
Correlates or predictors	Equation:	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Marriage characteristics</u>						
Marriage duration					-.04	-.03
Number of children					.06	.05
Wives' marriage order					.02	.02
Husbands' marriage order					-.06	-.06
<u>Out-of-marriage influences</u>						
Wives' job satisfaction						.03
Husbands' job satisfaction						.03
Husbands' perception of wife's parents' influence						-.03
Wives' perception of husband's parents' influence						-.03
R^2		.13**	.43**	.44**	.45**	.47**
ΔR^2			.30**	.01	.01	.02

Note: N=770; *p<.05.; **p<.01.

The first column in Table 4 presents association of partners' premarital characteristics and wife's global marital satisfaction. After adding marriage processes to the group of variable partners' premarital characteristics in column 2, only variables marriage processes turned out to be associated with dependent variable. Several processes reported by wife were associated with dependent variable: sexual intimacy (β=.12, p<.01), love for husband (β=.14, p<.01) and perception of being loved by husband (β=.12, p<.01). Three variables representing husband's report on marriage processes were also associated with dependent variable: perception of sharing goals with wife in raising children (β=-.09, p<.05), perception of sharing goals with wife in acquiring material goods (β=.12, p<.01) and sexual intimacy (β=.12, p<.01). Two groups of correlates taken together explained 43% of the variance of wife's global marital satisfaction. As pre-marital characteristics explained only 13% of the dependent variable, it means that entering marriage processes into equation we explained a significantly larger percentage of the dependent variable (ΔR^2=.30, p<.001). In columns 3, 4 and 5 in Table 4 we were successively adding groups of variables: family economic status, marriage characteristics and out-of-marriage influences. But still only the group of variables representing marriage processes was predictive for wife's global marital satisfaction. The significant wife's report predictors persistently were: sexual intimacy (β=.13, p<.01), love for husband (β=.13, p<.01) and perception of being loved by husband (β=.12, p<.01). Significant husband's report predictors were: perception of sharing goals

with wife in raising children (β=-.09, p<.05) , perception of sharing goals with wife in acquiring material goods (β=.13, p<.01), participation in strategic decisions (β=-.08, p<.05) and sexual intimacy (β=.12, p<.01). All three blocks of variables taken together explained 44% of the variable wife's global marital satisfaction, so only 1% more of the dependent variable was explained by entering economic family status. Adding marriage characteristics and out-of-marriage influences into equation did not explain more variation of the variable wife's global marital satisfaction. Evidently, marriage processes and pre-marital partners' characteristics were most predictive for the variable wife's global marital satisfaction. All 5 groups of correlates explained 47% of the variable wife's global marital satisfaction.

DISCUSSION

Three hypotheses concerning the influence of different groups of predictors on wife's global marital satisfaction were stated at the beginning of the study and we could say that all three hypotheses were confirmed by the results. According to the obtained results the best group of predictors of wife's global marital satisfaction proved to be variables labeled as marital processes in accordance with Hypothesis 1. A negligible percentage of variance of the variable wife's global marital satisfaction was explained by the group of predictors labeled marriage characteristics, as predicted by Hypothesis 2. According to Hypothesis 3 we expected substantial influence of husband's variables on wife's global marital satisfaction but even more significant influences should have been the variables representing either wife's premarital characteristics or wife's report on marital processes. Obtained results actually confirmed our Hypothesis 3, because most of the variables predictive for wife's global marital satisfaction were either her premarital characteristics or her perception of marital processes. Some husband's perceptions also contributed to wife's global satisfaction such as his perception of existence of sexual intimacy in marriage, perception of shared goals in acquiring material goods, but also his perception of less participating in raising children and less participation in strategic decisions. These results are in accordance with previously obtained ones, as for instance Kurdek's (1998) most important factor intimacy proved to be the most important in our research too: feeling sexual intimacy, loving husband and having feelings of being loved by husband are the most important factors contributing to the wife's global marital satisfaction. But, on the other hand, in opposition to the Fower's (1996) data that these feelings are

sufficient even being a mere illusion, our data point to the necessity of these feelings being partly reciprocated, as the actual husband's feeling of intimacy and sharing also proved to be important for maintaining wife's satisfaction. Sharing of the goals in acquiring material goods proved to be important for wife's global marital satisfaction (Table 4), but interestingly, she was more satisfied with husband's less sharing in raising children and his less participating in strategic decisions, the fact pointing maybe to the second of Kurdek's (1998) factors: more wife's autonomy and power. Our data are in opposition to many results pointing to the importance of some objective characteristics of the marriage such as marriage duration or presence and number of children (Glenn,1998; Devine et al., 1996; Glenn & McLanahan, 1982), and to those emphasizing equality in distribution of power (Myers & Booth, 1999; Ehrensaft et al., 1999) and sharing of domestic duties (Wilkie et al., 1998; Milkie & Peltola, 1999) or outside influences such as kin and in-law relationships (Bryant & Conger,1999, Julien et al., 1999, Rhyne, 1981). All these factors in our study proved to be less important for wife's satisfaction, if mutual sharing of love and intimacy was present in marriage.

Generally speaking, these results are very similar to those achieved in the United States and some Western European countries. Maybe the lack of the importance of the factors such as fairness of sharing duties, equality of power distribution and decision making reflected the expectations or better, lack of expectations of a married woman in Croatian cultural setting. Although less pronounced when taken together with all the predictors, but nevertheless significant when taken isolated are two factors that still might influence wife's marital satisfaction: wife's satisfaction with family income and both spouses', and especially wife's perception of overly pronounced in-laws' influence in marriage (Table 3).

But these factors have negligible influence in comparison to the significance of mutual feelings of love, intimacy and sharing (Table 4). The obtained results are interesting and actually amazing in view of today's seemingly prevalent materialistic and individualistic values. But, we should bear in mind that our study is correlational, or that we assumed all correlates or predictors of wife's global marital satisfaction being present at the same time, what is not justified. We know that predictors appear in different time succession, as demonstrated by Karney-Bradbury (1995) theoretical model in which spouses' vulnerabilities (personality and childhood experience) appear first and influence coping mechanisms and adapta-

tion to life stress (marriage processes in our model), which eventually influence global marital satisfaction. To be able to make better grounded conclusion about the importance of various predictors of wife's global marital satisfaction, it is indispensable to perform path analysis using correlates or predictors in logical time sequence, which is the aim of the future research.

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Korelati
subjektivnog općeg
bračnog zadovoljstva žena

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Ispitano je 770 bračnih parova u gradu Zagrebu s ciljem da se utvrde korelati ili prediktori bračnoga zadovoljstva. Bračno je zadovoljstvo definirano kao opće zadovoljstvo u braku (izmjereno jednim pitanjem u pet stupnjeva), određivalo se samo ženino bračno zadovoljstvo kao važnije obilježje za stabilnost braka i ispitana je povezanost 77 potencijalnih prediktora sa ženinim općim bračnim zadovoljstvom. Potencijalni prediktori podijeljeni su u pet skupina: predbračne karakteristike partnera, percepcija bračnih procesa u oba partnera, objektivni i subjektivni ekonomski položaj obitelji, objektivne bračne karakteristike i utjecaji izvan braka. Rezultati dobiveni metodom hijerarhijske regresije i stupnjevite hijerarhijske regresije pokazuju da pet skupina prediktora zajedno objašnjava 47 posto varijance varijable ženino opće bračno zadovoljstvo, no uglavnom je skupina bračni procesi značajno pridonijela objašnjenju varijance zavisne varijable. Najznačajnijima za opće bračno zadovoljstvo žene pokazale su se varijable: ženina percepcija postignute seksualne intimnosti, ljubav prema mužu i osjećaj da je muž voli, ali i muževljeva percepcija postignute seksualne intimnosti te njegova manja participacija u odgoju djece i donošenju bitnih obiteljskih odluka.

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Korrelate allgemeiner subjektiver Zufriedenheit von Frauen in der Ehe

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Die vorliegende Untersuchung umfasste 770 in Zagreb lebende Ehepaare und hatte zum Ziel, die Korrelate oder Prädiktoren für die Zufriedenheit der Ehepartner zu ermitteln. Die Zufriedenheit der Ehepartner wurde definiert als "allgemeine Zufriedenheit in der Ehe" (ermittelt anhand einer Frage, die wiederum in fünf Teilfragen unterteilt war). Die Aufmerksamkeit galt ausschließlich der Zufriedenheit der Frau, da dies als einer der wichtigsten Faktoren für die Stabilität der Ehe gilt. Untersucht wurde der Bezug zwischen der allgemeinen Zufriedenheit der Frau und 77 potentiellen Prädiktoren. Die potentiellen Prädiktoren wurden in 5 Gruppen unterteilt und lauten: Partnereigenschaften vor der Ehe, Wahrnehmung ehelicher Vorgänge von seiten beider Partner, der objektive und subjektive wirtschaftliche Status der Familie, objektive Charakteristiken der Ehe und außereheliche Einflüsse. Die Methode der hierarchischen Regression sowie der stufenweisen hierarchischen Regression ergab folgendes Resultat: Die 5 Prädiktorengruppen erklären zusammen insgesamt 47% Varianzen der untersuchten Variablen, d.h. der allgemeinen Zufriedenheit der Frau in der Ehe; jedoch hat die Gruppe der ehelichen Vorgänge wesentlich zur Erklärung der Varianz der entsprechenden Variablen beigetragen. Als die bedeutendsten Faktoren für die Zufriedenheit der Frau in der Ehe erwiesen sich folgende Variablen: die in der Wahrnehmung der Frau erzielte sexuelle Intimität, die Liebe zum Mann und das Gefühl, vom Mann wiedergeliebt zu werden, ebenso aber auch die in der Wahrnehmung des Gatten erzielte sexuelle Intimität sowie der geringere Anteil des männlichen Ehepartners bei der Erziehung der Kinder und bei wichtigen familiären Entschlüssen.