Chapter 1- Introduction

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The family is considered as one of the most fundamental social institutions across many societies in the world. As a primary agent of socialization, it is the family that gives first social identity to its members. Family is mostly seen as a homogenous unit where its members develop intimate bonds and share in the social roles. Family is the cradle of learning one’s ‘proper’ place in the society and internalizing what one can expect from the society and what the society expects from an individual. It has been long claimed that family serves multiple functions such as socialization, economic cooperation, regulation of sexual relations, and providing emotional support to its members (Coser, 1974; Mintz & Kellogg, 1988).

As much as family forms the centre of many activities of human life, the marital dyad is a significant part of structuring that family life. Marriage is a natural progression of life course for adults across all societies in the world. The marriage types/forms and attitudes towards it are important for the society’s continuance and the transmission of culture. Significant societal transformations such as greater participation of women in formal occupations, access to higher education and media have altered the traditional cultural norms existing in marriage (Kefalas, Furstenberg, Carr, & Napolitano, 2011). As the traditional normative orientations toward marriage and family have begun to get reconfigured, changes in people's attitudes provided a new stimulus for further changes in socioeconomic arrangements in the society (Tsuya, 2001).

A collectivistic society like India attaches a great deal of importance to family and therefore to the stability of marital relationship. By considering it a samskara, which every Hindu should go through in life, the marital relationship becomes a sacred duty. However, the sanctity of marital relationship is perceived to be under threat from secularising forces introduced by industrialization and capitalistic consumerism. Some scholars are of the view that marriage is becoming increasingly individualistic, weak and unstable (Blankenhorn, Bayme, & Elshtain, 1990; Wilson, 2002). Important demographic changes are taking place in India.
that are affecting the size and composition of the family, although these changes are as yet confined largely to urban, educated Indians at the upper levels of the occupational structure (Beteille, 1992). The high expectations that accompany such individualistic marriages have negative consequences for the overall health of the relationships and alter the existing patterns of marriage.

Therefore, the changes that are happening in society find a reflection in attitudes towards marriage, practices associated with marital unions and the importance attached to the permanence of marital relationship. The variations occurring in contemporary marriages due to changing role expectations, increased stress and societal changes have implications for relationship-dynamics for the married couple and not just the family. It seems worthwhile to explore the changing attitudes, perceptions and overall health of marital unions in a culturally diverse Indian society.

1.2 MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

The influence of globalizing forces in India is evident in the ways relationships are being perceived and marital bonds are being formed. The familial structures and functions are undergoing a change as evident from the new developments in families such as single parent homes, shrinking preference for joint families, increasing incidences of divorce, changing role expectations, emergence of working couples, inter-generational conflict and so on. The changing patterns can also be seen in the changing expressions of love, choice of partner, mixed marriages, age at marriage and the overall expectations from a marriage itself in contemporary India (Sonawat, 2001). Dube’s (1963, p. 202) assessment of the signs of the times in 1963 rings truer today:

There are unmistakable signs that the traditional conceptions regarding the place and role of women are slowly changing in contemporary Indian society. The process has been generated and aided by a variety of factors which are operating almost simultaneously. Increasing opportunities for modern education, greater geographical and occupational mobility, and the emergence of new economic patterns are in the main responsible for this trend.
As recent literature on gender relations has abundantly shown, women have worked in all civilizations across time and space regardless of their economic remuneration (Upadhya & Vasavi, 2008). However, the phrase ‘working woman’ has generally been used only to identify those who contribute directly to the financial earnings of the family, and as such, referred only to those who work outside their homes. Though marriages where both the husband and wife work are not new in India, the relatively new focus of women on ‘career’ has brought about a lot of changes in the familial composition and equations; unlike before, when home was to be a woman’s proper arena and family was to be her focus of attention. Patriarchal beliefs held for centuries ensured that women who worked would hardly be considered as the bread-winner and her income was ‘supplementary’ to the earnings of the husband (Ingoldsby & Smith, 2006). In this context, any woman who tried to think of a ‘career’ as against a ‘job’ was seen as taking things too far. After the economic liberalization and spread of education, more and more women began to enter the labour market not only in search of supplementary incomes, but also in search of fulfilling careers.

Access to higher education and greater participation of both men and women in the paid labour force have paved the way for a generation that is both ambitious and demanding. This leads to the emergence of ‘dual career couples’ which is a relatively new concept in India, referring to only those couples where both invested considerable amount of attention and time to maintain their current income-profile and even to better it by obtaining promotions or performance-based increments. In simple words, dual career couples are two people in a marriage, each with a career-focus. As such it could be considered an elite concept because it does not, in the relevant literature, include those not qualified professionally though they have to outperform others in their field in order to retain a livelihood-income.

The impact of such a change is seen in the way marriage has come to be perceived by different stakeholders. It can be informative to investigate how much the young urban generation shares conformity to the traditional practices and norms related to marriage. It seems that the Indian family
has retained a lot of its cultural roots and yet is advancing towards a modernized version of relationship-network. Though the question of whether it is possible to have a successful career and to balance it with a committed relationship is not new; understanding the changing dynamics from the perspective of a marital dyad in modern India from a sociological perspective has been less explored. Though, the family has been one of the widely studied themes, “in the sociological literature on the family in India, little or virtually no attention has been paid to the management of conflict between husbands and wives” (I. Ahmad, 2005, p. 4684).

In the western world, researchers were keen on sociological themes concerning families, married couples, cohabiting partners, parenthood, old age related and so on. In the Indian context, studies on family gained currency with the anthropological curiosity, raised both due to academic, colonial and religious interests, and led to the study of systems that appeared strange to western minds (I. Ahmad, 2005; Mullatti, 1992). Being a plural society with a multiplicity of caste, class, religion, language and diverse political ideologies, understanding how families function in Indian society became quite interesting and challenging to researchers. This resulted in a variety of ethnographic studies on tribal societies in various parts of India and on particular cases such as matrilineal Nayars in Kerala. This was followed by various analytical studies of kinship structures using a variety of methods including folk studies and ethnographies. Indological studies tended to focus on elaborating on the ideal structures of Indian society thereby, often unwittingly, presenting the upper caste Brahminic view of society as the ‘real’ or ‘ideal’ one.

From the 1950’s, studies began to focus more poignantly on the question of joint family and its possible break-down in the face of modernization, industrialization, urbanization and spread of education. However, scholars such as (A. M. Shah, 1968) have pointed out that the joint family had never been as commonplace in India as it was made out to be. Such has been the impact of the focus on the joint family and its possible breakdown on the trajectory of family studies in India that Oommen describes it as an ethnocentric western notion uncritically transplanted into the Indian situation (Mullatti, 1992). Other aspects of the Indian
family did not receive equally enthusiastic attention from scholars not because the Indian family had no problems, but because they were not considered important or worthy of academic attention. One such area has been the relationship between the marital dyad. Ahmad (2005) points out a lack of attention from sociological literature in dealing with conflict management between couples in the Indian context. “As a consequence, marital discord is not seen as a problem. Family sociology, thus, offers no clues as to the level of friction found among married couples” (I. Ahmad, 2005, p. 4684)

That marital conflict was not a favourite among the scholars does not mean it did not exist. One can assume that marital discords are common to all marriages. In traditional Indian society, though marital conflicts may have been common, they were looked down upon and settled easily due to the unquestioned authority of the head of the household, suggesting the unconditional acceptance of the patriarchal authority. This arrangement of family life may be considered idyllic but it has not remained impervious to the important social and economic changes happening in the society. The happiness of the marital dyad and their adjustments was least of the focus. Whether one was happy in the relationship or not was a moot question. Changing times have however, brought this question into focus.

1.3 CHALLENGES POSED BY URBAN SCENARIO

While the nuclear family system is increasingly becoming the norm, modern life-styles, changing professional and personal expectations are impacting relationships of marriage and commitment. In cities, young people are starting to choose their own partners. The increasing delay of women's first marriage in Asia was caused by increasing acceptance of individual freedom of choice, and that such freedom was facilitated by increasing women's education and premarital employment, and by more independent and individualistic lifestyle associated with changing social and normative environments in Asian societies (Tsuya, 2001). Success in marriage is not merely a function of personal involvement in the relationship. The satisfaction one finds in staying married may depend not just on the quality of one’s own personal interactions with the spouse, but
how spouses and others view marriage in general. “Marriage is not just the sum of the personal interactions that individuals find either satisfying or distressing. Marriage is a social status and a shared ideal — a story people have about their own life, their family, their spouse, and their love” (Waite et al., 2002, p. 32). The attitudes and values of individuals, families, and societies about marriage and divorce in general affect how satisfying the spouses find being married in particular. This probably is what kept the families intact in the Indian tradition, but this also may be the very aspect which is worst hit by the change in the value systems and concrete realities of urban life.

Since traditionally marriage has been a ‘taken for granted’ event in an individual’s life, his/her expectations from the marriage-partner was limited. The expectations were often placed by the family and community. Societal norms specified what kind of a person would make a good partner and what to expect from a marriage. However, with spread of education and financial autonomy, many individuals are beginning to hold their own personal expectations of their partners, and even demand them, with the effect that many young people probably enter marriage with a lot of expectations without reference to the partner’s ability to address them. Conversely, many also enter the marriage hoping that things will work out for them, often totally unprepared for the expectations of their partners. One’s unfulfilled expectations and the frustration of not being able to fulfil the expectations of the spouse can create a cold vacuum in the marital relationship triggering potential conflict situations. This is true often for men since despite modernizing trends they seem to expect even the educated/employed wives to be subservient and submissive to them. This is not likely to go well with the wives who have internalized modernistic views, thus leading to possible marital discords.

Marital relationship is often the predominant source of emotional stability/strength for the couples in the urban areas. The stress generated by the demands of work is sought to be minimised by having a family/spouse ‘to go back in the evening to’. Modern urban lifestyle places such a premium on the career prospects and material possessions that often, the relationship itself takes a backseat when it comes to assigning
priorities. Consistent efforts are often required by the couples to become providers of emotional support to each other. Such emotional reliefs are a result of mutual give-and-take. A partner’s resistance/hesitation to give such opportunities for reliefs can be themselves potential sources of stress. Therefore, disproportionate emphasis on ‘moving up the corporate ladder’ and ‘keeping up with the Jones’ at the cost of attention to the couple-relationship is likely to adversely affect the marital harmony.

Families of origin and affinal homes can be both a source of solace and struggle. It is possible that family of origin was a greater solace to the wife in a typically traditionally arranged marriage especially in the context of a strain in the relationship between husband and wife due to conflict with the affinal kin (Srinivas, 1999, pp. 141–143). However, in an urban set up the wife may not have to deal with a difficult affinal kith and kin and yet at the same time her own parents may not also be easily accessible to the wife thus, depriving her of a potential alternative source of comfort in loneliness and relationship-strains. In cases where the wife lives at the affinal home, a potential source of conflict is the proverbial ‘mother-in-law’ or the family of the spouse who may have had their own notions of what to expect from a daughter/son-in-law. Given the importance mother holds to a son in India and given the growing nuclearization of families, it is conceivable that a son is likely to bring it onto himself to take care of the mother in old age. Thus, the proverbial ‘mother-daughter-in-law spat’ need not be any less due to urbanisation.

Sources of such external controls are not limited to families. Though marriage is a time to reorient one’s priorities, one’s network of friends and the demands of maintaining such friendships can come into conflict with the demands of a married life especially in the context of urban life. Negotiating one’s availability and resources with the spouse, kids, own family, in-laws, and friends can be quite stressful. This is often compounded by the demands of the workplace especially if both the partners are working.

Colleagues at the workplace bring in a different dimension to the meaning of companionship in marriage. The economy having opened up, most companies are facing intense competition and this leads to tremendous
pressure on employees. Working late, six days a week, without holidays and a demanding boss can create a lot of frustration and tension. The demands of modern lifestyle and ‘workstyle’ often results in one spending most of his/her waking time with colleagues at the workplace. The pressures involved in meeting the deadlines, commonly shared difficulties and frustration among colleagues, etc. often lead to friendships within workplaces which can both be a source of emotional strength during the office hours and also be an invitation to marital conflict.

Greater exposure to peer groups of both sexes that urban life accords to an individual has played an important role in the self-selection of partners. Since workplaces and friendship circles in cities typically involve people belonging to different ethnic, linguistic, religious, and caste backgrounds it is likely that intercultural, inter-religious and inter-caste marriages are becoming more acceptable. Given the possibility of a lack of complete acceptance of such alliances by their respective families, the couples will often be left to fend for themselves. This can deprive them of an important source of support during times of conflict. Moreover, it is also likely that the cultural differences will gain prominence at a later stage in married life and in the absence of adequate support system and resilience of the couple, marital friction could be the result. Thus, it would be interesting to explore the role of social actors in influencing formations and substance of marital unions in an urban Indian context.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Indian society is in transition where traditional values are being questioned and the new set values have not yet taken root (Ramu, 1988; Sudarshan & Bhattacharya, 2009). This leads to considerable confusion in the minds of the married couples who are exposed to both traditional and modern cultures. Their socialization disposes them towards the traditional idea of marriage whereas the ‘modern’ concept of ‘companionate marriage’ also holds attraction for them. These different understandings of marriage hold out different expectations from married life and from the marriage partner. This exposes both partners to conflicting expectations and to the requirement of making adjustments. Different demographic,
sociological, and economic factors bear upon the nature and extent of adjustments in marriage.

In an urban situation, the husband and the wife face an array of adjustments that they have to make. This is made further complex when both partners are on a career path. The intensity with which they focus on their career often force them to make their priorities deliberately (rather than by default), create an environment where the careers of both can flourish without harming the happiness of a household, redefine their external involvements, deal painstakingly with every difference that keep popping up along the way and in the middle of it all keep the relationship alive and healthy. All this has to be done without compromising one’s productivity and efficiency at the workplace. The stress this generates has been a topic of research in many disciplines. Aiming at both career satisfaction and happiness at home, dual career couples have to manage the demands at the workplace and at home simultaneously which needs a lot of balancing all along the way. The spillovers between work and home can lead to challenging situations and the increasing expectations from each other, and can lead to greater stress on a regular basis (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Relatively less support from affinal and natal families, work pressures that often translate into unstable daily schedules, and longer absence from spouses, can deprive the couples of valuable mitigating mechanisms to face these challenges. In the face of greater expectations from one’s spouse, and the pressures of a successful career, the spouses may either become sources of solace to each other, thus creating an oasis of contentment, or may become sources of additional stress, thus leading to unhappy marriages. In a family where both spouses are working, the stress can be compounded, but so can the understanding of each other’s situation. The direction the relationship may take in times of the pressures and stress that couples go through in managing their work and family life been analysed as a factor of personalities of the individuals. However, given the fact that societal expectations, traditions, stereotypes and influence of one’s extended family are considerable in India, social dimensions of such adjustment cannot be ignored. Though marital adjustments are very private in nature,
they have their sources and consequences in various social institutions and processes. Changing family dynamics is most poignant in the relationship between married couples and after considering the limited literature that is available about this aspect in India, this focus appears worthy of study. The present study, therefore, is an attempt towards exploring the various sources of stress in a dual career Indian family, ways in which the stress is understood and dealt with by the couples (the process of adjustment), and how these affect their marital satisfaction as individuals and as a couple.

Though Indian marriages are still largely resilient and lasting, the popular literature in newspaper columns and self-help magazines testify that cracks are beginning to appear in the harmony of the relationship. Any intimate relationship will bring the differences between the involved persons into sharp focus, thereby bringing about a tension in their life and Indian couple is no exception to it (Srinivas, 1999, p. 141). The growing number of marital discords in the urban centers has become a cause of alarm (Thakur, 2009). Such apprehension is quite common in popular literature that describes it as the decline or breakdown of marriage in India. Whether such alarm is warranted is a question that need to be explored at some depth by examining the quality of marriage relationships among those who are likely to be most vulnerable to the societal changes: the dual career urban couples.

Factors related to quality of marriages have received considerable attention from researchers across the world (Cohen, Geron, & Farchi, 2010; Kapur, 1970; A. Shah, 1991; Thomas, Albrecht, & Priscilla, 1984). However, these have remained largely in the non-Asian, and specifically non-Indian, context. Considering the importance that culture plays in defining and endorsing factors of marital relationships, it is valuable to attempt to assess the marital quality of working professionals in India using an appropriate instrument which is relevant to the cultural context of India. Understanding the marital quality among working professionals in an urban context and exploring the adjustment process that they go through in leading their lives as marital dyad while catering to both spheres of home and work is the main purpose of the present study.
1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In the light of the above considerations, the study aims to explore the relationship of married couples in a city in India. Specifically, the objectives of the study are:

1) To determine the marital satisfaction level of dual-income urban married couples and its relationship with various socio-economic factors.
2) To ascertain the nature and extent of marital differences in the daily life among dual career married couples.
3) To examine the roles played by societal factors in the marital differences among the couples.
4) To examine the strategies used by the couples to deal with these differences.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

The study is conceived as an exploratory one that is meant to throw up various relevant issues and areas related to marital quality in a culturally diverse Indian society. The primary purpose of the study is to assess the quality of marriages of working couples and examine the adjustment process of the marital dyad in dealing with the tensions that arise of being a career couple. In this regard, the study has two components: examining the level of marital quality and its relationship to socioeconomic factors; and exploring the nature and extent of marital disagreements and the strategies to deal with them. In studying such complex issues as marital quality and its dimensions, both qualitative and quantitative methods are useful.

Considering the importance that culture plays in defining and endorsing factors of marital relationship, it is valuable to assess the marital quality of working professionals in India by using culturally appropriate instruments. Taking this point into consideration, the study used Marital Quality Scale developed by Shah (1991) in the Indian urban context. The scale was developed using a normative sample of over 300 respondents, of whom 86 per cent had at least graduate education, and 80 per cent were working professionals. Therefore, the scale was considered
appropriate for a study of marital quality among urban working professionals. The scale, however, does not take into account the specific nature/demands of the career the respondent pursues. This makes it applicable to a variety of respondents regardless of their career-status since the questions only pertain to their marital life.

The Marital Quality Scale consists of 50 statements with four answer-categories and asks the respondent to indicate how often the content of each statement holds good in his/her case. The statements covered opinions (e.g.: My spouse’s opinion carries as much weight as mine in money matters.), feelings (e.g.: My spouse makes me feel secure.), behaviour (e.g. My spouse argues with me in front of other people.) and perceptions (e.g. My spouse does not like me.). Positively and negatively worded statements were interspersed throughout the scale. The scale has separate forms for men and women; both forms are identically phrased except for linguistic changes necessitated by gender difference. The coefficient alpha for the scale reported a high internal consistency (0.91) and the test-retest reliability score was 0.83, indicating fairly adequate reliability of the scale. Construct validity of the scale was established through a factorial reduction of items and by a demonstration of its ability to differentiate persons with marital disharmony from the general population.

The study also seeks to examine the nature of marital disagreements among dual career couples. The respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they argued with each other on each topic and the response categories ranged from 1 (almost daily) to 5 (never). A linear regression was used to arrive at the importance of each of the factors influencing the frequency of marital arguments. The questionnaire also included a section on basic details of the respondent and his/her spouse, amount of time spent away from home for the purposes of work and the extent of bringing work home after office hours to capture the work dimensions as well. The respondents were married professionals (male or female), residing in urban areas of Bangalore along with their spouses who were also actively pursuing a career. The analysis relies on data collected from 238 dual career marriages in the city of Bangalore.
For the second component of the study, considering the important role played by perception in defining one’s openness to marital adjustment, it was decided that the study will seek a combination of behaviours and perceptions from the point of view of each of the working-spouse to examine the process of adjustment. To analyse the extent of marital adjustment and the strategies to cope with it, 25 dual career couples were interviewed using semi-structured interview schedule, after obtaining prior permission from the couples. Since the study is intended to capture marital adjustment of couples, both husband and wives were considered as respondents of the study and interviewed separately. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and coded first based on pre-determined themes. Sub-themes were arrived at from the text itself and added to the coding. The data generated through the interviews were analysed to gain insights into the disagreements among the couples and the strategies used by them in dealing with differences.

1.6.1 STUDY AREA AND RESPONDENTS

The area of study is the city of Bangalore in Karnataka. Traditionally known as “Pensioners’ Paradise”, the city of Bangalore has recently earned the epithet “the Silicon Valley of India” and has attracted scores of young migrants from most parts of India. The situation of marriages in Bangalore has been a topic of discussion among local academic and journalistic writings. In the absence of reliable data on divorce in Bangalore, newspaper articles and websites talk of ‘tripling’ of divorce rates in the city. It is claimed that the year 2006 saw 60 per cent more than the 4,500 divorce cases filed in family courts in 2005. Couples in the 25-35 age group accounted for 70 per cent of the cases, and 85 per cent of them were filed in the first three years of marriage (Nita, 2007). Aura (2008) reports that the number of matrimonial cases filed in the Family Court of Bangalore has increased steadily year by year since it was set up in 1987: from 653 cases in 1988 to 1392 cases in 1999. “Thus, public discourse – based on studies, news, opinions of professional, discussions with people – indicates that marital breakdown is becoming more common in Bangalore”(Aura, 2008, p. 29). “According to a survey by the Children's Rights Initiative for Shared Parenting (CRISP), around 13,000
cases of divorce are pending in various family courts in Bangalore. Of these 5,000 were filed in 2008” (Times of India, July 22, 2009).

Bangalore presents an ideal location due to the presence of a good number of Information Technology (IT) sector establishments, educational and medical institutions where one can expect a large pool of middle class young dual career married couples. The respondents for the first component of the study were selected from the employee-registers of corporates, medical and education institutions. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data on the Marital Quality level and its relationship to socio-economic background of the working professionals. Given the sensitive nature of the study, respondents were contacted using a combination of convenient sampling and snowball sampling. Though such a study would benefit from data collected with dyads as unit of analysis, considering the sensitive nature of such studies on the intimate lives of people, it was decided to study every case as a separate marriage. Considering the important role played by perception in defining marital quality, it was decided that for the purposes of the first component of the study we will focus on a combination of behaviours and perceptions from the point of view of only one spouse. This will give us a fair understanding of how a respondent sees his/her spouse and the relationship, though we would not know the other side of the story. However, it was ensured that the respondent and his/her partner were into full-time employment.

It was decided to use in-depth interviews since the intention was to obtain an understanding of the modalities of operation of the immediate social context and, the specific issues that arise when both respondents actively pursue independent careers. A total of 25 dual career couples were interviewed using a semi-structured interview schedule. The couples were contacted using a combination of convenient and snow-ball sampling. The interviews were transcribed and analysed for common themes, specific issues, conflicts encountered and strategies used to deal with them. It is important to note that all participants of the study willingly opted to participate and were living together when interviewed.
1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The first stage of the study involved assessments of marital quality based on perceptions of one partner in marriage. If both partners were involved in the study it would have allowed intra-couple comparison of perceptions. Owing to the personal nature of the research itself, and the cultural barriers to speaking about such personal matters to strangers, it was a great challenge to get willing couples to participate in the second phase of research. It would have been helpful to get couples who had separated and got back, however, their hesitation to favourably respond to participate in the interview process was respected. Therefore, it is likely that most of those who showed willingness to participate in the research were couples with low or medium level of difficulties. Since snowball sampling was used, the results cannot be generalized for the population in an urban context. The professional profile of the respondents may not represent working couples across all professions. Also, the quantitative data is collected from only one partner in marriage, and not from couples, which does not allow us to compare the perspectives of both the partners. Future research could consider this while selecting respondents and carrying out the analysis.

1.8 ORGANIZATION OF THESIS CHAPTERS

The thesis is organized into six chapters.

Chapter One: Introduction
Chapter Two: Marital Relationship from a Sociological Perspective
Chapter Three: Assessing Marital Quality of Working Couples
Chapter Four: Marital Conflict and Social Support
Chapter Five: Dealing with Differences
Chapter Six: Summary and Conclusions

The first chapter introduces the context of the study by explaining the different sociological, economic, and legal perspectives on marriage. It also discusses briefly on the way marital relationship has been understood in the Indian cultural context. The motivation of the study, and statement of the problem provide the research context of the study on marital
relationship in India. Further, the objectives, methodology and limitations of the study are briefly discussed. The review of studies relating to marital satisfaction, marital quality, and adjustments form the main contents of the second chapter. The concept of dual career is also introduced and each of the themes of marital satisfaction, quality, support and adjustments are explored in relation to the Indian society. The theoretical perspective used to examine marital relationship among dual career couples is also provided. The different theories of conflict perspective is explained in the chapter before examining the different mechanisms of social support available to the couple.

Chapter Three discusses the concept of marital satisfaction or quality which as viewed in western and non-western context. The scales widely used to measure marital quality is also explored before proceeding to discuss the results of the analysis of marital quality among working couples based on the quantitative survey. Marital disagreements and social support are discussed in next chapter. Based on data from in-depth interviews, chapter five examines the process of marital adjustment among the couples with regard to different themes of work and home spheres. The theory of social constructionism is employed to explain the process of adjustment which determines either positive or negative outcomes of marriage among the dual career couples. The last chapter provides the summary and conclusions of the study.