CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The review of related literature is as important as any other component of the research process. It involves locating, reading and evaluating reports of research as well as reports of casual observation and opinion that are related to the planned research project (Borg and Gall, 1989).

The general purpose of the review is to help the researcher to develop a thorough understanding and insight into previous work and the trends that have emerged. It can also help the researcher in reaching a number of important specific goals. It also helps in both limiting and clearly defining the research problems.

A review of pertinent literature dealt primarily with the areas of marital, adjustment, stress, self-concept, quality of life, social interaction pattern and social support. The review of related studies on migrants from Kerala and Arabs in Qatar are also presented in this chapter.

Marital Adjustment

Marriage has been described as the most important and fundamental human relationship because it provides the primary structure for establishing a family relationship and rearing the next generation. It is one of the most important commitments of an individual that he or she makes in his or her life.
Moreover, selecting a partner and entering into a marital contract is considered both a maturational milestone and a personal achievement.

People marry for many reasons, like love, happiness, companionship, and the desire to have children, physical attraction, or desire to escape from an unhappy situation. Marriage is a commitment with love and responsibility for peace, happiness and development of strong family relationships (Bernard, 1984).

It is in the early twentieth century that social scientists began to express their concern about marriage. Although research on marriage had been conducted since 1930s, most of the early work relied exclusively on self-report and interview methods. Systematic observational research on marital relation began in the 1970s (Weiss, Hops, and Patterson, 1973) and in the following years, various observational coding systems have appeared in the literature (Filsinger, 1983). In 1970's, concerns about marital adjustment and satisfaction received increasing attention. This was followed in the 1980's by studies conducted on marital stability, an aspect highly related to marital happiness (Carlson and Stinson, 1982). Later numerous attempts have been made to identify the components of marital satisfaction through studies of various characteristics of quality of marital relationship. The literature on marital satisfaction is closely related to marital adjustment (Spanier, 1976).

The research in the area of marital relationship frequently utilises concepts like marital success, satisfaction, consensus, companionship, or marital adjustment. Among those concepts mentioned above, **marital adjustment** is the most frequently used term in the literature of marriage.
A wide variety of variables have been applied to the evaluation of the degree to which existing marriage can be thought to be successful, viz., marital adjustment, marital stability marital quality etc. Marital adjustment is an aspect of the relationship between spouses rather than a feeling experienced by each of them.

Adjustment in marriage is a significant phenomenon. It is an interactive process which successfully leads to satisfaction or happiness. It serves to reduce the marital differences and to reduce tension between the spouses. It also increases the cohesion of the couple and their agreement on matters that affect the marital functioning.

Adjustment has been defined as the degree of an individual's psychological comfort with various aspects of a new setting (Black, 1988). They must adjust together to their total environment, including such matters as a new household, children, provision and preparation of food, relatives, friends, relations and work (Fonseca, 1966). The success of marital life is mostly dependent on the success in marital adjustment by the husband and wife.

It can be seen that the phenomenon of marital adjustment that is given a priority in all cultures is one of the most important commitments that an individual makes in his or her life (Hashmi, Khurshid and Hassan, 2007). Sharma and Hussain (1992) noted that of the various problems concerning to man and woman relationships, marital adjustment ranked in top.

Many factors contribute to how well each person adjusts to being married to his spouse and how satisfied each spouse is with his or her partner.
Marital Adjustment and Age

Schoen (1975) conducted studies on the relation between age and marital adjustment which showed that marital adjustment is low when the partners marry at a very young age, that is, when the man is under the age of 20 and women is under the age of 18.

The analysis of study of Srivastav, Singh and Nigam (1988) indicated that the age differences between husband and wife highly contributed toward marital adjustment. Adjustment problems are seen more among the younger couples. In addition to the age of the individuals getting married, investigations also have been conducted to examine the relationship between marital stability and discrepancy in age between the husband and wife. The studies found that the rate of divorce was lower when the husband and wife are approximately the same age than when there is a large age difference. (Srivastav et al. 1988)

Udry, Nelson, and Nelson (1974) found that marital instability is common among the husbands under 25 and wives below 20 years of age. But after reviewing the evidences on age differences and marital success, Udry (1974) concluded that there is an as yet not conclusive evidence of any significant relationship between marital quality and age, that whatever differences might be created by husband-wife age difference, their effect on marital quality appears to be negligible.

Marital Adjustment and Education

A study conducted by Srivastav et al (1988) to examine the effects of demographic characteristics on marital adjustment revealed that differences’ in educational level of the spouses were evident in the maladjusted couples.
Houseknecht and spanier (1980) found that both men and women with six or more years of college experience had increased rate of divorce. The US Bureau of the Census (2001) showed that individuals with less than a high school education experiences the high level of marital dissolution, where as the lowest level occurred at four years of college for women and five years of college for men.

The study conducted by Quddus (1992) about the adjustment of couples who live apart for occupational and other reasons reported that the number of years of their education is not significantly related to the adjustment of couples.

The findings of Pothen (1996) revealed that the level of education of couples plays an important role in the husband – wife relationship, especially in the early days of marriage. Also the education of the female spouses affects the marriage much more than the education of male spouses.

The study of Bumpass (1972) revealed that for men there was a small positive correlation between the number of years of schooling and marital happiness. For the woman the picture is less clear.

Glenn and Weaver (1978) found that there is no correlation between number of years of education and marital happiness.

A study by Hashmi et al (2007) suggests that highly educated (above graduation) working married women do not have to face difficulties in their married life and depression in their life. The findings indicate that graduate non-working married women feel more depressed in their daily life and in home task than the women who get education above than graduation. Because if a married woman is highly educated, she can well judge her household problems and solve them with ease. In this way she feels free from depression and lives a happy marital life. On the other hand less educated married women cannot solve their problems because of less information about that problematic issue. So that she feels herself in depression and this affects her marital life. Along with this, the results further suggested that highly educated married non-working women are better adjusted in their married lives. It indicates that those non-working women who are highly educated can spend their married life easily and solve their problems without depression as compared to only graduate women. According to researchers high education encourages women to solve their problems in marital maladjustment and it also helps them in bringing up their children properly.

**Marital Adjustment and Employment**

Feinauer and Williams-evans (1989) found that wife employment did not have a significant negative impact on overall marital adjustment for husbands or wives. Similarly, Lockslay (1980) found no evidence for any effect of wives' employment or degree of interest in their work activity on marital adjustment and companionship.

Kingston and Nock (1985) found that the congruency between wife’s employment and her husband’s and her own preference regarding her employment was a significant factor in marital adjustment. In his study Gilbert
(1985) reported that congruency between attitudes and role performance for both spouses to be an important determinant of marital adjustment.

Using data from one National Survey, Blair (1993) examined the effects of husbands' and wives' employment and marriage characteristics on their respective perceptions of marital quality. The result showed that occupational factors have only a minimal effect on both husbands' and wives' perceptions of marital quality. The results also suggested that husbands may maintain traditional role expectations for themselves and their wives, despite the dual-earner status of their marriage.

Hashmi, Khurshid and Hassan (2007) conducted a study on role of education on married women. The results further showed that highly educated working and non-working married women perform well in their married life and they are free from depression as compared to uneducated working and non-working married women.

Cassidy (1985) conducted a survey of 190 post-parental women of age 55 and over. The results of the first multiple regression analysis indicated that only the prestige associated with wives' present or former occupations and husbands' present or former occupations have significant effects on marital satisfaction. However, when analyzed separately by wives' employment status, chronological age was found to significantly affect the marital satisfaction of employed women, but not retired women.

Feinauer and Williams-evans (1989) found that wife employment did not have a significant negative impact on overall marital stability for husbands or wives. Kingston and Nock (1985) found that the amount of work hours of one or both spouses was not strongly related to marital happiness.
However, the result of the study among 272 male subjects done by Robinson, Flowers and Kok-Mun (2006) showed that workaholism is positively related to marital disaffection. The most important workaholism domains for predicting marital disaffection were over controlling behaviour and impaired communication.

Howell (1999) examined the relationship between coping strategies and marital satisfaction of dual career couples with children. The subjects were drawn from an urban neighbourhood. The occupation represented included business, health, education, law and social service. The research instruments used in this study included the ways of Coping Questionnaires and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. The results demonstrated a significant relationship between coping strategies and marital satisfaction in dual career families with children.

The literature reviewed in general is suggestive that even in the very conservative population studied, there was no evidence to suggest that wife employment independently affected marital adjustment.

**Marital Adjustment and Children**

Graham, Fischer, Crawford, Fitzpatrick and Bina (2000) examined the relation between parental status and marital adjustment of employed individuals. The sample consisted of 91 individuals — 47 employed wives and 44 employed husbands. This study found that men with children reported higher levels of marital adjustment compared to men without children and women with and without children. Overall, women with children reported lower level of marital adjustment compared to women without children and men with and without children.
Eiden, Tei and Corns (1995) conducted a study to examine the connection between maternal working models, marital adjustment, and the parent-child relationship. As predicted, findings revealed that maternal working models were related to the quality of mother-child interactions and child security, and marital adjustment and child security were also significantly related. Furthermore, maternal working models and marital adjustment were related interactively to child behaviour and security. Among children of insecure mothers, child security scores were higher when mothers reported high marital adjustment, but no relations was observed between child security scores and mothers marital adjustment among children of secure mothers. These findings suggest that maternal working models affect parenting and child adjustment well beyond infancy and that interaction between maternal working models and the marital adjustment on child behaviour and attachment security require closer examination.

Shek (1996) studied on the associations among Hong Kong adults’ marital quality, their relationships with their children, and their attitudes toward the value of children. Data were drawn from 1,501 married adults who completed several measures, including the Chinese Dyadic Adjustment Scale and the Chinese Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale. Results revealed that adults with more signs of marital satisfaction perceived the parent–child relational quality to be better.

The linkages between parents’ report of marital quality and parental well-being and children’s report of parent-child relational quality and adolescent psychological well-being in 378 Chinese families over 2 years were examined by Shek (2000). Results revealed that (a) marital quality predicted parental well-being (b) fathers’ marital quality and well being predicted
parent-child relational quality but mothers’ did not; (c) parental influence appeared to be stronger than maternal influence on adolescent adjustment; and (d) both direct and indirect paths were found for the linkages between marital quality and well-being and adolescent psychological well-being.

Marital Adjustment and Religion

Religion and spiritual values play dominant roles in the lives of families all over the world. For many, religion is the rock upon which they build their lives, their beliefs and their cause of action.

Much of the research on the relationship between religiosity and marriage was on the idea that couples, who are more religious are more likely than other couples to have happy and stable marriages (Sullivan, 2001). Kunz and Albrecht, (cf.Sullivan, 2001) found that compared to other couples, couples who attend church more frequently seemed to have higher marital satisfaction.

More extensive evidences also exist on ties between involvement in religion and marital satisfaction. But Jenkins (1991) found conflicting evidence for propositions such as high religiosity promotes marital satisfaction and increased church attendance increases marital satisfaction. Regarding stability, Jenkins concluded that there is a ‘moderate’ support for the proposition that ‘high religiosity promotes marital stability. Booth, Johnson, Branahan and Sica, (1995) reported a reciprocal relationship between religiosity and marital satisfaction, such that changes in marital satisfaction predict changes in religiosity over time.

Lev-Wiesel and Al-Krenawi (1999) conducted a study among Muslims, Christian (Roman Catholics) and Druze Subjects. The results
showed that marital quality was higher among Druze and Christians than among Muslims.

Studying the spiritualistic attitudes and personality traits, Mc Kenna (1961) found that those individuals who express religious attitudes are more tolerant, more optimistic, more restrained and less egoistic. Mayo, Puryer, and Richey, (1969) said that a religious male was significantly less depressed and less psychopathically deviant than non-religious males. As for women, it was found that they possessed higher level of ego-strength than those classifying themselves as irreligious.

**Marital adjustment and Income**

Income was found to be a very important contributory factor in marital adjustment. Studies have reported that there exist a relationship between income and adjustment of wives especially in the absence of their husbands. The study conducted by Quddus (1992) reported that higher the monthly income, better the adjustment of husbands to the absence of their wives. But this is not true in the case of wives; the monthly income of the husband is not significantly related to the adjustment of their wives in the absence of their husbands.

The study conducted by Hashmi et al (2008) explored the association between marital adjustment and economic resources. Results indicated that the economic resources play significant role in marital adjustment. Non-working married women have to face more economic problems in their married life as compared to working married women and consequently they faced more stress and less adjusted. Working women are more adjusted in their married life as compared to non-working women.
The connection between marital success and economic prosperity or hardship had been a subject of study for centuries. At an early point in this research Terman, Buttenweiser, Ferguson, Johnson, and Wilson, (1938) wrote “it is well known that more divorce occur in the higher classes.” According to Kengal (1973) marriage instability exists at all socio-economic levels, the general trend is for marriage break up to be more profound at the lower status level.

In the fifties and sixties empirical studies involving thousands of respondents brought out different findings including both positive and negative relationship between marital satisfaction and income.

Coombs and Zumeta (1970) argue that it was the attitude of wives towards their income that is relevant in determining marital adjustment. Ross and Sawhill’s (1975) work with data from the Michigan Panel Study of Income Dynamics revealed that marital split was related to lack of assets, income decreases and unemployment, but not to the level of income. Using the same data base, Hoffman and Homes (1976) found that, when other variables are controlled, marital dissolution is negatively associated with the husband’s hourly wage rate and the average hours worked each week. But after controlling variable such as home ownership, savings, hours worked and unemployment the wage rate no longer had a consisting effect.

Lacy (1998) made a study to test the hypothesis that there is a curvilinear relationship between income and the dimension of marital quality – marital happiness and marital conflicts for married mothers. The analysis found a curvilinear relationship between marital quality and family income, a
relationship that does not depend on the proportion of income earned by the husband.

Rogers (1999) examined the nature and direction of the relationship between wives’ income and marital adjustment. Based on panel data for a sample of 771 married women and men the analyses revealed that increases in wives’ income does not significantly influence either husbands’ or wives’ perceptions of marital discord. Rather, it was found that increase in wives’ income contribute significantly to marital discord.

Prior research on the relationship between income and marital adjustment has had an inconsistent findings; early research found a significant relationship while later research has generally failed to find a significant relationship.

**Marital Adjustment and Personality Traits**

Arrays of personality characteristics have received broad support as a measure of marital adjustment. Psychological traits of dominance and submissiveness also have role to play in marital adjustment.

Kumar and Rohatgi (1984) found that husbands with high adjustment possessed a higher need for dominance, whereas, wives with high adjustment were submissive. In the case of couples with low adjustment, both husbands and wives were found to be equally dominating. Besides dominance need, the same study also attempted to identify personality factors, such as intelligence and extroversion with reference to marital adjustment. The result showed that the couples with high adjustment were more intelligent and possessed more extroversion interests as compared to the couples showing low adjustment.
Later Kumar and Rohatgi (1985) examined the relationship of anxiety neuroticism and security variables with adjustment in marriage. The result showed that anxiety affect one’s adjustment in marriage. Husbands and wives with low adjustment also showed a great deal of neuroticism. The high adjusted husbands and wives felt more secure in comparison to others.

In another study, Kumar and Rohatgi (1986) further examined the association of frustration management and self-disclosure with marital adjustment. A significant relationship between frustration reaction and marital adjustment was observed. Low adjusted husbands and wives seem to depend more on aggressive, fixated and regressive modes of behaviour in the management of their frustration, than the high adjusted husbands and wives. In the case of self-disclosure behaviour the high adjusted husbands and wives showed greater tendency to be open about them.

Nemechek and Oslon (1996) studied 99 married couples. The result revealed that the marital adjustment was related to elevated scores on extraversion and openness to experience on a measure of the five factor personality model.

Mohan and Singh (1985) studied marital adjustment of rural and urban couples in relation to their personality in terms of extroversion, neuroticism and psychoticism. The analysis showed that rural couples were better adjusted than urban couples. Extroversion, neuroticism and psychoticism showed negative correlation with marital adjustment.

Bourchard, Lussier and Sabourin (1999) also came to the same conclusion in their study which was conducted to examine the contribution of personality traits to marital adjustment. Data were gathered from
questionnaires administered to a sample of 466 couples, in which the personality traits of neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness were measured. The results revealed that the self-reported and partner-reported personality traits were important predictors of self-reported marital adjustment in both men and women. The findings of this study demonstrated that neuroticism significantly predicts both self-reported and partner-reported marital adjustment for both men and women.

Demir and Fisiloglu (1999) examined the relationship between loneliness and marital adjustment among Turkish couples. Subjects were 58 heterosexual married couples, who completed the UCLA Loneliness Scale and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. Findings revealed that loneliness was significantly and negatively correlated with marital adjustment. Lower loneliness scores resulted from self-selected marriages than from arranged marriages. In addition, higher marital adjustment scores were associated with self-selected marriages, and marital adjustment increased parallel to an increase in the degree of acquaintance before marriage.

Personality traits are important features of what people desire in a mate. Arrays of personality characteristics have received broad support as a measure of marital satisfaction. Assuming that, in marriage, a dominant spouse would feel happier if he or she had submissive partner, Sharan (1972) examined marital happiness in 56 couples. He concluded that dominance of spouse is not an independent factor which contributes to happiness in marriage. However, a later study found conducted by Kumar and Rohatgi (1984) revealed contradictory results, but in favour of the traditional expectations.
Russell and Well (1994) studied the influence of personality on marital quality, using causal modelling on a sample of 94 couples who had completed a quality of marriage questionnaire and the revised short form of the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire. Irrespective of gender, quality of marriage was found to be influenced negatively by spouse’s neurotics, but the strongest influence on the quality of marriage of each spouse was the quality of marriage of the other. Altogether, the model accounted for over 60% of the variance in quality of marriage, provided an extremely close fit to the data. Finally it was argued that valid conclusions about marital quality can only be derived from couples rather than married individuals.

Kosek’s (1996) study revealed that there is a relationship between spousal ratings of personality and self-reports of marital satisfaction. 107 heterosexual couples were administered the NEO – Personality Inventory-Revised to appraise the five domains of personality and the Locke-Wallace Martial Adjustment Test to evaluate marital satisfaction. The analysis indicated that scores for all the personality domains were significant predictors of marital satisfaction for both men and women, with Agreeableness being the most robust.

Marital Adjustment and Other Psychological Factors

The findings of Quuddus (1992) revealed the relationship between marital adjustment and the anxieties and worries of living apart. The adjustment of husbands in the absence of their wives was moderately related to their marital adjustment. However the relationship between the marital adjustment and the adjustment of wives in the absence of their husbands was not statistically significant.
Investigations of Kitarnura, Aoki and Fujino, (1998) on relationship between marital adjustment and social adjustment revealed that there was a significant correlation between these two variables.

Marital and family therapists working with dual-career couples have frequently commented that these families face unique stresses inherent in their dual-earner lifestyles (Green and Zenisek, 1983; Haas, 1980; Prince-Bonham and Murphy, 1980; Rice, 1979; Wallston, Foster and Berger, 1978). Work reactions have either a positive or a negative effect on the non-work life of employees (Burke, Weir and Duwors, 1980; Jones and Fletcher, 1993). A low degree of work adjustment, and the resulting stress, can disrupt marital life and may negatively affect one’s quality of life.

Odell and Quinn (1998) conducted a longitudinal study on the marital relationship during first year of marriage to discover what relations exist between congruence on initial values and role expectations, and marital adjustment and the desire for spousal change. It was found that congruence was positively related to marital adjustment and negatively related to the desire for spousal change, although this relation was statistically significant only at one month of marriage. Few gender differences were found, although a consistent relation was found between wife’s desire for spousal change and husband’s marital adjustment. Findings suggest that the successful couples make adaptations within their marital systems and that initial expectations are not predictive of marital adjustment during the first year of marriage.

With the use of a non-random sample of 248, Eells and O’Flaherty (1996) found that the primary areas of marital discord revolve around communication issues. Also, the analysis indicated that females perceive more problems than males. Furthermore, females were most likely to perceive
males as responsible for these problems. Males, on the other hand, were more likely to perceive the problems as being mutually shared. The addition of income as a control variable contributed to the understanding of the primary areas of marital discord.

Kundu and Ghosh (1977) found that discrepancies in role concepts and expectation; inadequate self image; a tendency to hide themselves from the spouse; ignorance about the spouse’s values, attitudes, and insecurity; and lack of common interest and activities were evident among the couples with marital problems.

Marital quality and marital adjustment is closely related and therefore few studies on marital quality are also included.

**Marital Quality**

Marital quality is often used in a sense that includes marital adjustment as well as happiness and satisfaction. Marital satisfaction is primarily a subjective interpretation of a married person’s marriage. Marital quality is seen to be more inclusive and included such dimensions as communication, happiness, integration and satisfaction with the relationship.

Spanier and Lewis (1980), in a review of literature, noted that marital quality was the most frequently investigated phenomenon in the field of family studies. Spanier and Cole (1976) are of the opinion that marital quality is not only a subjective evaluation but also a process in a dyad. They included four aspects of marital quality as dyadic cohesion, dyadic consensus, dyadic affection, and dyadic satisfaction.

Johnson, While, Edwards and Booth, (1986) specified five components of marital quality as marital happiness, interaction, disagreements, problems
and instability. Hughes, Galinsky and Morris, (1992) included components of activities that a couple does together, consensus on topics, marital disagreement and companionship as factors of marital quality.

Amoloza and Booth (1992) did an analysis of a longitudinal study of the stability of and the developmental changes of marital quality over an eight year period. They measured marital quality using five dimensions: one an intra-personal one that taped the personal evaluation of the relationship and four interpersonal ones: amount of interaction, amount and intensity of disagreement, behavioural attributes that cause a problem in the marriage and divorce proneness.

Zuo (1992) used the typical two major dimensions of marital quality (marital happiness and marital adjustment) as separate constructs and investigated the reciprocal relationship between marital interaction and marital happiness. Marital interactions consist of the following components: frequency that spouses shared the following activities together: eating, going shopping, visiting friends, doing household project, and going out. The components of marital happiness are: the amount of understanding received from the other spouse, the happiness with the spouse’s companionship, the happiness of the amount of love and affection received from the spouse, and the strength of love for the spouse.

Johnson and Taitman (1997) conducted an exploratory study to examine the nature and magnitude of fluctuations in marital quality. Drawing on a national sample of married persons interviewed three times over an 8-year period, they found that marital quality is a stable phenomenon.
Marital Quality and Sexual Satisfaction

Sexual satisfaction is as important to wives as to husbands for marital satisfaction. The first years of marriage gives more importance to sexual satisfaction.

Kumar (1986) interviewed happily married couples to identify factors which contributed to happiness in marriage. He found that husbands and wives showed a high degree of agreement in several aspects. The husbands stated sexual satisfaction, proper understanding, right marital attitudes, faithfulness and giving importance to each other, as five most important factors in happy married life. The wives mentioned faithfulness, companionship, love and affection, giving importance and sexual satisfaction among the five most important factors in marital happiness. Three of the five factors on which the two groups agreed are sexual satisfaction, faithfulness and giving importance.

Henderson-King and Veroff (1994) explored the relationship between sexual satisfaction and four dimensions of marital well-being: competence, control, equity and happiness. Data from a longitudinal study of black and white couples were analysed separately by race and gender. The results showed that in both the first and third years of marriage, feelings of affirmation and tension were associated with sexual satisfaction for all race and gender groups. Sexual satisfaction was related to several dimensions of marital well-being, though not always in the expected direction, and the patterns differed across race and gender groups.

In one study, Chilman (1974) claimed that sexual adjustment tends to be more difficult for women and the end result is less satisfaction for men.
Other Correlates of Marital Quality

Durana (1996) found that emotional bonding is significantly related to marital quality. His research study used quantitative and qualitative research methods to evaluate the impact of bonding (physical closeness and emotional openness) and catharsis in the Bonding and Emotional Re-education (BER) segment of PAIRS training (Practical Application of Intimate Relation Skills). Participants were assessed by means of measures of marital satisfaction, self-esteem depression, anxiety, control and support. The results suggested that BER can lead to significant improvements in marital satisfaction, cohesion, self-esteem, and anxiety levels. The results also showed significant differences for PAIRS in marital satisfaction, consensus, affection, satisfaction and self-esteem. The study explored differences in changes for males and females. Exploratory findings indicated that there may be gender differences associated with changes in marital satisfaction.

Harper and Elliot (2005) found that the amount of intimacy a couple perceived in their marriage was not as important in determining the extent of marital satisfaction. Couples who perceived relatively little intimacy in their marriage were equally happy in their marriages as couples who had intimacy scores that were much higher.

Marital difficulties for many couples occur early in marriage. Approximately 21% of marriage end within the first two years and 40% end by the fourth year. The consequences for individuals and their families were in the areas of emotional well-being, financial stability, and child development. A study was conducted by Quinn and Odell in (1998). A sample of 93 couples participated in this study in which data were collected on marriage at five intervals between one month and two years. During the first
months, age, income, and education had some impact on marital adjustment but this influence weakened with time. Examining results across the two year interval suggests that interpersonal trust, desired spousal behaviour change, and emotional maturity were highly associated with marital adjustment. In particular, marital processes of interpersonal trust and desired spousal behaviour changed at one month are predictive of marital adjustment at two years.

Rollings and Cannon (1974) found that marital quality is lower in long term marriages and higher in short term marriages. It is because of the fact that the relationship becomes routine and overall evolution of the decline of relationship. But some other findings revealed that stability in marital quality vary by marital duration, with persons in longer marriages being more stable (Moss and Susman, 1980)

Myers and Booth (1999) studied the cross – sectional and over –time effects of marital locus of control (MLC) on positive and negative marital quality. Data were obtained for individuals who completed the final two waves of a 17 year longitudinal study of a national sample of American husbands and wives. Results revealed that higher levels of MLC were associated with reports of higher positive marital quality and lower negative marital quality. In addition, spouses with lower levels of MLC were more likely than were spouses with higher levels of MLC to report the occurrence of marital strains associated with lower levels of marital quality. However, it was noted that the negative effects of these marital strains were reduced, even at low levels of MLC. It was concluded that MLC is a personal resource that buffers the deleterious effects of marital problems and that may locate individuals in strong or weak marriages.
**Stress**

Marriage is never simply a static relationship. It is filled with change, crucibles within which major dynamics of living. It represents a social contract that bonds individuals together in an intimate relationship that can be stress-buffering and socially integrative.

Stressors are crisis-provoking events (Hill, 1988) or ‘triggering situations’, those life events or occurrences that are of sufficient magnitude to bring about change in the family system (Boss, 1987). McCubbin and Dahl (1985) and Lavee, McCubbin, and Olson (1987) defined a stressor event as a condition that either produces or has the potential to produce change within the family social system. But family stress is a process of family change rather than simply an event or situation that happens in or to a family.

Boss (2002) defined family stress as an upset in the steady state of the family. This definition contains the notion that the family stress process includes a complex balancing act by which the family system as a whole attempts to maintain equilibrium in its collective life. Nelson and Norem (cited in Malia, 2006) identified that internality, externality, pervasiveness, rate of change, intensity, predictability, reversibility, domain and level are dimensions of change that had its impact on the family system.

Some of the stressors in connection with family system include low-quality housing, ageing, inadequate health care, educational, and recreational facilities, inadequate employment opportunities, role ambiguity, the birth of a child, negative life events and chronic daily hassles etc. Kundu and Ghosh (1977) found that unhealthy atmosphere in the family and conflict in the family relations may accumulate a source for stress.
Kalmijn and Broese van Groenou (2005) found that marital disruption through divorce and widowhood has also been linked to economic distress. The strains and concomitant network disruptions associated with marital disruption may be reason for this distress.

The findings of a study by Chan (2000) showed that most stressful situations reported by the participants concerned health issues of their injured partners, the family and marital interactions, and the care-giving burden imposed on them.

**Stress and different roles**

Marital role can be defined as set of attitudes and behaviour a spouse is expected to demonstrate in the content of the marriage relationship (Gore and Manigione, 1983).

There is evidence that the pressures of managing multiple roles in women are the greatest, and the psychological benefits of employment are the least, under conditions of heavy family responsibilities that is, when young children are at home (Blood and Wolfe, 1960).

Marital and family therapists working with dual-career couples have frequently commented that such families face unique stresses inherent in their dual-earner lifestyles (Green and Zenisek, 1983; Haas, 1980; Prince-Bonham and Murphy, 1980; Rice, 1979; Wallston et al., 1978).

Barnett, Brennan and Raudenbush (1994) estimated the association between marital-role quality and psychological distress. The subjects of the study were a sample of 300 full time employed women and men in dual – earner couples. Individual–level variables such as age, education, occupational prestige, and job-role quality were controlled for, as were couple-level
variables, including length of marriage, parental status, and household income. The magnitude of the effect of marital – role quality on psychological distress was compared for men, women, parents, and non-parents. The findings revealed that for dual-earner couples, marital-role quality was significantly negatively associated with psychological distress for both men and women. The magnitude of the effect depends little, if at all on gender or parental status. The findings challenged the idea that marital experiences influence women’s mental health status more significantly than they do men’s.

The birth of a child precipitates a higher degree of change in some parents by adding the parenting role and there is related stress in marital life may compound the difficulties and the amount of stress experienced. Using data on 90 middle class fathers and 115 middle class mothers who responded to a mailed questionnaire in the US, Harriman (1986) examined the amount and quality of life changes accompanying parenthood as they relate to parents’ marital adjustment. Findings showed: 1) in the area of personal life, wives with high marital adjustment scores perceived more overall change than those with low marital adjustment scores, 2) husbands with low marital adjustment scores reported perceiving significantly more change than did husbands with high marital adjustment scores, and 3) negative personal and marital changes accompanying parenthood appear to be more difficult for wives than for husbands. These findings suggested that the perceived amount of change accompanying the birth of a child is associated with the sex of the parent and with their level of marital adjustment. The birth of a child precipitates a higher degree of positive change in the lives of parents high on marital adjustment than those low on marital adjustment.
Lavee et al. (1996) tested the hypothesis that the quality of marital relationships is related to spouses’ distress with their parental role and that the stress related to the parental role will be influenced by other roles and by the number of children at home and their age composition. Results revealed that although parenting stress of both parents were affected by the number of children and economic distress, the wife’s employment and the household division of labour had no effect on levels of stress. Such stress was found to have a negative effect on the psychological well-being and perceived marital quality of both husbands and wives. A significant association between husbands’ and wives’ parenting stress and a mutual effect of their perceived marital quality on each other were noted.

Ilgen and Hollenbeck (1991) observed that role ambiguity was defined as lack of clarity or the level of uncertainty surrounding expectations about a single role has generally been treated as a source of stress. As a source of stress, role ambiguity has been reported to have adverse effects on individuals in the family.

**Stress and Marital Adjustment**

The deleterious effects of stressful life events on self-reported quality of marital interaction have been documented across a wide range of stressors, including death of a parent (Umberson, 1995) cancer diagnosis (Coyne and Anderson, 1999) the transition to parenthood (Gjerdingen and Chalonger, 1994) and unemployment (Vinokur, Price, and Caplan, 1996).

Hashmi, Khurshid and Hassan (2007) conducted a study on 150 working and non-working married women (75 working married women and 75 non-working married women in the age range of 18-50 years) to explore
the relationship between marital adjustment and stress. Results indicated highly significant relationship between marital adjustment and stress. The findings of the results also show that working married women have to face more stress in their married life as compared to non-working married women. The marriage seems to confer a greater protective advantage on men than on women. They also observed that perhaps half of the adults suffering from severe stress blame the deteriorating relationships on their spouse.

Some studies have reported that in times of strain, partners express diminished warmth and elevated hostility. Abbey, Andrews, and Halman, (1995) found that stressful events trigger negative emotions and make it more likely that people will express anger and dissatisfaction to one another. Stressed people are preoccupied with their problems and may not be attentive to the needs of their partner. Thus, they may not provide as much warmth to the other as they would under less taxing circumstances. When problems persist over long periods of time, individuals may become demoralized and simply lack the energy to behave affectionately to their partner (Bolger, Foster, Vinokur, and Ng, 1996).

**Economic strain and Marital Adjustment**

Economic circumstances were linked to marital adjustment. UllaKinnunen and TaruFeldt, (2004) conducted a survey study of 608 Finnish couples. The result showed that poor economic circumstances were linked to economic strain, which was related to increased psychological distress, and psychological distress in turn was negatively reflected in marital adjustment. However, psychological distress only partially mediated the link between economic strain and marital adjustment. Economic strain was also directly linked to decreased marital adjustment.
Brown (1996) reported that the researchers have found a strong influence of economic factors on marriage among African Americans. Couples experiencing financial problems evaluate their marriages less positively than those with more secure financial circumstances. There are gender differences observed in the influence on couples. For example, Conger, Elder, Lorenz, Simons, Whitbeck, Huck, and Melby (1990) found that economic strain had a stronger negative influence on men than on women. They found that family economic strain is associated with lower warmth in marital interactions.

Rogers and Amato (1997) investigated the possibility and changes in the economic and social context of marriage have lowered marital quality. They used data from an American national probability sample of two generations representing individuals married between 1969-1980 and between 1981-1992. Compared with the older group, the younger group (both men and women) reported significantly lower levels of marital interaction and significantly higher levels of marital conflict and problems. Increases in age at first marriage and education between generations did not offset these declines. Changes in economic resources, work and family demands, wives’ gender role attitudes, and cohabitation prior to marriage accounted for these changes. Cutrona, Russell, Abraham, Gardner, Melby, Bryant, and Conger (2003) observed in their study that simple correlation between financial strain and observed warmth among wives is significant. The correlation fails to attain significance among men, but is almost identical in magnitude to that for women.

Larson, Wilson and Beley (1994) studied the relationship between perceived stress resulting from job insecurity and marital and family
functioning. 111 married couples in which at least one of the spouses was working in an insecure job environment completed questionnaires. Regression analyses indicated that job insecurity stress was negatively related to both marital and family functioning for both husbands and wives, regardless of employment status. For wives, job insecurity stress was negatively related to their marital adjustment, family communication, family problem solving, clarity of family roles, and affective involvement. For husbands, job insecurity stress negatively affected their marital satisfaction and perceptions of general functioning, family role clarity, and affective responsiveness.

Among couples, the male’s performance in the traditional role of breadwinner is very important, and increasing unemployment among men has been linked to divorce rates (Taylor, Tucker, Chatters, and Jayakody, 1997). Williams, Takeuchi, and Adair (1992) found that when changes in the economy lead to increased levels of unemployment among African American men, marriage rates among African Americans decline.

Myers and Booth (1996) conducted a study to investigate a wide range of contextual factors that may influence the effect of men’s retirement on marital quality. Results revealed that characteristics of the husband’s job, the division of labour, health, social, support and marital quality are pre-retirement factors that affect the influence of retirement on marital quality. Leaving a high-stress job enhances marital quality, whereas factors signifying gender role reversals, bad health, and reduced social support associated with the retirement lower marital quality. In addition, the influence of retirement varies according to the number of changes that accompany retirement.
**Daily hassles and Marital Adjustment**

Daily hassles are micro stressors (MacLean, 1976). It represent day-to-day interpersonal relationships or aspects of routines that have a negative impact on individual or family life (Kanner, Cyne, Schaefer, and Lazarus, 1981).

Harper, Schaalje, and Sandberg (2000) conducted a study on the relationship between daily stress, intimacy, and marital quality in mature marriages in which the ages of husbands and wives ranged from 55 to 75 years. Four hundred and seventy-two individuals married to each other and randomly from all fifty states completed the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale, the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships, and the Hassles and Uplifts Scale. Findings indicated that daily stress was negatively related to marital quality for both wives and husbands, and that intimacy mediated the relationship between stress and marital quality for both husbands and wives.

Both major negative life events and chronic daily hassles are associated with lower quality of spousal interactions (Cohan and Bradbury, 1997; Conger et al., 1990). Repetti (1989) found that high stress during the workday was associated with withdrawal from spousal interaction.

Zolinda and Susana (2006) examined the associations between stressors/hassles, problem-focused coping, and marital adjustment in 67 families of young children with disabilities. The result showed that when daily stressors/hassles were higher, husbands and wives viewed their marriages more negatively. Women reported higher marital adjustment when their husbands employed more problem-focused coping strategies.
Stressful events and physical /psychological disturbances

Gore (1978) found that men who felt unsupported by their wives were more likely to suffer physical and psychological disturbances after an involuntary job loss. Specially, they showed changes in cholesterol, illness symptoms and affectivity or emotional instability.

In analyzing the gendered mental health outcomes of marital transitions, Simon (2002) found that transitions out of marriage are associated with higher rates of alcohol use for men and higher rates of depression for women.

Marital distress and relationship conflict also contribute to depression. In a research aimed at exploring the relationship between marital adjustment, stress and depression, McGrath (1990) collected data on 695 women and 530 men and then re-interviewed them up to 1 year later. During this a number of participants separated from or divorced their spouses though the majority reported stable marriages. Approximately 21% of the women who reported marital split during the study experienced severe depression, a rate three times higher than that from women. Married women had higher rates of depression than unmarried women, but the reverse was true for men. The findings also indicated that graduate non-working married women felt more depression in their daily life and in home task than the women who had education above than graduation.

Leiblum (1993) found infertility to be a serious source of stress and anxiety that decreases psychological and financial resources. In one study, Amir, Horesh and Lin-Stein (1999) examined the effects of duration of infertility. The results showed that duration of infertility had impact on the
psychological measures of distress. In another study concerning infertility and attachment styles Mikulincer, Horesh, Levy-Shiff, Manovich, and Shalev (1998) found that secure infertile individuals revealed lower distress.

**Self-Concept**

Self-concept is a person’s perception of himself or herself. Self-concept and adjustment are inter-dependent. A well adjusted person would have a sound self-concept, and with a sound self-concept one would adjust well. Rogers (1961) views that self-concept plays a vital role in adjustment. It is within marriage and the family that the basic feeling about one’s self are laid down. Self-concept is an acquired or learned process which is influenced by various variables like attitudes, social factors and the community background. It can be developed in a desired direction. Self-concept is an important indicator of personality.

The working woman, being an earner in the family, is easily accepted and respected. Hence, it was thought that working women would have a more positive self-concept as compared to non-working women. To assess this, Kumthekar (2011) used Q-sort technique on a sample of 137 working and 99 non-working, all graduate, middle-class, married women in the age range of 25 to 45 years. No significant difference between working and non-working women was found. All women had a devaluated self-concept. The study was also aimed to note the differences among women working at different occupational levels. There is also no significant difference in their self-concept. However, in item-wise analysis, more confidence, ambition and assertiveness were seen in the case of working women as compared to non-working women.
Using data from a national panel survey, Cohn (1978) analyzed the effect of job loss on satisfaction with self. The results showed that becoming unemployed does lead to greater dissatisfaction with self. This dissatisfaction is accentuated by (1) concomitant change in familial role performance (indicated by level of housework activity and relative contribution to family income), (2) the unavailability of alternative roles and prior achievements, and (3) the lack of an external locus of cause to which to attribute job loss (level of local area unemployment). Furthermore, with reemployment, the decrement in satisfaction with self initially experienced with unemployment is removed, after taking into account residual effects of unemployment on familial role performance.

Kurdek and Schmitt (1986) examined the relationship between sex-role self-concept (masculine, feminine, undifferentiated, and androgynous) and relationship quality and dysfunctional relationship beliefs among 44 married (mean age 29.68 yrs), 35 heterosexual cohabiting (mean age 28.68 yrs), 50 homosexual (mean age 31.28 yrs), and 56 lesbian (mean age 31.18 yrs) couples. Ss completed questionnaires on demographic and background information, the Bem Sex-Role Inventory, a relationship beliefs inventory, and relationship quality assessments. Individual partner analyses revealed that relationship quality and relationship beliefs differed by Ss' sex-role self-concept. Androgynous and feminine Ss reported higher relationship quality than masculine and undifferentiated Ss; androgynous Ss had fewer "disagreement is destructive" beliefs than feminine Ss; and androgynous Ss had fewer "partner cannot change" beliefs than undifferentiated Ss. Couple analyses showed a relation between partners' sex-role self-concept only for the heterosexual cohabiting couples. For these couples, masculine men tended to
pair with feminine or undifferentiated women, and androgynous partners tended to pair together. Relative to other couples, those in which one or both partners were androgynous or feminine reported the highest relationship quality; couples in which one or both partners were undifferentiated or masculine reported the lowest. These effects did not vary by type of couple. It is concluded that sex-role self-concept is a robust factor in appraisals of relationship quality.

Schaffer (1996) studied the role of self-efficacy in the relationship between self-disconfirmation and depression, and the effect of self-concept disconfirmation on marital relationships. Data were analyzed from interviews with 155 couples. For husbands, objective self-concept disconfirmation had an estimated effect on marital happiness mediated through self-efficacy and depression. For wives, subjective self-concept disconfirmation had an estimated effect on marital happiness mediated through depression. Perceived and actual disconfirming appraisals from a spouse may affect the self-concept and the relationship in which disconfirmation occurs.

**Self-Concept and Marital Relationship**

In a study, Schaefer and Keith (1984) re-examined the relationship between the self-concept and marital quality. Through application of the interactionist model of the reflected self and a causal model based on path analysis and multiple regression, the direct and indirect effects of the self-concept, perception of spouse's evaluation, and spouse's actual evaluation on indicators of marital quality is examined. Three measures of marital quality and measures of the reflected self were obtained from interviews with 294 couples. The findings supported the prediction of a relationship between the
three components of the reflected self-concept and marital quality and led to a reassessment of the self-concept-marital-quality relationship.

The research conducted by Sharpley and Khan (1980) investigated the relationships between marital adjustment, values-systems, and self-concept for individuals and couples. Results indicate a high positive relationship between marital adjustment and self-concept and between marital adjustment and people-oriented values-systems for individuals. Marital adjustment was correlated with self-concept, and non-statistical data suggested a relationship between marital adjustment and people-oriented values-systems when shared by spouses.

Luckey (1999) found that satisfaction in marriage was related significantly to the congruence of husband’s self concept and that held of him by his wife, but was found unrelated to the agreement of the concept the wife hold of herself and that which her husband holds of her.

Because self-concepts allow people to predict (and thus control) the responses of others, people want to find support for their self-concepts. They accordingly gravitate toward relationship partners who see them as they see themselves. For people with negative self-views, this means embracing relationship partners who derogate them. The findings of Swann, Hixton, and Ronde (2011) confirmed this reasoning. Just as persons with positive self-concepts were more committed to spouses who thought well of them than to spouses who thought poorly of them, persons with negative self-concepts were more committed to spouses who thought poorly of them than to spouses who thought well of them.
Bell, Daly, and Gonzalez (1987), assessed the relationship of women's perceptions of maintenance activities within their marriages to their marital satisfaction. Each participant completed the Marital Relationship Inventory and then rated how frequently she and her husband used each strategy, how personally important it was that her husband use the strategy, and how important she thought it was to her husband that she regularly use the strategy. There was little relationship between marital satisfaction and strategy valuation. Satisfaction was moderately related to perceived frequency of use for several strategies. In a multiple regression analysis, wives' marital satisfaction was most strongly related to perceptions of the frequency of husbands' use of the strategies Sensitivity, Spirituality, Physical Affection, Self-inclusion, and Honesty.

Skowron (2000) investigated the relationship between differentiation of self and quality of marital relationships. Couples’ levels of differentiation explained substantial variance in marital adjustment: 74% of variance in husband’s marital adjustment scores and 61% of variance in wife marital adjustment scores were accounted for by couple differentiation of self-scores. Greater husband emotional cut off uniquely accounted for husband and wife marital discord. Contrary to family systems theory, actual couples were no more similar on differentiation than were randomly matched couples. Finally, greater complementarily among couples along the specific dimensions of emotional cut off and emotional reactivity predicted greater marital distress.

In a study on a sample of 166 married couples, McGovern and Meyers (2002) found that participants with more pleasant and more dominant temperaments, and those who had mates with more pleasant temperaments, were happier in their marriages. Temperament accounted for substantially
more variance (30%-34% in marital satisfaction. Unpleasant and submissive (i.e., depressed) wives were highly dissatisfied in marriage.

Peterson, Baucom, Elliot and Farr (1989) found that femininity was related to positive marital adjustment; masculinity was related as well, but perhaps to a lesser degree. Androgyny within a relationship was found to be highly desirable, whereas marriages involving undifferentiated individuals were more likely to be distressed.

Voss et al (1999) conducted a study and compared best same-sex friendship and friendship within marriage for men and women and investigated links between relationship quality and self-esteem. Partners in 219 couples completed measures of friendship quality, marital adjustment and self-esteem. Results indicated that men and women see their spousal friendships more similarly than their best friendships. Men make greater distinctions between spouses and friends than do women. These findings suggest that women perceive similar provisions from their spouses and friends, whereas men may not. Marital adjustment and friendship quality are significantly related to self-esteem for both sexes. Although women appear more sensitive to disagreements in their marriages, the detrimental effect of conflict on self-esteem was similar for men and women.

Schafer, Vikrama and Keith (1996) examined the role of self-efficacy in the relationship between self-disconfirmation and depression and to evaluate the effect of self-concept disconfirmation on marital relationships. Results revealed that for husbands, objective self-concept disconfirmation had an estimated effect on marital happiness that was mediated through self-efficacy and depression. For wives, subjective self-concept disconfirmation had an estimated impact on marital happiness that was mediated through
depression. It was concluded that perceived and actual disconfirming appraisals from a spouse may influence the self-concept and the relationship in which disconfirmation takes place.

The researchers have identified esteem support, or those expressions that validate and bolster the other's self-concept, to be an important communication practice in marriage that is tied to marital satisfaction (Acitelli, 1996; Cutrona and Suhr, 1992).

Cooper, Chassin, and Zeiss (1985) conducted a study to investigate the relation of sex-role self-concept and sex-role attitudes to the marital satisfaction and personal adjustment of dual-worker couples with preschool children. One hundred husbands and wives completed an assessment package consisting of the Bem Sex Role Inventory, the Personal Attributes Questionnaire, The Attitudes toward Women Scale, The Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test, and The Profile of Mood States. The results showed that androgynous individuals reported the greatest levels of marital satisfaction and personal adjustment. This was true for both men and women and across occupational levels. In addition, congruence between spouses' sex-role attitudes was associated with greater marital satisfaction.

A study conducted by Schaupp, Diane.S, (1985) to examine key qualities in satisfying, long-term marriages, sex-role self-concepts, marital adjustment, and self-actualization, on 107 couples with long-term marriages. Subjects completed the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI), the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI), and a short marital adjustment scale devised by Locke and Wallace. The results indicated the marital adjustment was positively related to BSRI femininity scores for both males and females. The BSRI femininity score was positively related to aspects of personal development for
both sexes as measured by the POI. Significant correlations between femininity scores and personal development were more numerous for males than for females. These findings suggest that feminine or expressive traits such as concern for the welfare of others are a factor in marital adjustment for both males and females.

**Quality of Life**

Quality of life is a term that is recognized and used today in a variety of ways. When we talk about positive quality of life, we are talking about having a life that is very meaningful to individuals and that provides them with resources. It can mean having an interesting and enjoyable job to go to, feeling safe, confident and happy with oneself, feeling close to those people who share your life, having fun and living life according to the beliefs and values that are important (Renwick, Brown and Nagler, 1996).

Quality of life is subjective in nature; each individual has a slightly different view of what is important to his or her QOL. A good quality of life can be said to exist when the hopes of an individual in the marital relations are matched and fulfilled by experience.

Hunt and Meckenna (1995) has defined QOL as an emotional response to circumstances, the impact of illness in social, emotional, occupational, family domains and personal well-being, to match between expectations and reality, satisfactory functions in physical, social and environmental terms and the ability of a person to meet his/her needs.

Quality of marriage has been and continues to be a widely investigated topic, although varying points of interest have shifted the focus over time. In their review of marital quality, Spanier and Lewis (1980) pointed out that
during the 1960's, the emphasis of the research was placed on the
demographic, personality and social variables related to marital happiness

Much prior research indicates that in many domains of social life, individuals’
well-being improves in the latter half of the life course. The reason for this
pattern is not well understood, however, Orbuch, House, and Mero, (1996)
argued that objective changes in family composition and in social and
economic conditions in middle and later life may explain the later – life
increase in well being. To test this argument they focused on one domain,
marital well-being, and examined the curvilinear relationship between marital
duration and marital quality, with emphasis on the latter half of the marital life
course. The results showed that reduced work and parental responsibilities in
later life explain much of the later life increase satisfaction but do not account
for the decrease in thoughts of divorce.

Glenn (1990) found a curvilinear relationship between family state and
some aspects of marital quality are about as close to being certain as anything
ever is in the social science.

Marital quality tends to peak in the first few years of marriage and then
to decline until mid-life, at that point it rises steadily with increasing age and
duration of marriage.

Well-being and Marriage

A good marriage not only produces a satisfied life but it also generates
a sense of well-being. There is voluminous literature that links marital status
to physical and psychological well-being. The literature finds that married
persons have greater psychological and physical well-being than their single
counterparts (Glenn and Weaver 1981; Stroebe and Stroebe, 1995).
A large literature has emerged on the relationship between marital status and well-being, as measured by a variety of indicators including morale, depression, happiness, life satisfaction, and so forth (Allen, Ciambrone, and Welch 2000). In a study by Chand, Mattoo, and Sharan (2004) suggested a strong positive role of being married as a predictor of overall life satisfaction. Married adults in Norway reported substantially higher levels of happiness and satisfaction with their lives than non-married adults (Mastekaasa, 1994). Overwhelmingly, the literature points to a positive association between having a marriage partner and being satisfied with life (cited in Shapiro, Corey and Keyes, 2008).

Jamile, Emery, Hauck, and MacIntyre (2005) conducted a study to evaluate the relationship among marital adjustment, quality of life, psychological functioning, and functional capacity among married patients with COPD who had participated in a 5-week exercise rehabilitation program and their spouses. Result revealed that marital adjustment scores indicated that patients and partners were, on average, satisfied with their marriages. Patient marital adjustment was associated with patient psychological well-being, whereas partner marital adjustment was associated with patient physical functioning.

Much of the past work has focused exclusively on women (Bennett and Morgan, 1992) in part because they generally outlive men and have a greater likelihood of being widowed. Reinhardt and Fisher (1988), for example, compared reports of life satisfaction among women who were married and those who were widowed and found significantly higher life satisfaction among those who were married.
Nathawat and Mathur (1993) compared marital adjustment and subjective well-being in Indian-educated housewives ($N = 200$) and working women ($N = 200$) who were administered a Marital Adjustment Questionnaire and 10 measures of subjective well-being. Results indicated significantly better marital adjustment and subjective well-being for the working women than for the housewives. Specifically, working women reported higher scores on general health, life satisfaction, and self-esteem measures and lower scores on hopelessness, insecurity, and anxiety, compared with the housewives, although the housewives had lower scores on negative affect than the working women.

Other researchers have directly examined gender differences, comparing married and widowed men and women. Connidis and McMullin (1993), for example, found that divorced men and women were less satisfied than their married counterparts. The result of Lubben’s study (cf. Chipperfield and Havens, 2001) results indicated that married men were more satisfied with life than either married or widowed women, and among men, those who were married had higher life satisfaction than those who were not.

Shek (1995) studied on the issue of gender differences in marital quality and well-being in Chinese married men ($N=738$) and women ($N=761$). The results showed that males had significantly higher scores on the Chinese Dyadic Adjustment Scale and Chinese Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale. While a longer duration of marriage was associated with higher levels of dyadic consensus and affectionate expression in men, the duration of marriage was negatively related to marital adjustment and marital satisfaction in women. The data also showed that women displayed more psychiatric symptoms and midlife crises problems and they had lower levels of positive
mental health and perceived health status than men. While marital quality was positively related to well being in men and women, the impact of marital quality on well being was generally found to be greater in women than in men.

A good deal of attention has also been paid to gender differences in the effect of marital status on health. Stemming from Jessie Bernard’s notion of ‘‘his’’ and ‘‘hers’’ marriages, there has been a sizable literature which demonstrates that the health benefits of marriage, and the burdens of singlehood, may be greater for men than women. However, more recent research suggests that both men and women benefit from marriage, but they differ in the way in which individual symptamatology is manifested.

The experiences in the family of origin, especially the relationship with the parents during childhood may influence relationships to be experienced in adult life. In order to analyze which experiences with the family of origin might be associated with better or worse levels of quality in marital adjustment. Falcke, Wagner and Mosmann (2008) conducted a study on a sample of 542 participants resident in Porto Alegre, State of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. Of the total, 78.5% of the participants were officially married and 21.5% lived in a stable union. Results showed that there is an association between the type of experience that the participants lived in their families of origin and the quality of their marital relationship. However, those childhood and teenage experiences accounted for only 10.8% of the quality of the marital relationship. These findings suggest that there may be a relationship between the legacies that people bring from their families of origin and their later marital adjustment.
Health related Quality of life

Patrick and Erickson (1993) define health-related quality of life as ‘the value assigned to the duration of life as modified by the social opportunities, perceptions, functional states, and impairments that are influenced by disease, injuries, treatments, or policies’.

While there are views suggesting that marital quality has an impact on health (Burman and Margolin, 1992), not much effort has been spent to examine gender differences in the impact of marital quality on health. Based on the responses of 1,744 adults, Williams (1988) concluded that while marital quality is important for the well-being of both women and men, the apparent effects are greater for women.

A substantial body of research from the U.S. and other countries documents the sizeable physical and psychological well-being advantages that married persons have over their non-married counterparts.

Marital Quality and Physical Health

According to van Krippenberg and de Hues (cited in Chaturved, 2003) physical functioning has been one of the key measures of quality of life. The peace of mind or peace with oneself is perhaps the most important issue for quality of life. There exists a relationship between deteriorating health and marital quality, as Booth and Johnson (1994) found out. Their findings indicated that a decline in health has an adverse effect on marital quality. Health seems to influence the marital quality of persons regardless of gender, education, religious background, number of friends, marital duration, or age. Much of the health-marital quality relationship is accounted for by changes in
financial circumstances, shifts in the division of household labour, reduction in marital interaction and behavioural problems of the afflicted individual.

Rauschenbach and Frongillo (1995) studied the effects of body weight on marital unhappiness and marital problems. They suggested that body weight was not related to most aspects of marital quality. Nevertheless, four significant relationships were revealed: Obese women were happier with their marriages; obese men had more marital problems; men who lost more weight had fewer marital problems; and men and women who gained more weight were happier with their marriages.

Trief, Wade, Britton, and Weinstock (2002) conducted a study to prospectively assess the relation between marital relationship domains (i.e., intimacy and adjustment) and health-related quality of life of diabetic patients. The result indicated that both of the marital quality measures were prospective predictors of aspects of health-related quality of life. Less diabetes-related distress was predicted by better marital adjustment. Greater satisfaction with aspects of the diabetes care regimen was predicted by better marital adjustment and greater perceived marital intimacy.

Pieper, Kushion and Gaida (1990) studied twenty married couples with one partner diagnosed as having diabetes at age 40 or older within the past 5 years participated in this study. Participants completed the diabetes or family version of Beliefs About Diabetes (BAD) and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS). Results showed that perceived barriers to diet and to medication by the person with diabetes were associated with higher marital satisfaction and quality of marriage. In contrast, for the non-diabetic spouse, the perceived benefits of diet were negatively associated with the ability to work with the diabetic spouse.
Hagelin, Seiger, and Fürst (2006) conducted a study to explore symptoms, other quality of life (QOL) aspects and impact of age, gender, marital status, cancer diagnosis and time of survival in patients with advanced cancer admitted to palliative care. The results showed that patients reported impaired general quality of life and high occurrence of symptoms. Married/cohabiting patients and younger patients reported lower functional abilities and more symptoms. No impact of diagnoses on quality of life parameters was found. Patients closest to death did not differ significantly from those with longer time to live in social functioning. This study showed that young and married patients may be at higher risk for perceived low quality of life at the end of life.

In one study, Mikulincer, Horesh, Levy-Shiff, Manovich, and Shalev (1998) found that infertile individuals also reported less well-being, and lower dyadic consensus than their counterparts.

**Marital Quality and Mental Health**

Attempts have been carried out to elucidate the assertion that marital qualities affect health outcomes. Radhika and Prakash (1987) in their study found that marital adjustment and marital satisfaction has an influence on the mental health of an individual. Robins and Regier (1991) found that married adults report lower rates of mental illness and higher rates of indicators of mental health than never married and previously married adults. Gove, Hughes and Style (1983) argued that it was the quality of a marriage rather than the marriage per se which determined the positive mental health of an individual.
Shek (1995) reported some pioneering findings on the linkage between marital quality and psychological well-being in the Chinese culture. He assessed the psychological well-being and perceived health status of a total of 1,501 Chinese married adults. The findings indicated that for the association between marital adjustment and well-being, those who displayed more signs of marital maladjustment demonstrated more psychiatric symptoms and midlife crises symptoms, had lower levels of purpose in life and life satisfaction, and perceived their health as relatively poorer in comparison with those who showed less marital maladjustment.

Moreover, in their extensive search of the literature, Stroebe and Stroebe (1983) reported that married females were more depressed than married males and widowed males were more depressed than widowed females. Wickrama, Lorenz, and Conger (1997) also found a linkage between quality of marriage and depression and morbidity symptoms. In one study which examined psychosocial risk factors for depressive symptomatology in a community sample of pregnant immigrant women in Montreal, Canada. Zelkowitz, Schinazi, Katofsky, Saucier, Valenzuela, Westreich, and Joelle (2004) found that forty-two percent of participants scored above the cut-off for depression. Depressive symptoms were associated with poorer functional status and more somatic symptoms. Depressed women reported more stressful life events and poorer marital adjustment.

The study of Kumar, Mori and Patel (1989) revealed that the couples with marital adjustment problems have more mental health problems such as headaches, fatigue indigestion, acidity, restlessness, hopelessness and anger than couples with high marital adjustment.
In a study, Arrindell and Emmelkamp (1986) compared female agoraphobics and their partners with three groups of control couples (non-phobic female psychiatric patients and their husbands, distressed couples, and happily married couples) on measures relating to marital adjustment, intimacy, and needs. Neither agoraphobics nor their partners rated their marriages as more maladjusted or unpleasant than non-phobic psychiatric patients or their partner controls. Instead, agoraphobics and their spouses were found to be more comparable to happily-married couples than to distressed controls. Non-phobic psychiatric patients and their partners were generally found to rate their marriages as being as distressing and unpleasant as those of distressed controls.

**Health problems and Marital Quality**

Like studies on marital quality affecting health, there are also research findings suggesting that health problems may affect the quality of the marital relationship, including marital adjustment and marital satisfaction (Mohamed, Weisz, and Waring, 1978).

Booth and Johnson (1994) examined the relationship between deteriorating health and marital quality. Data from a national sample of 1,298 married persons were used to analyse the effects of changes in health over a three-year period on shifts in marital quality. The findings indicated health to influence the marital quality of persons regardless of gender, education, religious, background, number of friends, marital duration, or age.

Rauschenback and Frongillo (1995) studied the effects of body weight on marital unhappiness and marital problems. Data were drawn from a survey of 1,980 married adults in the U.S. The results suggested that body weight was
not related to most aspects of marital quality. Nevertheless, four significant relationships were revealed: Obese women were happier with their marriages; obese men had more marital problems; men who lost more weight had fewer marital problems; and men and women who gained more weight were happier with their marriages. These population based results differ from popular beliefs.

Concerning the possible mechanisms which mediate the impact of health problems on marital relationships, Schulz and Tompkins (1990) showed that health problems might affect the family's finances, division of labor, mutual activities, and perception, which would eventually influence the quality of the marital relation.

Regarding the degree of support for these two views marital quality affect health problems and health problems affect the quality of the marital relationship, Campbell (1986) remarked in his study that the notion that health problems affect marriage was more popularly accepted than the assertion that marital qualities affect health outcomes.

In a review of research findings on the linkage between marital relationships and health, Burman and Margolin (1992) concluded that (a) there is some evidence suggesting that marital variables affect health problems, although such an impact may be indirect and nonspecific in nature, and (b) evidence on the impact of health problems on marital relationship is inconclusive and the patterns involved are inconsistent. They also hypothesized that the relationship between these two domains is a bi-directional one.
Social interaction pattern

Aries (cf. Ybarra, 2008) noted that people’s lives have been dominated by being socially connected and having relationships with others. Social interaction is a central feature of people’s life. Behavioural interaction during social situations is a continuum of actions, responses, and reactions. Multiple contexts influence the course of relationships over time (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Sinha and Verma (cf. Ybarra, 2008) found that preference for being with others is strongly correlated with well-being.

The research of McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Brashears (2006) indicates that people have fewer close others they can talk to about their innermost thoughts and feelings. Few social connections have shown to have important implications for people’s health (cf. Ybarra, 2008). In addition, Baumeister, DeWall, Ciarocco, and Twenge (2005) found that socially rejected individuals have been shown to suffer from self-regulation deficits. Studies of House, Landis, and Umberson (1988) have also shown that fewer social connections are related to the risk of death even after controlling for level of health.

Social Interaction and Marital Quality

Systematic observational research on marital interaction began in the 1970s (Weiss, Hops, and Patterson, 1973). But less work has been conducted to differentiate basic features of social interaction that enable marital relationships to function effectively (Terman, et al, 1938).

Couples function within a social context, vulnerable to the influences and pressures of member of their social networks. The findings of Milardo and Lewis (1985) reveal that because of their importance for each spouse, these
social influences can affect the quality and course of marital relationship. The network members also help couples to build feelings of satisfaction with their partners by validating their relationships, nurturing a sense of coupleness (Lewis, 1973). Surra and Milardo (1991) reported that partners acquire knowledge about one another and their relationship not only from interactions with one another, but also from members of their social networks.

Stafford, Canary and their colleagues (cf. Kline and Stafford, 2004) have identified a number of specific relational maintenance behaviors that predict various relationship qualities. Shared tasks and openness, for instance, are identified as specific maintenance behaviors that predict levels of trust, commitment, love, and satisfaction in marriage.

**Casual Interaction and Marital Satisfaction**

Argyle and Henderson (1985) identified the frequency of casual interaction between marital partners as important to the quality of marital relationships. Sheer frequency of interaction has had a long history as an important aspect of intimate relationships, Duck and his colleagues (cf. Kline and Stafford, 2004) for instance, have argued that everyday casual interaction plays a powerful and significant, and yet largely ignored, role in the development of relationships. Berger and Kellner (1964) have argued that marital reality is constructed through everyday conversation. In addition, Barnes and Duck (1994) have found that routine casual interaction provides an opportunity to vent grumbles, escape everyday stresses and be comforted.

Everyday casual interactions can provide a safe context within which more specific discussions can occur and partners can learn about one another (Duck, 1990). Canary and Stafford (1991) found that couples reported using
casual interaction to maintain their relationships. Similarly Kirchler (1988) found marital happiness to be positively associated with frequency of interaction, except when the interaction was conflict ridden.

Reissman, Aron, and Bergen (1993) concluded in their study that the time couples spent engaging in leisure activities, such as talking or sharing tasks, was related to their relational satisfaction. Similarly, Vangelisti and Banski (1993) found that couples who talked at the end of the workday had higher levels of satisfaction than those who did not spend nightly time interacting with one another. Richmond (cf. Kline and Stafford, 2004) found that satisfied couples engaged in more conversation across a variety of topics overall than did dissatisfied couples.

Jacobson, Waldron and Moore (1980) found that wives' daily marital satisfaction was correlated with the number of positive interactive events they had with their husbands, such as showing interest in the conversation and talking about personal feelings; husbands' satisfaction was more highly correlated with social activities and pleasing affectionate behaviours. Rusbult, Olsen, Davis, and Hannon (2004) have shown that perceived partner affirmation of the individual's ideals is strongly associated with ongoing relationship stability.

Complementary findings have been presented by Gottman (1994) who finds that contempt and criticizing promote marital dissatisfaction and instability; these behaviours specifically reflect the rules of not embarrassing and not making the other feel small.

Gottman and Krokot (1989) conducted two longitudinal studies of marital interaction using observational coding of couples attempting to
resolve a high-conflict issue. They found that a different pattern of results predicts concurrent marital satisfaction than predicts change in marital satisfaction over 3 years. Results suggest that some marital interaction patterns, such as disagreement and anger exchanges, which have usually been considered harmful to a marriage, may not be harmful in the long run. These patterns were found to relate to unhappiness and negative interaction at home concurrently, but they were predictive of improvement in marital satisfaction longitudinally. However three interaction patterns were identified as dysfunctional in terms of longitudinal deterioration: defensiveness (which includes whining), stubbornness and withdrawal from interaction.

**Interaction Processes and Marital Stability**

Gottman, Coan and Carrere (1998) conducted a study to examine marital interaction processes that are predictive of marital stability and divorce, which further discriminate between happily and unhappily married stable couples. Data were drawn from 130 newlywed couples that were assessed according to seven process models. Results revealed that models of anger as a dangerous emotion, active listening and negative affect reciprocity were not predictive of marital stability. However, models of the husband rejecting the wife’s influence, negative start up by the wife, a lack of de-escalation of low intensity negative wife affect by the husband or a lack of de-escalation of high intensity husband negative affect by the wife, and a lack of physiological soothing of the male all predicted divorce. In addition, a contingent positive affect model and balance models of positive-to-negative affect predicted satisfaction among stable couples.

Revenstorf and Schindler (1985) reported that the most consistent finding in the literature on marital interaction and marital satisfaction is the
finding that negative interaction is much more common in the interaction of unhappily married couples than happily married couples.

Gottman (cf. Gottman and Krokot, 1989) found that couples' interaction at home without an observer present was characterized by much more negative affect and by more negative affect reciprocity than their interaction in the laboratory. Gottman et al (1988) in their study found that couples who did not have a companionate set of expectations about marriage, characteristically avoided conflict in daily life.

Several studies have suggested that wives were more likely than husbands to confront disagreements in their marriage (Huston and Ashmore, 1986). Interview and questionnaire-based research has revealed that, in unhappy marriages, wives were described as conflict-engaging, whereas husbands were described as withdrawn. For example, there was a consistent spouse difference in marital complaints. Unhappily married women complain about their husbands being too withdrawn, whereas unhappily married men complain about their wives being too conflict engaging (Terman et al., 1938).

Nezlek, Richardson, Green and Schatten-Jones (2002) studied a sample of 113 healthy older adults used a variant of the Rochester Interaction Record to describe the social interactions they had each day for two weeks. They also completed various measures of psychological well-being including life satisfaction and loneliness. A series of multilevel random coefficient analyses found that life satisfaction scores were positively related to how enjoyable interactions were, how self-assured people felt when interacting, how much control they felt they had over interactions, how responsive others were to their needs, and how socially active they were. Analyses that took participants’ marital status into account suggested, however, that interaction
outcomes and life satisfaction were related only for married participants, and that these relationships were primarily due to interaction outcomes with spouses.

Social network analysis demonstrated the relative social isolation of respondents living alone compared with matched fellows living with others.

**Social Support**

The term social support means the resources people derive from their social relationships, membership in groups, and formation of networks (Blonna, 2005). According to Larson (cf. Shapiro, Corey and Keyes, 2008) social support refers to the quality and number of persons whom an individual trusts and can rely on, as well as the degree to which one is needed and matters to others and society. Jones and Bright (2001) identified four categories of social support: (a) social integration, or embeddedness, (b) relationship quality, (c) perceived social support and (d) enacted social support.

Marriage represents a social contract and offers its members a sense of permanence, belonging and purpose. Waite and Gallagher (cf. Shapiro, Corey and Keyes, 2008) found that married persons are purportedly more socially enmeshed in supportive networks than non-married persons. The studies by Hurlbert and Acock (1990) have found that married persons have larger social networks and greater social support than unmarried persons. Social support makes a sense of belongingness. Willits and Crider (1986) found that this can contribute to the development of a personal well being and marital satisfaction.
Social Support and Marital Relationship

House et al. (1988) explained marital status itself as a structural form of social support. Acitelli (1996) observed that support plays a critical role in marriages. Couples function within a social context, vulnerable to the influences and pressures of members of their social networks. The findings of Milardo and Lewis (1985) revealed that because of their importance for each spouse, these social influences can affect the quality and course of marital relationship. The network members also help couples to build feelings of satisfaction with their partners by validating their relationships, nurturing a sense of coupleness (cited in Bryant and Rand, 1999).

In one study, Bryant and Rand (1999) examined the relationship between various social network support and marital success of husbands and wives who had been married for an average of 20 years. The findings suggested that social support positively influence the long term marital relationship.

Sharlin (1998) investigated the relationship between background characteristics of married adolescents and the quality of their marriages. The sample consisted of 179 adolescent girls who married between the ages of 14 and 17. Findings suggested background characteristics and social support variables to be related to their marital quality.

Xu and Burleson (2001) found that recently married women desire significantly greater support from their spouses compared to their male counterparts, even though women do not appear to differ in the reported levels of support they experience from their spouses.
Surra and Milardo (1991) reported that partners acquire knowledge about one another and their relationship not only from interactions with one another, but also from members of their social networks.

Barret (1999) examined the role of social support (measured as presence of a confidant, perceived social support, and frequency of informal interaction) in determining life satisfaction among the never married. Results indicated that age moderates the effect of marital status on social support such that the negative effects of being never married are greatest among the elderly. In the analyses of life satisfaction, marital status and social support are significant predictors.

In one study, Julien and Markman (1991) found that social support within marriage is more strongly associated with marital satisfaction and general well-being for younger and middle-aged wives than husbands.

Regarding the relationship between social support and attachment styles, Mikulincer, Florian, and Bucholtz (1995) found that individuals with the secure style view social support as more available to them and seek more of it than do those with the two other attachment styles.

**Spousal Support**

Social support or husbands and wives friendships have theoretical and empirical support, showing benefit on marital satisfaction. Acitelli and Antonucci (1994) reported that spouses who report higher level of support from the partner are more materially satisfied than those reporting lower level of support. In this study they also observed the gender difference. The result showed that this relationship is stronger for older married women than men.
In another study of older women with osteoarthritis, Martire, Stephens, Druley, and Wojno (2002) found that negative reactions to spousal support were associated with decreased life satisfaction and fewer self-care behaviours. However, older husbands relied more on their wives for support than the reverse (Antonucci and Akiyama, 1987).

Julien et al. (1994) showed that the couple can work through their problems by offering the pair aid when problems arise. Burley (1995) studied dual–career men and women. Results of the study revealed that the subjects who believed that their partners provided career social support experienced higher marital adjustment than those who felt little support.

Pina and Bengtson (1993) examined the relationship between the division of household labour and wives’ happiness. The study sample consisted of 287 primarily white, middle-class married women who participated in the third wave of the University of Southern California Longitudinal Study of Generations. The two principal aspects of the research were the affects of the division of household labour on the wife’s feelings of support from her husband and the effects of these feelings of support on the wife’s evaluation of marital quality and psychological well being. The results indicated that for wives with more egalitarian beliefs about marital roles and for those in full-time employment, more equal division of labour was associated with increased feelings of support, which in turn were positively linked to greater levels of marital satisfaction and well – being.

In studying the potential moderating effects of social support on the relation between parental status and marital adjustment, Graham et al (2000) found that women with children who reported lower social support were more vulnerable to lower marital adjustment than other groups of women. Level of
social support was not a moderator for men. It was also found that affective support had moderating effects, but no such effects were evident for instrumental support.

Baxter (1986) found lack of spousal support as a major reason for relationship dissatisfaction and dissolution. Pasch and Bradbury (1998), in a study showed that how spouses who help each other contend with overcoming personal difficulties. They conducted a study among the newly married couples. The subjects participated in 2 interaction tasks; a problem-solving task in which spouses discussed a marital conflict and a social support task in which spouses discussed personal, non-marital difficulties. Observational coding of these interactions showed the wives’ support solicitation and provision behaviours predicted marital outcomes 2 years later, independent of negative behaviours during marital problem-solving discussion. In addition, couples who exhibited relatively poor skills in both behavioural domains were at particular risk for later marital dysfunction.

Umberson (1995) conducted a study to examine how the recent death of a parent affects adults’ marital relations. The quantitative findings indicated that, compared with the relationships of individuals who have not recently lost a parent, the relationships of individuals who recently experienced a mother’s death were characterised by a decrease in social support from their partner and by an increase in the partner’s negative behaviours. The relationships of those who recently experienced a father’s death were characterised by a decrease in relationship harmony and an increase in relationship strain and occurrence of conflict. Qualitative findings indicate a number of possible reasons for the decrease in marital quality after the death of a parent.
Friendship and Family Support

The research of Zimmerman (1983) among 60,000 ‘successful American families’ found out that the major key to their success lay in the fact that each family surrounded itself with friendship ties to four or five other families. They believe that this network of family friendship provided a nested environment supplying emotional support.

Proulx, Helms, Milardo and Payne, (2009) conducted a study to examine the link between relational support from close friends and wives' marital family relationship quality using data from 52. The results from a hierarchical regression analysis suggested that husbands' interference moderates the association between supports from close friends’ wives’ marital satisfaction.

In examining the role of gender, Harriman (1986) found that female clients received more social support from their families.

Studies of romantic relationships shows that individuals who perceive greater support from friends and family for their relationship at one time not only report higher commitment at a later time, but also score higher on other measure of dyadic formation (Sprecher and Felmlee, 1992). However, the findings suggested that the perception of social support from family and friends is somewhat more influential for women than for men in predicting the marital relationship. Furthermore, women disclose more information to friends about their personal lives and relationships than do men. Women also value the opinion of friends more than men.

In one study, Unger, Kipke, Simon, Montgomery and Johnson (1997) explored two sources of social support - family support and friend support as
resources for coping with illness. The relation of family and friends received and provided support with marital satisfaction and the effects of sex and length of marriage were studied. Results indicated that the association between support and marital satisfaction was moderated by the couple's length of marriage, the sex of patients and spouses, and the degree of congruency between husbands' and wives' evaluations of their marital satisfaction.

Allgood, Crane, and Agee (1997) assessed the association between friendships and couples in therapy as compared with a sample of volunteer couples. Discussions with friends about family problems were positively associated with both marital satisfaction and stability. Logistic regression revealed that clinical husbands are less likely to talk about marital problems with their friends than clinical wives who are likely to talk about marital problems with their friends. The wives’ marital stability was also a significant predictor for the clinical couples.

**Social support and health**

Amir *et al.* (1999) studied the moderating effects of two psychological resources attachment style and perceived social support on adjustment in 109 infertile women, examining the effects of duration of infertility and of primary (the woman had no child of her own) versus secondary (the woman already had a child of her own) infertility. A hierarchical regression analysis showed that attachment style and social support both were related to marital quality and to psychological well-being and that these two resources function as stress moderators. It was concluded that attachment style and social support were important resources for individuals in times of stress, as exemplified in the infertility situation.
However the literature on the effects of social support on physical and mental health yields some insights.

Social support in medical settings has received much attention; numerous empirical studies in a variety of situations such as chronic and acute disease, bereavement, old age, pregnancy, and negative life events in general affirm the positive effects of social support in such situations (Sarason, Sarason, and Pierce, 1990).

Studies have been found reported to show that people with low social support are more prone to mental illness (McGuire and Raleigh, 1986), depression (cited in Ybarra, Matthew, Manis, Rodriguez, and Emily (2008), and lower immune competence (Kielcolt-Galser, Garner, Speicher, Penn and Glaser (1984).

Several studies have findings to show that married adults were at reduced risk for premature mortality and physical morbidity like cardiovascular disease (Stroebe and Stroebe, 1995). Studies have also suggested that social support serve as a moderating influence in the stress-illness relationship.

Heffner, Kiecolt-Glaser, Loving, Glaser, and Malarkey, (2004) investigated linkages between spousal support satisfaction and affective, cortisol, and blood pressure responses to conflict in two samples, 85 newlyweds and 31 older couples, married an average of 42 years. The result showed that that among newlywed wives, greater spousal support satisfaction was associated with smaller changes in negative affect and cortisol responses to conflict. Notably, newlywed wives and husbands demonstrated lower blood pressure after conflict when spousal support satisfaction was higher. In
contrast, older husbands (but not wives) exhibited greater cortisol responses when spousal support satisfaction was lower. These relationships provide a window on mechanisms linking marriage and health for men and women across the life span.

Kaila (1996) in her study of the relationship between the perceived social support and psychosomatic problems of the women whose husbands working outside the country revealed that there was a close relationship between social support and well-being of the women. The study also indicated that these women were experiencing a supportive and helping attitudes and behaviour from the society.

A longitudinal study by Abbey, Andrews and Halman (1995) examined perceptions of received and provided social support and disregard among members of 248 infertile and fertile married couples. Women’s and men’s perceptions of the amount of social support they gave to and received from their partner were highly relations with physicians, and communication between spouses. It is concluded that spouse health is more important than sex of caretaker in determining reaction to illness.

In studies conducted on kidney transplant patients and their significant others, Frazier, Tix and Barnett (2003) examined whether the relations between enacted social support and patient distress were moderated by patients' satisfaction with their relationship with the support provider (i.e., their significant other). In Study 1 using 121 couples, found that unsupportive spousal behaviours were associated with more distress only among patients who were less satisfied with their marital relationship. In Study 2 the investigators also observed that the relations between unsupportive behaviours and distress again varied as a function of the patient's relationship satisfaction,
although the particular pattern of the interaction depended on the specific unsupportive behaviours offered to the patient. In both studies, relationship dissatisfaction was associated with higher levels of patient distress. Supportive behaviours were not related to distress and did not interact with relationship satisfaction.

**Social support and Quality of life**

Missouri, (2000) suggested that social support can promote health by providing persons with positive experiences, socially rewarding roles, or improved ability to cope with stressful events.

Regarding the relationship between social support and attachment styles, Mikulincer, Florian, and Bucholtz (1995) found that individuals with the secure style view social support as more available to them and seek more of it than do those with the two other attachment styles.

Tanasescu, Turbow and Maman (2007) found that on overall social support in their sample of residential home clients social support from friends exerted the strongest influence and it was significantly and positively related to Quality of life. The study also found that social support from family only tended towards a positive relationship with self. Lam and Rosenheck (2000) found that the lower level of reported quality of life in patients who lacked social support.

In examining the role of gender, they found that female clients received more social support from their families as well as higher Quality of life than male clients.

The research by Busschbach and Wiersma (2002) suggested that affective bias, poor insight, lack of adaptive processes and persistently
unfavourable life circumstances may all influence subjective measurements of subjective quality of life.

The review of literature has provided in detail an insight into marital quality and satisfaction and its correlates which, among others, include age at the time of marriage, education and income of the couple, spiritual quality of life, personality characteristics, sexual adjustment, marital interaction, communication after marriage, role sharing, quality of time spent together, social networks, wives and husbands employment status, children, economic pressures, stress of daily life, effects of having a job, the negative results on marital quality followed by the physical and psychological illness and other sociological factors.

While studies regarding marital satisfaction have a long and well-documented history, a growing number of studies still debate the dimensions of ‘marital adjustment’ and most of them agree that marital adjustment is a multidimensional phenomenon. Historically, much of the research on marital satisfaction has examined simple linear relationships between variables. Till recently, studies focused on the relationship between marital characteristics and marital satisfaction. But with regard to the increasing number of marital divorce rate and other marital problems, it is clear that too little is still known on ways to achieve and maintain a sufficient level of marital satisfaction to assure marital success. So there is a need for studies of more complex models to explain how multiple factors such as migration influences marital adjustment and other variables such as stress, self-concept, quality of life, social interaction and social support.
Studies on Migration

Migration has both direct and indirect impact on the people. The direct effects become visible immediately and are mostly structural in nature. Although migration results in improved quality of life, there are some negative impacts of migration on the family and society. The prevalence of very small families in the state is partly a consequence of migration. Single member households increased by 33 percent and two member households by 42 percent as a result of migration. The migrated workers going outside the country are mainly men and they were usually quite young in age.

The research studies in these areas are very scanty. An attempt was made to review some important studies with respect to the variables under study. Some sociological studies are available as on how the migration affects the family relations and interpersonal adjustment.

The impact of migration on marital relations

Having one spouse working in foreign country does not mean contented life. Suppressed sobs and plaintive murmurs linger behind the façade of the jumbo stereo sets, luxurious togs and exotic perfumes that make up world of these women. According to the Kerala Migration Study Zachariah, Mathew and Rayan, (2000) these women were hardly equipped to cope with the situation.

A Migration Survey conducted in Kerala by the Centre for Development Studies (Zachariah and Rajan, 2007) concluded that there are 1.06 million of them in the state, living a separate life from their husbands.

Young migrants often marry women from their own communities and leave them behind, so that they can simultaneously start a family, ensure that
somebody cares for their aging parents and provide better living conditions for everyone.

A prolonged separation in the early period of marriage does seriously curtail the marital life of young couple. The report of Renshaw (1976) showed that these extensive absences of partners negatively contribute to the fulfilling of some aspects of family roles such as companionship with spouse and children and participating in household responsibilities. The study conducted by Quddus (1992) on the adjustment of couples who were staying separately for occupational reasons of Bangladesh, reported that there was a close relation between marital adjustment, number of years of schooling, frequently of home visits, monthly income and number of years lived without family.

Tolnay (1998) analysed the relationship between migration experience and family patterns among residents of the North and West is examined for three time periods 1940, 1970 and 1990. In general, an inverse association was observed between duration of residence in the North or West and family stability among African Americans. Although selective return migration to the South contributes to this association, it can account for only a minor part of the variation in family patterns by migration history. It is concluded that there is no evidence to support previous assumptions that southern migrants carried a dysfunctional family culture with them to the North and West, and thereby destabilized the non-southern African American family.

The effect of separation on women

One aspect of migration research which has received increasing attention is the impact of occupational separation on women and families left behind. Gulati (1987) in her 36 case studies of migrant households from
Trivandrum district reported that wives below 20 years and having no children generally stay with their parents or in-laws. Most of the wives stayed with their in-laws because it is the custom of the society to be within the husband’s house.

In another such study, Gulati (1983) found that in Kerala, migration of the male family head to the gulf countries generally results in an increase in the interdependency among family members, and that in the absence of the husband, the parents and siblings or other relatives often take care of the migrant’s wife and children. The study also found that the prolonged absence of men in the family induced those women to take a more active role in the management of family affairs and become less dependent on male relatives. Similar finding had been reported from Sri Lanka also. (Korale, 1983).

The case studies by Mathew and Nair (1978), Gulati and Modi (1983) done in the state of Kerala demonstrated the similar findings that not only does male immigration strengthen informal family and kin networks, but it also leads to a more active role for women in the management of family and household affairs.

Gulati (1987) also pointed out that with the passage of time, as wives learn to manage things on their own, they take independent decision on many matters, and in the process, tend to less and less dependent on relatives. They gain confidence in the course of time and start leading their life independently.

The above findings were supported in parts of the country. Rawat and Rawat (1986) found increased participation of the women of migrant households in the village level economy and politics. This made them self-dependent to some extent. However, the women experienced a greater
workload also. The study of Kray and Kudat suggested that migration bring about positive changes in women’s status within the family. (cf. Rawat and Rawat, 1986).

Jetley (1987) found that male migration resulted in increased households and child care responsibilities for the women, prolonged hard work, loneliness and frequent economic crises. The women were not involved in decision making at the family level and yet were heading the family as single parents. The findings also indicate that migration effects on women are determined by the amount of remittances the migrants are able to send home. When the remittances are large as in the case of migrants to the Middle –East, the women enjoy certain privileges and freedom, even though they experience problems of an emotional nature. But when the economic benefits are marginal as in the case of rural migrants to urban centres, the effects on the women are more negative than positive.

Murray (1981) noted that women’s experiences, in the context of the migration of the household, ranges from security to bitter frustration, acute personal stress and emotional dissolution.

Lyketsos (1977) studied the psychological reactions of the family members left behind by the male head of the family who migrated to Germany and Northern European countries from Greece. They found that there were positive correlations between the male absence and neurotic and situational reactions among the family members. The study comprised of two groups namely the family of migrants and of the non-migrants. It was noted that the situational reaction were present in 21% of members in group A while it was only 4% in group B. Neurosis was evident in 12.7% of cases in Group A and
10.2% of cases in Group B. It was also found that in the same household of the emigrants, the wives were the most affected.

The Migration and Psychological Problems

Several studies conducted on the impact of family separation on the individual have pointed out the dangers of intro-familial estrangement. The social and psychological problems induced by separation were the focus of a study by Kin (1983) based on interviews, personal letters, diaries and company records of 540 South Korean overseas construction workers they found that over 60% of those applying for repatriation from the Middle East gave family matters as the reason for their intention to leave the job.

There is growing evidence to suggest that women in the migrant households face many tensions, pressure, conflicts and anxieties. These pressure are of different kinds and intensities, some of them depending on the age and relationship of the women to the migrant worker. Zachariah et al. (2000) found that among the respondents of 891 women 43% reported loneliness. The other problems reported were added responsibilities (23.3%), debt (10.6%) and low financial gains (12.9%). For women below 30 years loneliness topped the list. Other adverse consequences arising from the husband’s migration are anxiety, problems with in-laws and misunderstanding with the husbands abroad.

A few other studies showed that the couples who were experiencing the prolonged absence of their spouses, especially in the early years of marriage had many emotional and adjustment problems (Pearlman, 1970 and Macintosh, 1968).
Kalia (1996) conducted a study to explore the relationship between psychosomatic problems and social support perceived by the women whose husbands are abroad for employment. The results have shown that psychosomatic problems do exist among these women. A good percentage of these women who had to manage families on their own due to employment of their husband outside the country suffered from deterioration of health as they became tired in a short period of time and had trouble with aches in their lower back. Some of them also felt fidgety or tensed, had trouble getting to sleep; and felt a constriction in the chest.

There were also problems of sexual adjustments and extra marital relationships among such wives (Zachariah et.al. 2000). ‘The Hindu’ reported that at the family court in Trivandrum, adultery related cases filed by Gulf-based Malayalis were on the rise (The Hindu, 2000).

Gulati (1983) found that the incidence of mental illness was particularly acute in the so called “Gulf pockets” in Kerala. A report in a popular monthly had focused on the prevalence of psychiatric cases in the Gulf Pocket of Kerala. It was noted that the incidence of mental illness among young women has reached alarming proportion in these areas.

Some information is also available from Pakistan regarding the psychological problems experienced by the wives of the immigrants. Abbassi and Irfan (1983) reported that the head of the psychological department in a hospital near Islamabad dealt everyday an average of 10 to 15 patients afflicted with what has been termed as the “Dubai Syndrome”. Over a six months period, about 1,450 such cases were treated in one hospital alone.
Infidelity and extra–marital sexual relationships were among the complaints and source of conflicts in martial life when the partners happen to remain physically separated. In a study conducted among Koreans, Kim (Arnold, and Shah 1984) found that about 7% of workers in a large company, who terminated their contract in order to return home, reported their wives’ infidelity as the reason for the same. Kin reported that counseling centres of Korean companies which had contract in middle eastern countries often dealt with family affairs including unfaithful or run away wives.

**The Effect of Separation on Children**

There are a number of studies relating to the role of the father in the upbringing of children and the effect of separation of father in their adjustment. Some studies are related to the socialization process. Most of the early works on the socialization process have focused on the mother- infant relationships. However, recent researches have recognized the importance of both the parents in the socialization of children. It has been reported that the influence of the same sex parent continues well into adolescents. Leupton (1998) analysed data collected a decade apart from two large samples of high school students in Wisconsin. He was interested primarily to study how much influence the parents had on the growth of the children. It was found that the youth were influenced most often by both parents, but when they perceived influence by only one parent, it was most likely to be the same sex parent.

Rollings and Thomas (1979) in a review concluded that for both boys and girls it is the same sex parents who predominantly influenced the development of the children’s sex role. High masculine boys tend to have father who are decisive and dominant. Parental punishment was found to
facilitate sex role typing in boys, only if the father was decisive and dominant and nurturing.

However, Look (1982) in her review concluded that for girls it is the father who plays the critical role in the development of femininity. It was also concluded from the review that separation of the father from the home, either temporarily or permanently, may result in negative effects on male children. The effects are most apparent in pre-adolescent boys, and most severe if the separation occurred before the age of five. The effects most commonly noted are high verbal aggression but low physical aggression, more dependent behaviour, and more feminine concept. This pattern is not found with older male children, probably because other males may serve as appropriate models, for them in the place of the absent father. According to the same author the effects included in the possibility that in later years there may be some anxiety in dealing with males.

Masur and Gleason (1980) examined the play of parents with their pre-school aged boys and girls and found that fathers provided and elicited significantly more information than mothers on such occasions. In turn, the children produced more total vocabulary from their fathers than they did from their mothers.

Lyketsos (1977) found that in Greece the separated children were more prone to manifest behaviour problems. For the majority of affected children, the father’s continuing absence from home was associated with a process of disturbed social and family relationship. This may, in turn, have affected the children’s emotional growth, which account for behavioural problems, disturbed adjustments reactions, and pathological defense mechanisms during
childhood and adolescents. Personality problems have also found to be more in such children.

A study from Bangladesh by Siddique (1983) found that alcoholism, drug addiction and other kinds of misbehaviours were found more in the children of the migrants. This has been attributed to the fact that they were relatively free from controls and that they had a lot of money to spend according to their will.

**The migration and other correlates**

Several studies are found to be reported which focuses on the effects of migration on community and large society. For example, Abbassi and Irfan (1983) using PIDE dates, found that households receiving remittances from abroad had a lower female labour force participation and a higher school attendance rate for children, particularly for girls.

Smart and Theodosio (1983) studied the expenditure and investment patterns of a sample of 495 Philippino households with the head of the family employed in the Middle East. The author concluded that there was a dramatic rise in the living standards and savings among these families.

Hettige (1989) in his study found that many of the Sri Lankan males were unemployed before they migrated. Citing the example of Bogallamma, a village in Sri Lankan, Hettige found that the migration had already enhanced the economic position of a considerable number of families. New houses have been built and the existing houses have been either renovated or extended. Many have adopted new life styles and a few have started new business. However it was notable that the changes brought about by migration had not
resulted in the formation of an altogether negative attitude toward gulf migration among villagers.

Hoodfar (1997) studied the influence of large-scale male migration from Egypt to the Arab oil-producing countries on domestic budgeting and the position of wives within low-income Cairence household. The data, drawn from a sample of 42 households which included income – earning women and non-wage earning women, indicated that less educated women and those who were primarily homemakers frequently managed to renegotiate a more favourable financial arrangement with their husbands during and after migration, and raised their status and decision- making power within the household. On the other hand, contrary to common-sense assumptions, educated and income-earning women were more likely to lose access to their husband’s income and to major decision-making opportunities, resulting in lowered status within the household. To protect their interests, many women in these groups appealed to the traditional and Islamic division of domestic responsibilities, which hold men financially responsible for the family’s upkeep.

THE 'GULF wives syndrome' is a term that is much bandied about in sociological discussions on Kerala's migration population. The large labour emigration from Kerala has made the state prosperous; it has also spawned a piquant problem of the “Gulf wives” women who have been left behind to often single-handedly shoulder the family responsibilities as their husbands earn the bread abroad.

Studies on the impact of Gulf migration bring out the psychological trauma faced by the “Gulf wives”. The common complaints observed are mild depression and psycho-somatic disorders." More than 50 per cent of the
younger women left behind complain of loneliness and sexual moroseness as their biggest problem. "The younger women are more affected by the separation problems than the older ones.

In the case of 2.4 per cent of the “Gulf wives”, the husbands left for the Gulf within a few days of marriage, in one-third of the cases within three months and in 45 per cent in the first year of marriage. The problem of loneliness and separation is partly ameliorated by frequent communication between husband and wife over the phone or through letters.

The review of literature of migration problems reveals that the effects of migration on family and society are many. The effects are both positive and negative in nature. Some of the major effects are the conjugal separation, female centered families, inter-dependence among relatives and more dependence on friends, increased work load and emotional problems for women and also comparatively greater freedom for women. The major impact of migration is felt by the wives of the male migrant by the way of disturbed emotional health, economic burden, and dual role responsibilities.

The available studies are mostly sociological or economic analysis of the migrant’s problems. There is a need to study in depth, the psychological implications of migration for the wives and in terms of their marital quality, adjustment, stress, social support, and social interaction.

**Studies of Expatriates**

The study conducted by Ali, Van der Zee and Sanders (2003) focused on personality, family characteristics and characteristics of expatriates’ work life as determinants of the intercultural adjustment of expatriate spouses. Among a sample of 247 expatriate spouses it was first shown that in particular
the traits of open-mindedness and emotional stability were associated with expatriate spouses’ adjustment. In addition, family cohesion and family adaptability were found to have an impact on the spouses’ adjustment. Of the work related variables, both support from the company and work satisfaction were related to indicators of adjustment. These effects sustained after controlling for the influence of demographic variables such as duration of expatriation, command of the local language, having visited the country prior to relocation and economic situation that were also found to contribute to spouses’ adjustment.

The "Happiness Index" survey carried out by Dixon (2011), suggested that 70 per cent of expats regard themselves as very happy with their new life, although almost two thirds admit to feeling pressure on their personal finances. 60 per cent of those who responded said they feel a greater sense of community in their new country. Using Survey Monkey, the Post Office questioned 710 Post Office International Payments customers with properties abroad, of whom 233 were expats living permanently abroad. Reasons given for leaving the home-land included searching for a better quality of life, finding a place to retire or gaining new "life experiences".

Havey’ (19997) study revealed that Dual-career expatriate couples present a challenging set of problems for international human resource managers. The results of a survey of husbands and wives in expatriate dual-career couples are analyzed relative to: 1) differences between the expatriates and their trailing spouses; 2) differences between male- and female-led dual-career couples; 3) differences between dual-career couples' opinions prior to expatriation and upon repatriation. The results of the study indicate dual-career couples have relatively consistent concerns and expectations prior to
expatriation and upon repatriation to their home country. The significant differences observed were between male-led dual-career couples prior to expatriation when compared to male-led dual-career couples upon repatriation. In addition, the dual-career expatriate respondents did not feel the overseas provided adequate training or social support during the international assignment.

Oudenhoven, Mol and Zee (2003) studied the three levels of adjustment of expatriates during their assignment in Taiwan. The Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ) was used to assess the expatriates’ personal, professional and social adjustment. In all three domains, emotional stability appeared most consistently as a predictor of adjustment. Social initiative was an additional strong predictor of psychological well-being, as was cultural empathy of satisfaction with life and of the amount of social support in the host country. Flexibility was a predictor of job satisfaction and social support. The study also examined the effects of marital status on adjustment. Married expatriates showed higher levels of adjustment than expatriates who were single or separated.

Copeland and Norell (1985) studied the role of social support on international relocations. The relocations are important because an overseas assignment presents both the disruption of established social support networks and the challenge to develop new ones. Such changes can be especially stressful for relocated accompanying spouses, due to competing family responsibilities, social isolation, socio-political constraints, and changes in their social and/or work status. Participants in this study were 194 women who had moved temporarily to a new country primarily because of their husband/partners’ jobs; they were living in one of 17 countries in Europe, Asia, the Middle East,
or Latin America. Women with higher adjustment (a) were in more cohesive families, (b) had had more involvement in the decision to move, (c) felt they had fewer losses in friendship networks, (d) had more functions of social support adequately met, and (e) received more of their support from local rather than long-distance providers, compared with those with lower adjustment.

As the study includes Arab wives, few studies related to Arab wives are also included in the literature.

**Studies on Arabs**

As seen in the literature a large number of studies have been done in the state of Kerala but very few studies have been done among Arab wives in relation to the variables selected for the study. One of the studies conducted recently reported that young Arab wives are relatively satisfied with the quality of their lives and exhibit high levels of emotional wellbeing. Most of them are also satisfied with efforts to increase the number of quality jobs in the country.

The Qatari economy saw average growth of more than 17% between 2004 and 2008, and it continued to grow at more than 8% in 2009 despite the global economic crisis. This strong economic performance is reflected in young Qataris’ perceptions of their quality of life. Currently, more than 9 in 10 (92%) say they are satisfied with their standard of living, and 75% say it is improving.

Young Qataris are also relatively optimistic about their overall quality of lives. The variables most highly related to Mindset Index scores are young Qataris’ ratings of current economic conditions in the country and their
satisfaction with their standard of living. These findings imply that economic optimism supports the perception among young people that their contributions to society are valued. This relationship likely runs both ways, with optimism about the country’s Mindset also helping to holster young people’s assessment of economic conditions.

The strongest predictor of higher Access Index scores among young Qataris is the belief that there is someone outside their family that they could trust as a business partner. This relationship points to the importance of community organizations and social networks that allow young Qataris to interact with a broader range of people and identify those with common interests and goals. Efforts by the government to minimize the administrative barriers facing new business owners are a strong sign of commitment to policies that support entrepreneurship. Young Qataris generally view the country’s employment situation positively. Majority of young Qataris (58%) is of the opinion that says it is a good time to find a job in their communities. Two-thirds (65%) are satisfied with efforts to improve the number and quality of jobs in the country. And the vast majority (96%) believe people in Qatar can get ahead by working hard.

The Qatari government has invested considerable resources in the country’s schools, with education free for all country nationals up through the tertiary level. The majority of young Qataris (86%) are satisfied with the schools in their area. Moreover, almost all (96%) agree that Qatari children have the opportunity to learn and grow every day.

Young Qataris, for the most part, express widespread satisfaction with their communities. Ninety-five percent say they are satisfied with the city or area in which they live, and 88% say they would recommend it to a friend or
colleague as a place to live. Thus, it is no surprise that just 13% of young Qataris overall say they are likely to move away from their city. Satisfaction with public transportation, roads and highways, and the availability of good affordable housing is somewhat less prevalent, though a majority of young Qataris are satisfied with each.

Majorities of young Qataris also indicate they are satisfied with environmental conditions in their city or area, including the quality of air (82%) and the quality of water (74%).

Reflecting Qatar’s status as a receiving country for migrants rather than a sending country, 71% of young Qataris view their communities as good places for immigrants. However, a lower proportion (52%) report that their communities are good places for racial and ethnic minorities.

Finally, relatively high percentages of young Qataris indicate involvement with civic organizations, another factor to explain their positive views of their cities and local areas.

Qatari leadership has, in recent years, supported an expanded role for women in the country’s public and private life. Moreover, the Qatari constitution grants equal rights to education and employment for all citizens. Growing contributions made by Qatari women in the public and private sectors may be reflected in the finding that the vast majority of young women (96%) and young men (99%) say women in Qatar are treated with respect and dignity.

The vast majority of young Qatari’s (96%) believe people can get ahead by working hard in their country.
Gulf cultures are patrilocal, with the newly married wife moving into her husband’s home. When the husband lives with his extended family, domestic space becomes the site where female hierarchies are enacted and contested, between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law, between co-wives, or between sisters. In households with no domestic servants, female relatives share domestic responsibilities under the supervision of the senior (in age and/or status) woman of the household. The division of labour within the household reflects status differentiation amongst the women that is marked by spatial practices, including sleeping arrangements and who controls the kitchen and pantry resources.

Increasingly the trend amongst the upper and middle classes in the Gulf is for married couples to live in nuclear families in order to avoid the potential conflicts that result from living as extended families. Such a trend may reflect urban cultural ideals as regards polygamy. In Islam, the religious ideal for polygamy is that each wife of a man must be treated equally, and in the Gulf this is often interpreted to mean that each wife must have either her own house or her own wing of a house – in short, her own domestic space to rule over. Increasingly Gulf wives are seeking the same autonomy over their own domestic realm vis-à-vis not only co-wives but also female relatives of their husbands.

Yet despite the trend towards living in nuclear families, living in an extended family remains a cultural ideal. One way that many families achieve both the tradition of living as extended family with young wives’ desire for autonomy within their own domestic realm is by occupying several separate apartments in a single building. Some wealthy families live in residential compounds behind high walls which house an entire extended family in which
each nuclear family has its own house and thus own domestic space. Other extended families live within a single residential structure but designate certain areas to be under the control of each married woman—one wing of the house for each family.

Based on the extensive literature reviewed the investigator has received a clear direction as to take up a study in the field of gulf migration. The studies related to the variables selected could develop an insight regarding the research already conducted in this area. The review also helped to plan the study more effectively. Moreover the findings of the present study could be explored and discussed in the light of earlier studies reviewed.