

METHODIST UNIVERSITY COLLEGE GHANA

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

**PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS OF MARITAL SATISFACTION: A STUDY IN
SELECTED CONGREGATIONS OF THE HO EAST PRESBYTERY OF E.P**

CHURCH, GHANA

BY

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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY,
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(MPHIL) DEGREE IN GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING**

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DECLARATION

I declare that except for references to other people's work, which have been acknowledged, this work was conducted by me and further declare that this research has not been presented in part or whole to any other institution. In the department of Psychology, Methodist university college Ghana

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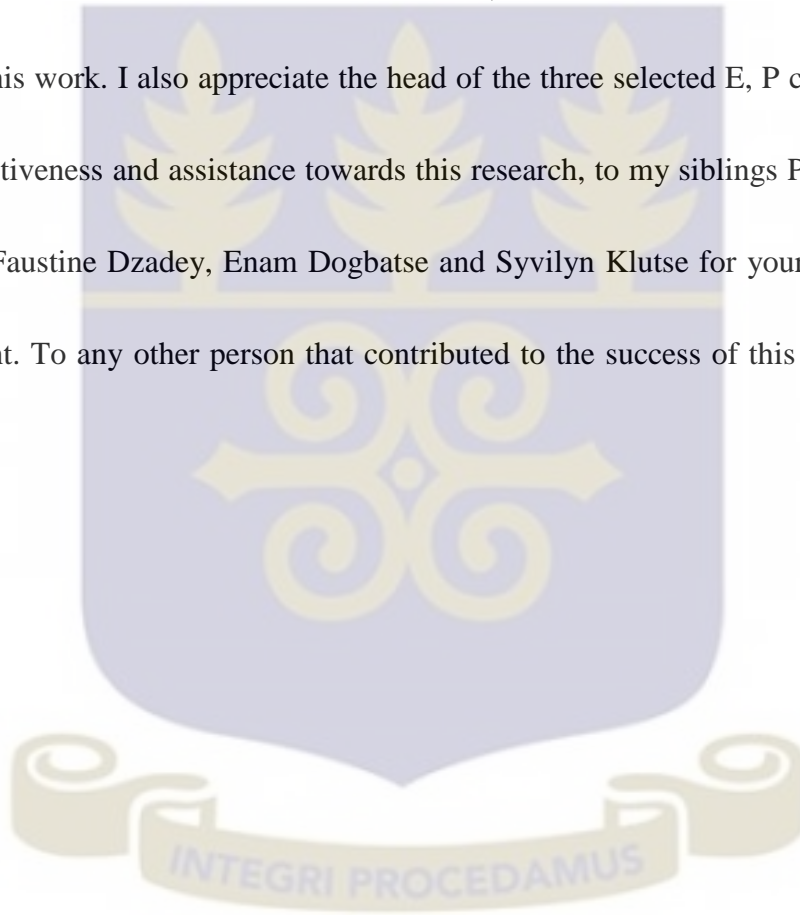
DEDICATION

To Frank Agbo my husband, thanks for being a friend and for showing me the Lord in your undying insistence that I can do all things, for believing in me, supporting and encouraging me. May you always remember I will imbibe here in my heart whatever you have thought me, God bless you.



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My thanks go to the Almighty God for my life and the strength, Elohim, I am most grateful. I also acknowledge my parents, Mr. Theophilus Dzadey and Mrs. Margaret Dzadey for their relentless effort to see me succeed, my sincere thanks to my supervisor Rev Dr. Daniel Bruce and Dr. Samuel Atindanbilla, for their tremendous assistance and patience for this work. I also appreciate the head of the three selected E, P congregations for their receptiveness and assistance towards this research, to my siblings Peace, Prince, Michael and Faustine Dzadey, Enam Dogbatse and Syvilyn Klutse for your support and encouragement. To any other person that contributed to the success of this project, God richly bless u.



ABSTRACT

The aim of this study basically is to find out some psychosocial factors affecting marital satisfaction among married individuals: a descriptive survey design was used. 200 married individuals were sampled from three selected congregations from the east presbytery of the E.P Church Ho; using a purposive sampling method. 98 respondents had premarital counseling and 108 people did not. 114 were males and 86 were female respondents who are married individuals and have been married for at least 1 year with at least a child. The research result tested for five hypotheses the first hypothesis was supported using an independent t-test indicating that those who did not have premarital counseling have higher marital satisfaction than those who had premarital counseling. The second hypothesis was tested using the Pearson (r) correlation and result indicated that there is no positive correlation between parental stress and marital. Testing for the third hypothesis using the independent t- test indicated that there is no significant gender difference in marital satisfaction of respondents. The fourth hypothesis was also not supported indicating a no correlation between self-esteem and marital satisfaction. The final hypothesis was also rejected indicating a no correlation between age at marriage and marital satisfaction. Research was concluded indicating that, premarital counseling, self-esteem, parental stress, gender and marital satisfaction has little or no impact on marital satisfaction.

TABLE OF CONTENT

Declaration and Approval.....	i
Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgement.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Table of Content.....	v
List of Tables.....	vii
 1. Chapter One (Introduction).....	 1
1.1. Background Information.....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem.....	5
1.3. Aims and Objective of the Study.....	6
1.4. Significance of the Study.....	7
 2. Chapter Two (Literature Review).....	 8
2.1. Theoretical Framework.....	8
2.2. Review of the Related Studies.....	18
2.3. Statement of Hypotheses.....	34
2.4. Operational Definitions of Terms.....	35
 3. Chapter Three (Methodology).....	 37
3.1. Research Design.....	37
3.2. Target population	37

3.3.Sample size and sampling technique.....	37
3.4.Instrument/materials.....	37
3.5.Research procedure.....	40
3.6.Scoring of Data	43
4. Chapter Four (Results).....	48
4.1.Demographic Variables.....	48
4.2.Hypothesis Testing.....	49
5. Chapter Five (Discussion).....	53
5.1.Discussion.....	53
5.2 Limitation	67
5.3 Summary, recommendations	68
5.4 Summary and conclusions.....	71
Reference.....	73



LISTS OF TABLES

TABLE 1- Summary of Independent T Test of Differences in Pre-Marital Counselling and Marital Satisfaction

TABLE 2- Summary of the Pearson r Correlation between Parental Stress and Marital Satisfaction

TABLE 3- Summary of Independent t test of gender differences in marital satisfaction

TABLE 4- Summary of the Pearson r Correlation between Self-Esteem and Marital Satisfaction

TABLE 5- Summary of the Pearson r Correlation between Age at the Time of Marriage and Marital Satisfaction

APPENDIX

1. A – Index marital satisfaction.....	82
2. B- Parental stress scale.....	84
3. C- Rosenberg self-esteem scale.....	85

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

Marriage can be described as a union between two biologically unrelated female and male who live together and seek to derive benefits from such union such as sexual gratification, love, companionship etc. and also use such a union as a legitimate means to procreate (Abra, 2001). Acknowledging that marriage is a basic institution in every society, Nukunya (1992) on his part disclosed that despite the universality of marriage, there is no accepted definition for it. He however, quoted one of the often quoted definitions as contained in the official handbook of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain, as “ a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are recognized as a legitimate offspring of both parents.” (p. 23), marriage is not just a social union or legal contract between man and woman or an institution in which interpersonal relationships, usually intimate and sexual are acknowledged. Marriage, a close meaningful relationship is one of the most essential needs of human beings. Research shows that married people are happier with their life and they are physiologically healthier (Rosen-Grandon, Myers & Hattie, 2004), also, it was established that people who engage in

meaningful relationships demonstrate lower level of neuroticism and shyness and higher level of self-esteem (Lehnart & Neyer, 2006).

Successful marriage is associated with both physiological and psychological health. Human beings go on their lives as a member of small or large groups. The most important one of these groups is family which is called a special small group and provides a continuation of human species. Compliance with certain conditions, you can create families with at least two individuals of the opposite sex to choose each other as partners. Choosing their partners, deciding with whom they will share their lives, family building, family responsibility, and living with their partners are some of the duties of young adulthood period (Yeşilyaprak, 2003).

Notions like life satisfaction, life quality, marital satisfaction, family satisfaction to mention a few have been extensively studied over the course of time both by social and psychological sciences. From a psychological point of view, these notions involve a subjective element. Although both longitudinal and transversal studies have been performed, Diener and Lucas, (2000) said they are still unable to decode the complexity of the human relationships and what exactly causes the failure or the success of a relationship especially in the marital sphere because marital satisfaction is an important aspect of family life that shapes people's health and wellbeing.

Greater marital satisfaction is associated with less depression (Williams, 2003), better self-rated health, positive outcome (Umberson, Williams, Powers, Liu, & Needham, 2006). The scientific literature suggests that a successful marriage could be defined on the basis of several factors: marriage stability, joy and marital satisfaction. It is stated that marital satisfaction is one of the main significant factors that influence the quality and stability of marriage (T.Li, 2011). Although, it is thought that marital satisfaction is important not only for the quality and stability of the marriage, but also for the spouse's interpersonal interactions with each other, a further research is needed in this field. However, within a few decades, studies have shown that marital satisfaction is not so easily achieved because a wide range of both psychological and socio demographic factors that could affect husband's and wife's behaviour, thinking, feelings, communication and other interpersonal interactions in marriage needed to be taken into account when assessing satisfaction in marriage. (Rosen-Grandon, 2004), Family life and marital satisfaction are very important and are known as main predictors of overall quality of life (Shek, 1995; Stutzer & Frey, 2006). However, marital satisfaction can affect not only the physical and mental health of both spouses (Holt-Lunstad, Birmingham, & Jones, 2008), but also children's development, wellbeing, academic performance, social skills, and relationships (Cummings & Davies, 2010)

Marital satisfaction is also a mental state that reflects the perceived benefits and costs of marriage to a particular person such that the more costs a marriage partner inflicts on a person, the less satisfied one generally is with the marriage and with the marriage partner. Similarly, the greater the perceived benefits are, the more satisfied one is with the marriage and with the marriage partner (Cummings & Davies, 2010). The categories of how people express love to each other are potentially helpful. These expressions of affection suggest a framework for understanding how different people view positive moments. Although marital satisfaction and its relationship to different aspects of human life have been well researched, it still continues to be an important topic of research among marriage, family, and couple therapists (Bradbury, Fincham, and Beach, 2000) and have further observed that although they reviewed a decade of “research on nature and determinants of marital satisfaction, more than one hundred studies related to marital satisfaction and representing diverse orientations and goals. The sheer magnitude of this work attests to the continued relevance of this topic.

Successful marriage is associated with both physiological and psychological health. The scientific literature suggests that a successful marriage could be defined on the basis of several factors: marriage stability, joy and marital satisfaction and further stated that marital satisfaction is one of the main significant factors that influence the quality and

stability of marriage (Li & Fung, 2001). The concept of marital satisfaction is used to describe the extent to which a person enjoys his or her marriage. A higher level of satisfaction is seen as a measure of marital success. It is therefore, important to study correlates of marital satisfaction in order to determine what variables could potentially predict the outcome of marital success because people get married in hopes of having a happy marriage, which is conceptualized as a successful marriage. Spanier (1976) argued that, although this concept may seem ambiguous, the growing field of research in this area demands attention. There is however a strong urge in the continued study of how couples form successful marriages, to which the profusion of existing research can attest.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Data available at the Accra Metropolitan Assembly, Ghana - Accra on customary marriage in 2008 indicates that a total of 618 marriages were dissolved out of 1,511 marriages registered. In January 2007, 46 out of the 136 registered marriages were dissolved.

There has been some research in the Ghanaian (and African) setting on marriage. Most (if not all) of such research has been done by non-psychologists, usually sociologists and anthropologists (Assimeng, 1989; Gyekye, 1996; Klomegah, 1997; Miller & Kanae,

1999 ;) However, there is not enough empirical research from a social psychological point of view that has explored the concept of marriage and marital satisfaction in Ghana; these works show that although these are good anthropological (ethnographic) and philosophical accounts, they have described marital life in one way or the other, without actual in-depth study from a psychological perspective to give an empirical social psychological account of the construction and experience of marital life. Invariably, many of these ethnographies are couched in the traditional individualism-collectivism frame (Hofstede, 2001). It is based on this fact that the researcher intends to explore some psychosocial factors namely self-esteem, parental stress, premarital counselling (psychological factors), age at marriage, and gender (social factors) to see the role they play in an individual's marital satisfaction.

1.3 Aims and objectives of the Study

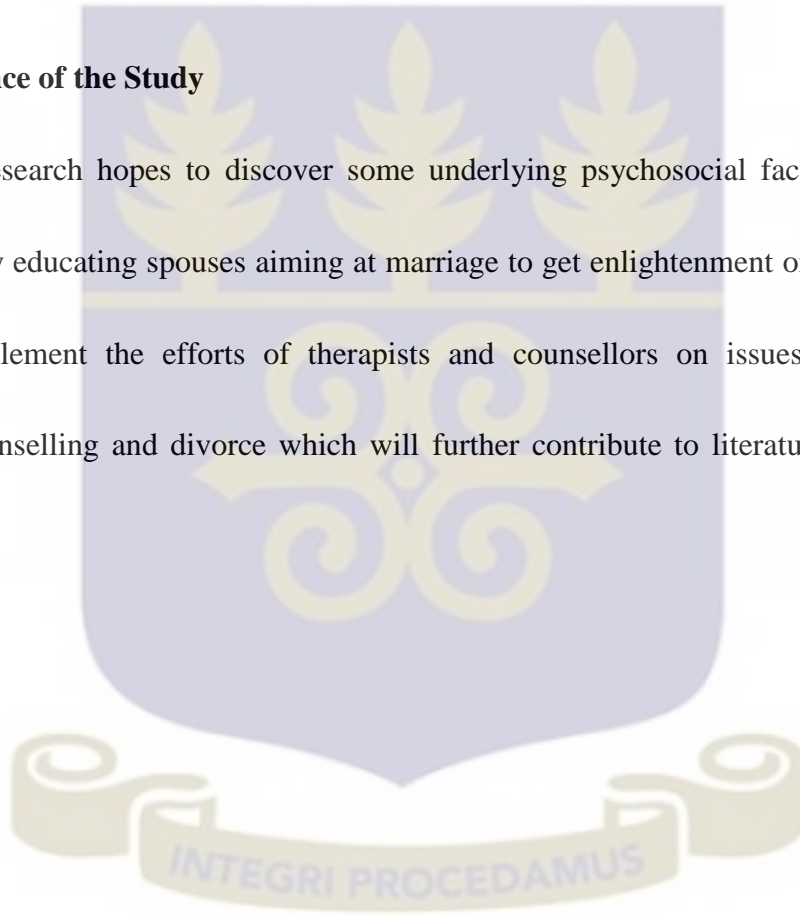
The specific objectives of this study are the following;

1. To find if a difference exist in scores of marital satisfaction between respondents who had premarital counselling and those who do not.
2. To find out the relationship between parental stress and marital satisfaction of respondents
3. To find out the gender difference that exists in marital satisfaction.

4. To find out the relationship between self-esteem scores of respondents and marital satisfaction
5. To find out the relationship that exists between age at marriage and marital satisfaction.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The research hopes to discover some underlying psychosocial factors of marital satisfaction by educating spouses aiming at marriage to get enlightenment on marriage and also to complement the efforts of therapists and counsellors on issues pertaining to marriage, counselling and divorce which will further contribute to literature available in Ghana.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION: This section covers some theories and related studies in the area of marital satisfaction. These theories are

1. The dynamic goal theory of marital satisfaction
2. Behavioural theory
3. Self-efficacy theory
4. Vulnerability- stress –adaption model
5. Cognitive relational model of stress

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1.1 **The dynamic goal theory of marital satisfaction. – (Li and Fung 2011)**

Li and Fung (2011) asserted that marital goals, the goals that spouses hope and strive to reach for in their marriage, significantly contributed to marital satisfaction.

Marital goals are considered one of the key elements in the dynamic goal theory of marital satisfaction. When prioritised marital goals are achieved, the married couple is more likely to feel satisfied within their marriage. Married couples typically have three goals: companionship goals, personal growth goals, and instrumental goals. Companionship goals

are focused on people's needs for belongingness and relatedness in the marriage. Personal growth goals emphasis a spouse's desire to develop, grow or actualise oneself within the marriage. Instrumental goals centre on the practical nature of the marriage including sharing household labour and responsibilities with each other, such as housework, managing family finances, and raising children. In general, new married couples focus on personal growth goals, middle-aged couple's emphasis instrumental goals, and older couples strive to reach companionship goals.

This theory is chosen because it views marital satisfaction from a life span or developmental point of view. The theory argues that people have multiple goals to achieve in their marriage. These marital goals can be classified into three categories: personal goals, companion goals and instrumental goals. The priority of the three goals is under dynamic changes across adulthood. However, whether the prioritised goals are achieved in marriage determines marital satisfaction. However not denying the fact that some other factors can determine marital satisfaction such as life transitions and cultural values can affect the priority of different marital goals. While other factors such as communication patterns, problem solving, attribution and gender can facilitate the achievement of prioritised marital goals.

2.1.2 Behavioural Exchange Theory (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990)

Behavioural exchange theory adopts an interpersonal stance which asserts that marital satisfaction is related to the exchange of overt behaviours between partners. The underlying premise is that the exchange of positive, rewarding behaviours enhances marital satisfaction whereas negative, punishing behavioural exchanges decrease marital satisfaction (Wills, Weiss & Patterson, 1974). This perspective has focused on behaviours occurring in the context of problem solving, in which distressed couples appear more likely to engage in negative behaviours than non-distressed partners.

Although the link between behaviour and satisfaction has received considerable support, there is recognition that variables other than behaviour are likely to be associated with marital satisfaction. Bradbury and Fincham (1990) have elaborated on the link between behaviours and satisfaction by considering the attributions partners make regarding overt behaviours. Although these cognitive processes are not thought of as directly associated with marital satisfaction, they are believed to influence interaction behaviours that in turn impact marital quality (Bradbury & Fincham, 1991). In the theoretical framework proposed by Bradbury and Fincham (1990), if the behaviour of one's spouse appears to be low in negativity, unexpectedness, and self-relevance, the individual will produce subsequent behaviour in the absence of additional processing. However,

perceptions of high negativity, unexpectedness and self-relevance will lead to attributions regarding the specific behaviour, examples of which include the intentionality of the behaviour and the positive versus negative intent of the individual. These attributions in turn influence subsequent behaviour. Both situations are believed to influence and be influenced by short and long-term satisfaction of partners.

This theory was also chosen because it will help in using reinforcement principles and how it affects behaviour in addressing the concept of marital satisfaction which is unique.

2.1.2 Self Efficacy Theory on Family Relations (Bandura, 1994)

“Perceived self-efficacy is defined as people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave. Such beliefs produce these diverse effects through four major processes. They include cognitive, motivational, affective and selection processes. Successful experiences in the exercise of personal control are central to the early development of social and cognitive competence” (Bandura, 1994). This theory to a large extent will help in discussing how married individual's beliefs about their capabilities in marriage to produce designated levels of performances that exercises influence over events could possibly affect

their lives and self-esteem. It will further help in understanding and appreciating the concept of self-esteem as one psychological factor with regards to marital satisfaction.

2.1.3 Vulnerability-Stress-Adaptation Model (Karney & Bradbury, 1995)

Karney and Bradbury (1995) have answered the call for an integrated framework with presentation of the vulnerability-stress-adaptation model. In this model marital quality is posited to be a function of three variables: enduring vulnerabilities, stressful events, and adaptive processes. Enduring vulnerabilities include the stable characteristics that each spouse brings to the union (e.g., personality characteristics and level of education). Stressful events, on the other hand, encompass all the events or circumstances that are experienced by the couple (e.g., death of a family member, loss of job). Adaptive processes refer to the experiences encountered in the marriage such as the behaviours engaged in during conflict or the appraisals surrounding these interactions. Karney and Bradbury (1995) posited that enduring vulnerabilities and stressful events influence marital quality indirectly through the adaptive processes with the relationship between stressful events and adaptive processes presented as reciprocal. The adaptive processes, in turn, are expected to influence (or be Predictors of Divorce and Relationship Dissolution).

This model therefore attempts to incorporate variables which have previously been recognised such as stressful events (crisis theory) and overt behaviours (behavioural

theory) with additional factors such as stable characteristics and importantly, it presents an integrated framework for their influence on marital quality and stability. A number of the pathways in the model have already received considerable support (e.g. stressful events to adaptive processes), allowing the vulnerability-stress-adaptation model to act as a comprehensive integration of previously cited research findings. In addition, empirical investigation of the complex relationship between the variables is well under way. Cohan and Bradbury (1997) examined the way in which stressful events contribute to marital quality and stability through adaptive processes. Their results suggest that the link between stressful life events and relationship quality and stability may be moderated, not mediated, by adaptive processes. Therefore, it appears that the vulnerability-stress-adaptation model has received considerable empirical support as a useful organisational framework. This theory is also chosen because, it will help in explaining the concept of stress and how enduring vulnerabilities and stressful events influence marital satisfaction indirectly through the adaptive processes with the relationship between stressful events and adaptive processes presented as reciprocal.

2.1.4 Cognitive-Relational Model of Stress (Lazarus, 1991)

This is a common model of stress that is based around a cycle of appraisal of environmental stress and consequent coping. Appraisal and coping are mediating processes that seek to reduce stress. This is also known as the Transactional model Lazarus Theory. Antecedents provide input into the central appraisal activity.

Stressors: There are direct causes of the stress, such as a broken computer, being shouted at, or losing something.

General causes of stress include: *Deprivation*: Not having what you want. Uncertainty, do not know what things mean or what to do about them. *Difficulty*: Unable to take effective action. *Threat*: Perceived probability of harm. *Harm*: Physical or psychological damage. They typically come from the external environment, although we can also create stress internally by imagining bad things happening. Stress is an accumulative thing and many small stresses can be as bad as one large one. The particular combination of factors can also be significant. As well as direct stressors, there are other contextual factors that may be significant for appraisal, for example whether other people are present. Context is important for the production of meaning in any appraisal, whether stress-driven or not. In stress situations it can take on particular importance when environmental factors may exacerbate the stress or constrain coping, as well as external environmental factors, the

internal human aspects of the person being stressed have a significant effect on the appraisal process. Some people have a greater tendency towards anxiety than others (as in neuroticism in the big five personality model). This will make them more susceptible to stress. At the other extreme, those whose stress threshold is high actively take risks. Another important factor is the ability of the person to cope with stressful situations once they occur. Again, some people are better at this than others. A wide range of additional personal factors can be significant in how people perceive stress, such as how extraverted or introverted they are.

Primary appraisal: Appraisal is the thinking stage that takes aspects from antecedents and identifies coping actions. It happens after stress is experienced, even though the person may not think of it as 'stress' it is more likely seen as an 'issue', which may be defined as 'a risk that has happened'. Appraisal is often considered as a single activity, but is really made up of two distinct components: assessment of the situation (primary appraisal) and identifying what to do about it (secondary appraisal). In primary appraisal, people usually first appraise for short-term threat to needs and then for longer-term impact on personal and organisational goals. They may also look on the positive side, seeking opportunities and looking forward to challenges.

Secondary appraisal

In secondary appraisal, the person decides what can be done to reduce the feelings of stress. Things they choose to do may depend on how familiar they are with the situation and the resources which they can use. These choices can be intelligent and effective, though they are often automatic and dysfunctional. There is a kind of fight or flight option in choosing what to do. The person may seek to address the stressful situation, seeking to gain from it or actively reduce the stress. They may also feel helpless and just wallow in the stress, doing little to really cope.

This theory is also chosen because; it addresses the concept of stress on the cognitive- relational principles which emphasize that one's interpretation of stress is based on a cycle of appraisal of environmental stress and its subsequent coping which the researcher believes will help in discussing the findings on stress and marital satisfaction.



2.1.5 Interdependence Theory (Kelley & Thibaut, 1959)

Interdependence theory focuses on the interaction between the two marital partners in providing outcomes in the form of rewards and costs in the relationship. Examples of

rewards are pleasure and gratification, while examples of costs are embarrassment, and distress (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). In common with other social exchange theories, the basic premise they share is that people initiate and maintain relationships partially because of the anticipated benefits that will accrue from the interactions in the relationship (Blau, 1967). Interdependence theory explores the structure of interdependence between two partners in a relationship: the degree of dependence of each partner, the mutuality of dependence of both partners, the correspondence of outcomes (whether the outcomes for each individual correspond and whether the outcomes will cause conflict) and the basis of dependence (Rusbult & Buunk, 1993). The theory also explains how more global considerations such as long-term goals and concern for each other's interests guide the interaction between the two partners (Rusbult & Van- Lange, 2002).

This theory is chosen because, it explains how an individual evaluates the outcomes of the interactions that occur in a relationship, and decides whether or not he or she is satisfied. This implies that the individual has set standards based on which he or she defines the level of satisfaction within the relationship.

2.2 Review of Related Studies

Studies and findings on some psychosocial factors and its relation to marital satisfaction; these proposed factors which are premarital counselling, parental stress, self-esteem, gender and age at marriage are presented as follows.

2.2.1 Premarital counselling

In a research to find out the effect of Pre-Marriage Counselling on Marital Satisfaction of Iranian Newlywed Couples indicates that premarital education had a positive significant effect on sexual, nonsexual and marital satisfaction of couples. Premarital relationship period is a period for two different people who do not know each other, to know and understand each other and create bonds of love which are necessary to live together before they take the decision to marry. Personal, social, and legal facilities such as friendship before marriage and engagement are for the purpose of fulfilling this fact (Özgüven, 2000).

Another research by Tuğba and Melek (2010) indicates that premarital relationship enrichment program enhances relationship satisfaction level of couples significantly. In their study they found that because early on in the engagement process couples are not experiencing initial distress often times they see no reason to change (Sullivan, 2004).

One particular study was a meta-analysis conducted by Carroll and Doherty (2003). The meta-analysis evaluated the results of research about the effectiveness of premarital prevention programs. The study revealed that the average couples that participated in a premarital counselling program were better off than 79% of those who did not (Carroll, 2003). In other words the couples who participated in premarital counselling had higher rates of satisfaction and stability within their marriage and lower rates of divorce than couples who did not participate in a premarital prevention program.

Another study after analysing the information they gathered from the survey they found that participation in premarital education was associated with higher levels of satisfaction and commitment in marriage and with lower levels of conflict and divorce (Stanley, 2006).

One other contradictory meta-analysis of evaluation research on premarital education, Fawcett, Hawkins, Blanchard, and Carroll (2010) concluded that “we do not see good evidence yet for a positive effect of premarital education on relationship quality/satisfaction, at least over the short time frame of the typical study” (p. 225).

Adding to this assertion is Sullivan and Bradbury’s (1997) findings that, after assessing marital outcomes in 60 couples after 18 months, there were no differences in marital satisfaction and stability between couples who participated in premarital

preparation and those who did not. In another study by Cunderlach (1985) to find out the correlation that exists between current marital satisfaction and premarital counselling indicates that, virtually no correlation exists between premarital counselling and current marital satisfaction.

2.2.2 Parental stress

A study suggests a long-term association between stress and relationship outcomes and illustrate that everyday stress is often also associated with relationship deterioration (Bodenmann & Cina, 2006).

Another study by Ashley Randall and Guy, Bodenmann (2009), also confirmed that stress can promote or hinder well-being in close relationships this is so because, relationship quality is the primary predictor of life satisfaction.

In another study by Anthony (2008) found that dyadic relationships including marital satisfaction exerted a strong influence on family cohesion and adaptability among married parents in South California. A recent meta-analysis study revealed that although childless couple's experience a decline in marital satisfaction over time, parents are significantly less satisfied than non-parents are, and number of children is reliably related to marital dissatisfaction (Twenge et al., 2003).

Being the parent of a younger child also correlates in some studies with lower marital satisfaction (Crnic & Booth, 1991), as well as parenting more than two children (Twenge et al., 2003). Crnic and Booth (1991) reported that developmental changes in the child, especially when the child is young, may exacerbate the minor stressors that parents face.

Some studies confirm that spouses, after the birth of their first child perceived that quality of their relationship and their satisfaction with family life is impaired compared to the prenatal period, partly as a strenuous response to the needs of the infant's care, partly due to an emotional increase of attention and attachment to the new-born which can put the relationship with the partner in the background (Bradbury, 2008)

Jill Hess (2008) indicated in his study that marital satisfaction and parental stress correlate in many ways, most significantly in the areas of parental distress and parent child interactions. However, a contradictory research finding by Merrifield (2010) revealed that, mothers' marital satisfaction was negatively related to their parenting stress. Some studies also demonstrated a negative relationship between parenting stress and marital satisfaction (Gerstein et al. 2009).

Another research by Lavee, Sharlin and Katz (1996) examined the hypothesis that the effect children have on their parents' marriages is due to stress in the parental role

where a multivariate model was specified to assess the relationship between fathers' and mothers' parenting stress and their psychological well-being and perception of marital quality. In addition, the effects of 6 other variables were assessed: 2 competing roles (mother's employment and household division of labour), 2 children-related variables (number and age composition), marital duration, and economic distress. Data were collected from both the husband and the wife in 287 intact couples who had children living at home. Using structural equation modelling, data from both parents were analysed jointly to assess the mutual effect of the spouses on one another. The findings indicated that, for both fathers and mothers, parenting stress was affected by the number of children and economic distress, but not by other roles (wife's employment and household division of labour). For both spouses, psychological well-being and perceived marital quality were affected negatively by parenting stress. Significant association was found between husbands' and wives' parenting stress, as well as a mutual effect of their perceived marital quality on each other.

2.2.3 Gender

A gender role perspective has often been used to describe differences in marital satisfaction. Many studies have revealed that marital satisfaction is higher in men than in women (Williams, 2006). These differences were explained by gender differences in roles in marriage, and in expectations for marriage and intimate relationships (Shek, 1995). Women's roles in marriage are nearly always more demanding than their husbands', especially for employed women who encounter additional responsibilities (being wife, mother, homemaker, and employee). Because women and men usually are differently socialised, the emotional expectations of women are often not met by men.

Several contradictory studies have demonstrated that men report higher marital satisfaction than women do (Fowers, 1991). Shek (1995) suggested two possible explanations for gender differences in marital relationships. The first explanation is based on the different roles of women and men in a marriage. The female roles in marital relationships are usually more demanding and less rewarding compared with the husbands' roles, and women feel that they benefit less from a marriage and hence have a less positive perception of it. Also, married women who have full-time jobs encounter more responsibilities, duties, and role conflicts within their families.

The second suggested explanation refers to differences in expectations between women and men. Marital satisfaction in women is lower than in men because women tend to have higher expectations of intimacy and emotional support in a marriage, whereas men are usually not socialised to provide this kind of support in a relationship (Fowers, 1991). Men and women are usually differently socialized (e.g., instrumental vs. emotional), and some researchers have indicated that affective and emotional spousal support predicts higher marital satisfaction (Gove, Style, & Hughes, 2006). Furthermore, the differences in marital satisfaction between women and men might be due to the differences in expression of their feelings: women tend to cope with their emotions by seeking social support (Simon & Nath, 2004) and talking about what they feel in their personal lives (Simon & Nath, 2004), while men are more emotionally inhibited (Matud, 2004) and possibly dislike talking about such sensitive topics as their marital relationship.

In a contradictory result by Jeffrey, Richard, Megan and Ryan (2014) in the meta-analysis empirically tested the widely held assumption that women experience lower marital satisfaction than men. A total of 226 independent samples with a combined sum of 101,110 participants were included in the meta-analysis. Overall results indicated statistically significant yet very small gender differences in marital satisfaction between wives and husbands, with wives slightly less satisfied than husbands; moderator analysis,

however, indicated that this difference was due to the inclusion of clinical samples, with wives in marital therapy 51% less likely to be satisfied with their marital relationship than their husbands. The effect size for nonclinical community-based samples indicated no significant gender differences among couples in the general population. Additional moderator analyses indicated that there were also no gender differences when the levels of marital satisfaction of husbands and wives in the same relationship (i.e., dyadic data) were compared.

2.2.4 Self Esteem

Recent studies have also explored stable personality traits such as self-esteem (Erol & Orth, 2013) the Big 5 personality traits (affectivity and temperament and their role in marital satisfaction. (Watson, Hubbard, & Wiese, 2000),

Following this perspective, it would be interesting to explore the relationship between self-esteem, situation specific coping strategies and their contribution to marital satisfaction. One consequence of this conceptual isolation is that particular topics within the self-esteem literature (e.g., adolescent self-esteem) have received considerable attention, whereas other topics have been largely ignored. For example, a search of the self-esteem literature of the past three decades located only three empirical projects that focused on self-esteem in marriage (Luteijn, Roberts & Donahue, 1994) these three studies resulted

that marital satisfaction is positively related to self-esteem. It would be valuable to extend the understanding of self-esteem in marriage beyond this single ending.

Researchers have also found that denial, negative self-verbalization, withdrawal, drug abuse and violence are negative coping strategies related to marital dissatisfaction. On the contrary, optimism, positive self-verbalization and reframing of the situation are functional coping behaviours related to higher marital satisfaction (Bodenmann & Cina, 2006). When studying actor and partner effects of self-esteem on relationship satisfaction, Erol and Orth (2013) noted that self-esteem predicted relational satisfaction for both partners.

A few researchers also report similar findings in which marital satisfaction is positively related to self-esteem (Howard, 2000; Kwon, 2001; Lippes, 1999). Research again suggests that self-esteem predicts higher marital satisfaction (Sciangula & Morry, 2009). A research by Shanavas and Venkatammal (2014) on 110 participants from Kerala indicates that self-esteem is positively correlated with marital adjustment.

Research also by Bélanger, Di Schiavie, Sabourindf, Dugal, and El Baalbaki, Lussier, (2014) to investigate the relationship between self-esteem, specific coping strategies and marital adjustment, the research used 216 subjects from 108 couples who completed the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Ways of

Coping Checklist also confirmed the results that presence of a relationship between self-esteem, specific coping strategies and marital adjustment in men and women.

Another research by Fincham and Bradbury (1993) indicated a positive correlation between attribution factor such as self-esteem and marital satisfaction. In another research by Shanavas and Venkatammal (2014) in trying to investigate the nature of relationship between emotional intelligence, self-esteem and financial satisfaction in marital adjustment, 110 couples who were from Kerala had been married for less than 15 years, were randomly selected. Emotional intelligence scale, self-esteem scale, financial satisfaction scale and marital adjustment questionnaire were used for data collection. Multiple regression analyses showed that emotional intelligence and self-esteem, financial satisfaction have significant relationship with marital adjustment. Findings of the study concluded that emotional intelligence, self-esteem, is positively correlated with marital adjustment. The concentration however here is on self-esteem and marital satisfaction which also indicated a positive correlation.

Another research by Bélanger, Di Schiavie, Sabourin, Dugal, Ghassan, El Baalbaki, Lussier (2014) whose main objective was to investigate the relationship between self-esteem, specific coping strategies and marital adjustment. The sample consists of 216 subjects from 108 couples who completed the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, the Rosenberg

Self-Esteem Scale and the Ways of Coping Checklist. The results confirm the presence of a relationship between self-esteem, specific coping strategies and marital adjustment in men and women. Moreover, cross analyses reveal that one's feelings of self-worth are associated with his/her spouse's marital adjustment.

Another research by Oprisan and Cristea (2011) in another study revealed that low self-esteem, unhappy partners and difficult negotiations in couple, influences the perception of marital satisfaction, regardless of relationship duration. The conclusion was that satisfaction or dissatisfaction does not depend on years spent in a marital relationship, that other elements like good self-esteem, ability to communicate in a couple, could help building and maintain a fulfilling marital life.

2.2.5 Age at Marriage

Most research in the area of marital satisfaction has focused on age at time of marriage (Lee, 1977). There is virtually unanimous agreement that there is an inverse association between the age at first marriage and marital satisfaction as well as the probability of divorce. It means that the younger one is when married, the higher the likelihood of divorce. People who marry early are at a higher risk of marital instability than those who marry later in life. One major reason for addressing age is that factors which are

negatively related to marital “success”(i.e. whether one divorces or remains married) include many which are related to age at time of marriage, such as low education, premarital pregnancy, short premarital acquaintance, personality maladjustment, and low socioeconomic background (Burchinal, 1965).

Regarding the effect of age on marital satisfaction, young couples may have greater marital satisfaction as they seem to have fewer marital adjustment problems than middle-aged couples who have to face their midlife-crisis (Jose & Alfons, 2007).

Personal maturity probably enters into the process somewhere, too, so a look at one's age at the time of marriage seems to fit the question. Bumpass and Sweet (1972) studied whether the inverse correlation between age at time of marriage and marital instability was attributable to the participant's education, where it indicated that, premarital people who marry early are at a higher risk of marital instability than those who marry later in life. One major reason for addressing age is that factors which are negatively related to marital “success” (i.e. whether one divorces or remains married) include many which are related to age at time of marriage, such as low education, premarital pregnancy, short premarital acquaintance, personality maladjustment, and low socioeconomic background (Burchinal, 1965).

Bumpass and Sweet (1972) studied whether the inverse correlation between age at time of marriage and marital instability was attributable to the participant's education, premarital pregnancy, religious affiliation, parental marital stability, or husband's marital history. They performed a multivariate analysis on a large sample of married, white women under the age of 45, and found that marital instability was not attributable to the aforementioned factors. Their data showed that age at marriage was the strongest single predictor of marital instability in their analysis. This means that, absence of all other seemingly relevant variables, age at time of marriage was the strongest predictor of marital stability.

Lee (1977) studied the relationship between marital satisfaction, age at marriage, and marital role performance. "Role performance" was defined as the extent to which a person acts out what is perceived to be their role socioeconomically and interpersonally in marriage. This study used the used data from a non-random sample of 394 married couples, including spouses' evaluations of role performance in order to gain a more accurate response. All respondents were in their first marriage, had been married six years or less at the time of the study, and were under 35 years of age. Through use of multivariate analysis, Lee found a positive correlation between age at time of marriage and marital satisfaction after controlling for the antecedent variables of length of marriage, education,

socioeconomic background, and religious importance. This means that as the age at marriage increased, marital satisfaction increased as well. This positive correlation finding was true for both males and females. Lee concluded, however, that the strength of the correlation was moderate at best, and may be related to an unmeasured third variable a potential for remarriage. He hypothesised that those who marry young may be cognisant of their better potential to remarry in the event of a divorce, and may then be less willing to tolerate dissatisfaction.

Booth and Edwards (1985) expanded on the research done by Bumpass and Sweet (1972) and Lee (1977) and also found that age at marriage was positively correlated with marital satisfaction due to inadequate preparation. They hypothesised that this situation likely stemmed from inadequate role models or from lack of exposure length to these role models because of early termination of their “marriage apprenticeship” (p. 68) as a result of early marriage. They felt that people who married at an early age were more likely to experience deficiencies in their marital role performance, which then led to marital dissatisfaction.

In another study from a national sample of men and women under 55 years of age who were interviewed by telephone in 1980 where a digit dialing procedures to locate eligible participants was used. In total, the analysis involved 1,715 men and women

currently in their first marriage. To test their hypothesis that early marriage was related to marital instability and poor role performance, and to control for the confounding variable of external pressure for marriage, Booth and Edwards used the Marital Instability Index (Booth, Johnson, & Edwards, 1983) as well as multiple items to assess role performance, alternatives to the present marriage, and external pressure for marriage. They found that marital instability is the highest for those who married early (before age 20). Those who married in their twenties scored the lowest on marital instability. They found that those who married later than their twenties scored similarly to those that married earlier, which suggested that marital stability may have a curvilinear relationship with age.

Bradbury, Fincham, and Beach (2000) continued in this similar study of marital satisfaction in relation to age. Their research indicated that both society and the individual benefit when couples form strong marriages, as those unions frequently lead to less involvement in crime and other detrimental activities by spouses and/or offspring. Slowly declining divorce rates over the last eight years may be related to a sharp increase in the average age of brides and grooms during that same span of time; however, overall marital satisfaction has dropped significantly over the past four decades, and continues to noticeably decline for nearly all couples during the first decade of marriage. Furthermore, the positive and negative factors that led to both increased marital satisfaction and marital

dissatisfaction, respectively, may not be mutually exclusive (i.e. satisfaction in marriage is a judgment based on criteria that changed both with the age of each partner and that of the marriage).

Jose and Alfons (2007) examined the effects of age on marital satisfaction found out that those who married later were more likely to remain married, but also that those who married younger and get divorced are more likely to remarry. Contrary to previously stated results, these researchers found that age had a significant negative effect on the sexual adjustment and marital adjustment of first-married adults. In other words, the older one was at the time of first marriage, the less adjusted the individual would be toward the marriage and, consequently, the less satisfaction one would express. Middle-aged adults seemed to have greater adjustment problems than both young and elderly participants involved in the study. They performed a multivariate analysis on a large sample of married white women under the age of 45, and found that marital instability was not attributable to the aforementioned factors. Their data showed that age at marriage was the strongest single predictor of marital instability in their analysis. This means that, in absence of all other seemingly relevant variables, age at time of marriage was the strongest predictor of marital stability.

Bradbury, Fincham and Beach (2000) continued in this similar study of marital satisfaction in relation to age. According to them, slowly declining divorce rates over the last eight years may be related to a sharp increase in the average age of brides and grooms during that same span of time; however, overall marital satisfaction dropped significantly over the past four decades, and continued to noticeably decline for nearly all couples during the first decade of marriage. Furthermore, the positive and negative factors that led to both increased marital satisfaction and marital dissatisfaction, respectively, might not be mutually exclusive (i.e. satisfaction in marriage is a judgment based on criteria that changed both with the age of each partner and that of the marriage).

However, in a contrary research by Adler (2010) in a study was to determine whether there is a relationship between marital satisfaction as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976) and the independent variables of age. The result however indicated that there was a negative correlation between age at the time of marriage and marital satisfaction of participants.

2.3 Statement of Hypothesis

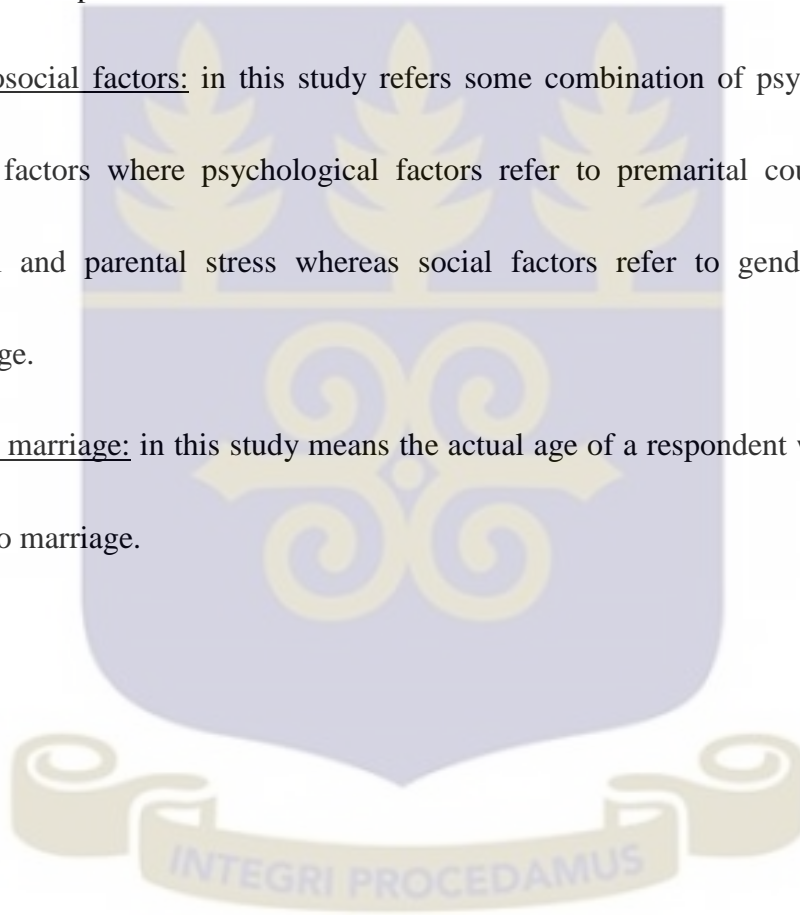
- 1) Respondents who did not have premarital counselling will score higher on marital satisfaction than those who had premarital counselling

- 2) There will be a correlation between parental stress and marital satisfaction of respondents.
- 3) There will be a gender difference in marital satisfaction.
- 4) There will be a correlation between self-esteem and marital satisfaction scores of respondents.
- 5) There will be a correlation between age of respondents at marriage and their later marital satisfaction scores

2.4 Operational Definitions of terms

1. Marital satisfaction- a global evaluation of the state of one's marriage and a reflection of marital happiness and functioning.
2. Pre-marital counselling: - This is a specific type of systemic understanding and improving the premarital individual and couple interactional factors that can influence both quality and the stability of the marital relationship.
3. Married individuals: Christian married males and females who are registered members of the targeted churches; their ages will range from 18 - 70 years who have been legally married under the ordinance marriage 1951 (Cap 127) of Ghana

4. Self-esteem- in this study means a positive or negative orientation towards oneself; an overall evaluation of one's worth or value.
5. Parental stress: in this study means parenting experience where parents believe their parenting demands exceed the expected resource available that permits them to succeed in a parent role.
6. Psychosocial factors: in this study refers some combination of psychological and social factors where psychological factors refer to premarital counselling, self-esteem and parental stress whereas social factors refer to gender and age at marriage.
7. Age at marriage: in this study means the actual age of a respondent when he or she got into marriage.



CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This section includes the methods employed in getting data for the present study, instrument used, how they are scored and their respective psychometric properties.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design took a form of a survey by use of questionnaires. This method is normally used to gather information from respondents about their beliefs, opinions, characteristics and past or present behaviour.

3.2 Target Population

Population comprises selected E.P Church congregations at the Ho east presbytery namely Dela Cathedral, Elorm Parish E.P Church, Kekeli E.P Church all at Ho, the Volta region of Ghana. These congregations of the Ho East presbytery of the E.P Church were selected because it is a homogenous group and were the best in terms of proximity. They were as well receptive and could be classified as a homogenous group because it gave a

representation of variety in terms of gender, socio- economic background, home locations, and age differences among others.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Two hundred out of the two hundred and fifty intended married individuals were selected from the selected congregations to participate in the survey. The population was about 700 for the three congregations. However, using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sampling chart, the ideal sample was two hundred and fifty out of it; two hundred people answered the questionnaires using a purposive sampling method. A purposive sampling was used because, it is mostly used when a researcher wants to identify specific individuals and variations for in-depth investigation which employs getting all possible cases that fit particular criteria, using various methods.

3.4 Instruments / Materials/Materials

3.4.1 Rosenberg self-esteem scale

Instrument that was used included stationary materials such as pen, paper, pencil and eraser. Set of standardised Rosenberg self-esteem questionnaire by Rosenberg (1965).

This is an ordered one dimensional scale with 10-item questionnaires from which respondents chose an option for each item that best aligns with their view; this helped in informing the researcher about the background, self-esteem and perception of the pupils. The Rosenberg self-esteem scale is a commonly used measure of self-esteem, while designed as a Guttman scale, it is now scored as a Likert scale. The 10 items are answered on a four point scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The original sample for which the scale was developed in the 1960's consisted of 5,024 high school juniors and seniors from 10 randomly selected schools in New York State and was scored as a Guttman scale. The scale generally has high reliability; test-retest correlations are typically in the range of .82 to .88, and Cranach's alpha for various samples are in the range of .77 to .88 (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1993; Rosenberg, 1986).

3.4.2 Index Marital Satisfaction

This is an instrument used to measure the marital satisfaction of a married individual. The primary instrument that was used in this study is the Marital Satisfaction Inventory by Hudson (1982). The instrument is widely used to assess the nature and extent of conflict within the marital relationship. The scale was found to have a reliability in excess of .90 and it also has excellent discriminant, construct, content, and factorial validity. Findings are also presented to show how marital relationship problems relate to a

number of other problems in personal and social functioning and to several biological and social characteristics of respondents.

1 - Rarely or none of the time

2 - A little of the time

3 - Sometime

4 - A good part of the time

5 - Most or all of the time

3.4.3 Parental Stress Scale

The Parental Stress Scale is a self-report scale that contains 18 items representing pleasure or positive themes of parenthood (emotional benefits, self-enrichment, personal development) and negative components (demands on resources, opportunity costs and restrictions). Respondents are asked to agree or disagree with items in terms of their typical relationship with their child or children and to rate each item on a five-point scale: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), undecided (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). The scale is intended to be used for the assessment of parental stress for both mothers and fathers and for parents of children with and without clinical problems.

The Parental Stress Scale demonstrated satisfactory levels of internal reliability (.83), and test-retest reliability (.81). The scale demonstrated satisfactory convergent validity with various measures of stress, emotion, and role satisfaction, including perceived stress, work/family stress, loneliness, anxiety, guilt, marital satisfaction, marital commitment, job satisfaction, and social support. Discriminant analyses demonstrated the ability of the scale to discriminate between parents of typically developing children and parents of children with both developmental and behavioural problems.

3.5 Research Procedure

An authorisation letter was taken from the department of psychology to the head of the selected head churches in Ho in the Volta region of Ghana for approval; a copy of the proposal was also given to the head of each church to have a fair idea of what the research involve. A most convenient date was negotiated for the research to take place and also to give them ample time to make ready and any provisions needed for the research. Another was sent to the Catholic Church for a pilot study of the questionnaire since the setting is different from where the instrument was designed.

On the day of the research although separate days for each of these churches, a purposive sampling was used to select 100 participants to answer the questionnaire A purposive

sampling was used because, it is mostly used when a researcher wants to identify specific individuals and variations for in-depth investigation which employs getting all possible cases that fit particular criteria, using various methods. The respondents were provided with index numbers ranging from 1 to 100 for ethical reasons. The participants were told fairly on reasons for the research as well as the process that will involve answering the questionnaire. The announcement was made two weeks prior to the day of the research. They were as well told of the benefit that awaits them after participating such as incentives to arouse the interest of those who may have originally decline to participate which was customized pens with Methodist University labels on them. On the day of the research, some of the respondents especially those who admitted they could not answer without help were guided to fill the said questionnaire, and those who admitted they could do so by themselves were given the questionnaire to be filled and returned in a week time. Respondents were assured of confidentiality as the research was purely for academic purposes. The researcher then helped in filling the questionnaire by clearly explaining the items one after the other for further understanding before they were allowed to select a response that best align with their view. This was achieved by mixing the English language with the local language “Ewe”. The questionnaire was also in four parts to assess a) demographical data b) Marital satisfaction c) parental stress d) self- esteem. A prompt

opportunity was given for explanations for the benefits of doubt and any misconception that may be held by the participants. SPSS was then used to analyse data.

3.6 Scoring Of Data

Data gathered was computed according to responses to questionnaire. For the index marital satisfaction, questionnaire the positively worded items must be reverse-scored. If one scored a positively worded item as 1 it is re-scored as 5, 2 becomes 4, 3 remains 3, 4 becomes 2 and a score of 5 becomes 1. The positively scored items that must be reversed scored are 1,3,5,8,9,11,13,16,17,19,20,21,23. After all the positively worded items have been reverse scored, all 25 items are summed. The final step is to subtract 25 from this sum. Scores below 30 are considered indicative of satisfaction with the relationship. The higher the score the more dissatisfaction with the relationship is indicated.

For the **parental stress scale**, To compute the parental stress score, items 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 17, and 18 were reverse scored as follows: (1=5) (2=4) (3=3) (4=2) (5=1). The item scores were then summed up. The total is however the parental stress scores of that individual. The 8 positive items are reverse scored so that possible scores on the scale can range from 18-90. Higher scores on the scale indicate greater stress.

For the Rosenberg self-esteem questionnaire the final score for the respondent was the sum of the ratings for all of the items.

Scores was calculated as follows: *For items 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7:* corresponding scores are:
strongly agree = 3, Agree = 2, Disagree = 1, strongly disagree = 0

For items 3, 5, 8, 9, and 10 (which are reversed in valence): corresponding scores are:
Strongly agree = 0, Agree = 1, Disagree = 2, strongly disagree = 3

The scale ranges from 0-30. Scores between 15 and 25 are within normal range; scores below 1 suggest low self-esteem, above 25 is high self-esteem.

Pilot study from the Roman Catholic churches in Ho indicates that the marital satisfaction inventory has a high reliability of .737; the parental stress scale has a relatively low parental stress scale of .477. However, there was no pilot study for the Rosenberg self-esteem scale because of its high usage and popularity in Ghana.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This section is the analysis of findings of the present study as given by the SPSS output.

4.1 Demographic Data

This research is basically to find out the psychosocial factors thus a combination of psychological (premarital counselling, self-esteem, parental stress) and social (age at marriage and gender) factors on marital satisfaction a study tailored to selected branches of the E.P Church. Respondents were between the ages of 18 to 75 years. Respondents were from different ethnic groups in Ghana but 90 percent were “Ewes” and the rest 10 percent cuts across the other ethnic groups in Ghana. The education background of respondents cuts across “not educated”, “semi educated” and “educated” with 25 percent not educated, 35 semis- educated and 40 percent educated. Two Hundred out of the two hundred and fifty respondents were purposively sampled to participate in this research with 98 respondents who had premarital counselling and 108 people who did not. 114 were males and 86 were female respondents who are married individuals who have been married for at least 1 year with at least a child.

4.2 Result

- 1) The first hypothesis stated that “Respondents who did not have premarital counselling will score higher on marital satisfaction than those who had premarital counselling”

An independent t test was used to analyse this hypothesis. The results are presented in table 1:

Table 1 Summary of Independent t Test on differences in Pre-Marital Counselling and Marital Satisfaction.

	PMC	N	M	SD	df	t	P
Marital Satisfaction	Yes	98	40.765	10.663	198	-2.280	.021
	No	102	44.510	12.451			

Table1 shows a summarised result of an independent sample t-test for the mean difference in marital satisfaction for respondents who had premarital counselling against those who did not go through premarital counselling. This result shows that there is a difference in the mean scores of respondents who had premarital counselling ($M = 40.765$, $SD = 10.663$) and those who did not ($M = 44.510$, $SD = 12.451$), indicating the mean marital satisfaction

scores of those who did not have any form of premarital greater than that of those who had premarital counselling with $t = -2.280$ and a p-value associated with t value is $p = .021$ (one tail tailed) With a df (198), this t is not significant at the 0.05 level ($.021 < 0.05$) because even though p is less than 0.05, the mean and standard deviation scores of those who had marital counselling is greater than those who had premarital counselling, Clearly indicating that indeed no statistically significant difference exists between those who had premarital counselling and those who did not and therefore supporting the hypothesis.

HYPOTHESIS TWO

The second hypothesis states that “there will be correlation between parental stress and marital satisfaction of respondents”. A Pearson r correlation was used to analyse this hypothesis. The results are summarised and presented in table 2.



Table 2; Summary of the Pearson r Correlation between Parental Stress and Marital Satisfaction

	M	SD	r	P
Parental Stress	43.500	10.319	.135	.057
Marital Satisfaction	42.675	11.731		
P > 0.05				

$r = .135$ $p = .057$, correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

The analysis in table 2 above shows the computed Pearson r between Parental Stress and Marital Satisfaction. The computed r value of .135 is not significant at ($p = .057 > .05$) for a one tailed. As a result, the hypothesis which explores the relationship between parental stress and marital satisfaction was rejected



HYPOTHESIS THREE

The third hypothesis state that “there will be a gender difference in marital satisfaction” was tested with an independent t test. The results are summarised and presented in table 3:

Table 3: Summary of Independent t test of gender differences in marital satisfaction

	Gender	N	M	SD	df	t	P
Marital Satisfaction	Male	114	43.175	12.019	198	.694	.489
	Female	86	42.012	11.374			

Table 3 shows the summarised result of an independent sample t-test for the mean difference in marital satisfaction scores for male and female respondents. Males ($M = 43.175$, $SD = 12.019$) and females ($M = 42.012$, $SD = 11.374$) did not differ significantly with a $t = .694$ and a p-value associated with t value is ($p = .489 > .05$) (one tail tailed) with a df (198), indicating that this “t” is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level and therefore rejecting the hypothesis and meaning that there is no gender difference in marital satisfaction.

HYPOTHESIS FOUR

Hypothesis four states that there will be a positive correlation between self-esteem and marital satisfaction scores of respondents. A Pearson r correlation was used to test this hypothesis. The results are summarised and presented in table 4:

Table 4: Summary of the Pearson r Correlation between Self-Esteem and Marital Satisfaction

	M	SD	r	P
Self-esteem	20.975	6.440	-.100	.157
Marital Satisfaction	42.675	11.731		
P > 0.05				

$r = -.100$, $p = .157$ correlation is not significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4 is a correlation which shows the computed Pearson r between Parental Stress and Marital Satisfaction. The computed r value of $-.100$ is not significant at $p = (.157 > .05)$ for a one tailed. As a result, the hypothesis which explores the relationship between self-esteem and marital satisfaction stating that there will be a correlation was rejected.

HYPOTHESIS FIVE

Hypothesis five states that “there will be a positive correlation between age of respondents at the time of marriage and their later marital satisfaction scores”. A Pearson r correlation was used to test this hypothesis. The results are presented in table 5:

Table 5: Summary of the Pearson r Correlation between Age at the Time of Marriage and Marital Satisfaction

	M	SD	r	P
Age at time of marriage	6.337	6.337	-.002	.977
Marital Satisfaction	11.731	11.731		
P > 0.05				

$r = -.002$, $p = .977$ correlation is not significant at the 0.05 level.

The data analysed in table 5 is a correlation which shows the computed Pearson r between age at the time of marriage and Marital Satisfaction. The computed r value of $-.002$ is not significant at $p = (.977 > .05)$ for a one tailed test. As a result, the hypothesis which explores the relationship between age at the time of marriage and marital satisfaction stating that there will be a positive correlation was rejected.

4.3 Summary of Result

The research tested five hypotheses. The first hypothesis was supported using an independent t-test indicating that respondents who had premarital counselling have higher marital satisfaction than people who had no premarital counselling. The second hypothesis was tested using the Pearson (r) correlation and the result indicated that there is no correlation between parental stress and marital satisfaction. Testing for the third hypothesis using the independent t- test indicated that there is no significant gender difference in marital satisfaction of respondents. The fourth hypothesis was also not supported using a Pearson (r) test indicating a no correlation between self-esteem and marital satisfaction. The final hypothesis was also rejected using the 0.05 significance rule indicating a no correlation between age at marriage and marital satisfaction



CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses results of present study with discussions in relation to theories and previous study.

5.1 Discussions

The first hypothesis which states that “Respondents who did not have premarital counselling will score higher on marital satisfaction than those who had premarital counselling” was retained indicating that even though $p = (.021 < .05)$ the mean and standard deviation ($M = 44.510$, $SD = 12.451$) of those who did not have premarital counselling was greater than the mean and standard deviation ($M = 40.765$, $SD = 10.663$) of those who had premarital counselling therefore, the hypothesis was retained. However, the result indicated that there is no statistically significant difference between those who had premarital counselling and those who did not as suggested in many findings around the area of premarital counselling and marital satisfaction. Examples are research done by Özgüven, (2000), Tuğba and Melek (2010), Sullivan (2004) among others whose research indicates that premarital relationship enrichment program or counselling enhances relationship satisfaction level of couples significantly. On the other hand, the present study

result which however indicates that premarital counselling does not have any significant impact on marital satisfaction has also confirmed some other previous study done in this area. For example is Sullivan and Bradbury's (1997) findings that, after assessing marital outcomes in 60 couples after 18 months, there were no differences in marital satisfaction and stability between couples who participated in premarital preparation and those who did not. In another study by Cunderlach (1985) to find out the correlation that exists between current marital satisfaction and premarital counselling indicates that, virtually no correlation exist between premarital counselling and current marital satisfaction.

This may not necessarily mean that premarital counselling is neither good nor important. However, reasons that can best explain this result are the following; in the developed countries where most of the studies are done in this area, premarital counselling is well structured. The counsellors are well trained and certified. The premarital counselling programs are intensively evaluated to cover important areas of marriage. In Africa and to be specific Ghana, a personal observation however, indicates that most of the "counsellors" who take "to be" couples through premarital counselling are lay people who do so by virtue of age, experience in marriage, elders of a church, pastors wives who have a certificate of 6 months training in ministry, pastors wives who in most cases are equally not professionals. The duration of the counselling programs are usually done by discretions and

details of the counselling programs are usually scanty and not professional. This may lead to the lack of positive impact on this couple's marital satisfaction.

Again, premarital counselling or therapy is fundamentally different from skills-based premarital education, involving more intensive work between couples and therapists and focusing on more specific personal problems (Duncan et al., 2010; Hawkins et al., 2008). Premarital counsellors operate from a variety of theoretical orientations. Examples are: behavioural couple therapy, emotionally-focused couple therapy, insight-oriented marital therapy, image relationship therapy, Bowen family systems theory, and solution-focused brief therapy (Bruun, 2010).

From the open ended questions in the demographic data, the respondents who had premarital counselling, most confirmed that no theoretical framework were used in preparing them for marriage and most of the things are lessons from personal experiences of the counsellors. However, for clinical intervention to be most effective it should be guided by sound theoretical reasoning and that intervention into family systems should be based upon a coherent theory of family process and family development

It is in view of this that premarital counselling in Ghana must be evaluated by subsequent studies to identify the necessary areas that must be involved in the premarital counselling process. It is however, worth noting from personal observations that

the Ghanaian forefathers without any legal marriage or formal education or counselling on marriage usually have long lasting marriages even though it comes with its own ups and downs. This may not necessarily mean they were satisfied with their marriages but the system in Ghana to a large extent does not promote talking about dissatisfaction but rather promotes endurance and stability. This exploration could also make married individuals not to express their true dissatisfaction and rather pretend and endure their marriages.

The second hypothesis however which states that “There will be a correlation between parental stress and marital satisfaction of respondents” were also rejected $p = (.057 > .05)$ indicating that there is no positive correlation between parental stress and marital satisfaction of couples, which reflects a contrary result from most of the studies reviewed. In the research by Jill Hess (2008) which indicated in his study that marital satisfaction and parental stress correlate in many ways, most significantly in the areas of parental distress and parent child interactions. Nevertheless, other studies which support the current result. An example is the research finding by Merrifield (2010) which reveals that, mothers’ marital satisfaction was negatively related to their parenting self-efficacy. Some studies also demonstrated a negative relationship between parenting stress and marital satisfaction e.g. (Gerstein et al. 2009) Another research by Lavee, Sharlin, Katz (1996) which examined the hypothesis that the effect the presence of children have on their

parents' marriages is due to stress in the parental role this was as a result of using a multivariate model to assess the relationship between fathers' and mothers' parenting stress and their psychological well-being and perception of marital quality. The findings indicated that for both spouses, psychological well-being and perceived marital quality were affected negatively by parental stress.

Taking the vulnerability-Stress-Adaptation theory into consideration, as propounded by Karney and Bradbury where marital quality is posited to be a function of three variables: enduring vulnerabilities, stressful events, and adaptive processes. Enduring vulnerabilities include the stable characteristics that each spouse brings to the union (e.g., personality characteristics and level of education). Stressful events, on the other hand, encompass all the events or circumstances that are experienced by the couple (e.g., death of a family member, loss of job).

Adaptive processes refer to the experiences encountered in the marriage such as the behaviours engaged in during conflict or the appraisals surrounding these interactions. In discussing this result, emphasis however will be laid on these three variables thus the enduring vulnerability, stressful event and adaptive process of the respondents. Firstly, the adaptive process could refer to Culture, genetic tendencies and the environments which play a major role in the formation of an individual's personality coupled with other factors

such as level of education among others. In the Ghanaian setting however, from personal observations, the Ghanaian society puts premium and glory on number of children alongside its associated problems. With this, to be able to fit in this society, the stress that comes with it is no longer considered as stress but joy. It brings the feminine and masculine status and respect. This coupled with the stressful event which is the stress associated with parenting and its adoptive process which basically refers to experiences encountered in the marriage such as the behaviours engaged in during conflict or the appraisals surrounding these interactions such as interpreting the stress as the joy of motherhood or fatherhood can account for the present result.

The Lazarus Cognitive-Relational theory of stress is a common theory of stress that is based around a cycle of appraisal of environmental, stress and consequent coping. Appraisal and coping are mediating processes that seek to reduce stress. This is also known as the Transactional model Lazarus Theory where the antecedents provide input into the central appraisal activity. Explaining the present result using this model, the stress could be seen as a subjective thing depending on the individual thus the personality since the model explains that some people have a greater tendency towards anxiety than others. This will make them more susceptible to stress. At the other extreme, those whose stress threshold is high actively may not experience the stress associated with parenting that much. One will

also want to say that the cultural differences again play so many roles. The environment coupled with their individual personalities could to a large extent lead to the individual differences in results of the reviewed studies and the present study.

This could however mean that in Ghana unlike the western countries where most of the reviewed studies were done, Ghanaians are most probable able to handle stress specifically parental stress than the westerners. Coupled with this natural tendency, due to the high premium given to childbirth in Ghana, there are usually lots of family support where lots of people are involved in the child rearing process which means the stress associated with parenting is usually shared with family and other significant others which could prevent this parenting stress from interfering with marital quality or satisfaction of the married individuals.

With regards to Appraisal which is the second aspect of this model, Appraisal is often considered as a single activity, but is really made up of two distinct components; assessment of the situation (primary appraisal) and identifying what to do about it (secondary appraisal). In primary appraisal, people usually first appraise for short-term threat to needs and then for longer-term impact on personal and organisational goals. They may also look on the positive side, seeking opportunities and looking forward to challenges. This coupled with the cognitive psychologist's assumption that "it is not the

event that causes the reactions but the individual's interpretation of the event can also explain the current result in a cultural aspect and how parenting stress could be viewed as fulfilment which will inversely affect marital satisfaction as against what has been hypothesised. All this will determine the individuals coping mechanism to the same event and hence varied result. Invariably put, what someone will interpret as stress associated with parenting in a western country will be interpreted as joy associated with parenting by someone in an African society due to social desirability.

Parents who understand the intricacies of developmental processes may be less stressed by everyday difficulties of parenting as compared to parents with a less sophisticated, more concrete understanding of children (Crnic & Booth, 1991). As a child develops, he or she acquires more abilities and skills and participates in a greater range of situations and behaviours, which in turn may increase parental stress. The events themselves are not as stressful to parents as are their perceptions of the events (Crnic & Booth, 1991). This leads to the suggestion that a parent's attributions and expectations about his or her child's behaviour may undergo alterations across developmental periods (Crnic & Booth, 1991). Other factors associated with parental stress may include difficult temperament, physical disabilities, congenital diseases, respiratory illness, developmental delay, and cognitive impairment (Deater-Deckard, 1998).

The third hypothesis however which states that “there will be a gender difference in marital satisfaction gave a result indicating that there is no gender difference in marital satisfaction ($p = .489 > .05$). The present finding is a contradiction to most of the results in the studies reviewed. An example is the study by (Gove, Style, & Hughes, 1990; Mickelson, 2006) the outcome of their study indicated that men and women are usually differently socialised (e.g., instrumental vs. emotional), and some researchers have indicated that affective and emotional spousal support predicts higher marital satisfaction.

Nevertheless, the present result on gender and marital satisfaction supports some earlier results too. An example is the result of a study by Jeffrey, Megan and Ryan (2014). The purpose of their meta-analysis was to empirically test the widely held assumption that women experience lower marital satisfaction than men where a total of 226 independent samples with a combined sum of 101,110 participants were included in the meta-analysis. Overall results indicated statistically significant yet very small gender differences in marital satisfaction between wives and husbands, with wives slightly less satisfied than husbands. Moderator analyses, however, indicated that this difference was due to the inclusion of clinical samples, with wives in marital therapy 51% less likely to be satisfied with their marital relationship than their husbands. The effect size for nonclinical community-based samples indicated no significant gender differences among couples in the general

population. Additional moderator analyses indicated that there were also no gender differences when the levels of marital satisfaction of husbands and wives in the same relationship (i.e., dyadic data) were compared.

However, we must understand what “gender” is and how different it means from “sex”. Gender is defined as the socially determined role of an individual that is ascribed as a result of his or her sex (Juni & Grimm, 1994). The terms “gender” and “sex” are often used interchangeably, however, these terms are not synonymous. Sex refers to the biological distinction between females and males, while gender refers to the social and psychological characteristics often associated with being female or male. While we tend to impose a gender-based classification system on the world, it is important to note that gender is not a binary concept, as maleness and femaleness can occur on a continuum, as can sex (Knox & Schacht, 2000). One can then say it is not the sex in itself that predicts marital satisfaction in this case as may be believed initially but rather the gender that is characterised by the socially determined role of an individual that is ascribed as a result of his or her sex (Juni & Grimm, 1994) indicating the extensive roles variables such as culture, race, upbringing, values and beliefs play in an individual’s gender makeup and hence its related marital satisfaction.

Exploring the African concept of Gender can largely explain the present findings where in sub-Saharan Africa; research has not used marital satisfaction as a measure for marital continuity. Women have poor negotiating powers due to gender status imbalance; where expectations from their original families urge them to continue staying in marriages not satisfying. That is due to the cultural concept where relationships are based on bride price are exchanged between the two extended families during the traditional marriage and the societal norms of remaining in unsatisfying marriages. However, it is also out of place in the Ghanaian culture to talk ill about your partner much less you being satisfied or not (Ngazimbi, 2009).

The fourth hypothesis which states that “there will be a positive correlation between self-esteem and marital satisfaction scores” gave a finding which indicated that there is no correlation between self-esteem and marital satisfaction = (.157 > .05). This result is however contradictory to the previous studies reviewed example is the study by Shanavas and Venkatammal (2014) on 110 participants from Kerala which indicates that self-esteem is positively correlated with marital satisfaction. The researcher could however not find previous studies to support present result, however there could be some reasons that could account for the present results that will be discussed.

In Africa, what accounts for self-esteem could be different from what accounts for it in other western countries. However, drawing a link between it and marital satisfaction may mostly not be parallel. An African man or woman believes more in marital stability than marital satisfaction. The culture does not permit divorce or publicly talking low of your marriage (Ngazimbi, 2009). That in itself is what rather affects the individual's self-esteem.

Using the Self efficacy theory to explain the present findings, an individual's self-esteem which is based on socially acceptable goals once achieved may have little or no effect on marital satisfaction. On the other hand, an individual whose marital satisfaction scores are high is also mostly dependent on social or a cultural expectation of marriage is achieved, be it negative or positive. The individual is assumed to have his or her satisfaction which is almost independent of self-esteem which is believed to evolve throughout our lives as we develop an image of ourselves through our experiences with different people and activities.

Again from the self-efficacy theory, experiences during childhood particularly play a role in the shaping of self-esteem. When we were growing up, our successes, failures, and how we were treated by our family, teachers, coaches, religious authorities, and peers, all contributed to the creation of our self-esteem (Bandura, 1994). Meaning marital satisfaction

in itself has little role to play on self-esteem since self-esteem is believed to have developed across life span.

One other theory that can discuss this result is the interdependence theory. This theory also explains how more global considerations such as long-term goals and concern for each other's interests guide the interaction between the two partners (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2002). An individual evaluates the outcomes of the interactions that occur in a relationship, and decides whether or not he or she is satisfied (Rusbult & Buunk). This implies that the individual has set standards based on which he or she defines the level of satisfaction within the relationship and not necessarily the individual's self-esteem.

The last hypothesis which however hypothesised that "there will be a positive correlation between age of respondents at marriage and their later marital satisfaction scores" gave a result that indicated that there is no correlation between age of respondents at marriage and their marital satisfaction, it means the hypothesis stated was rejected $p = (.977 > .05)$. This result supports some other studies from the studies reviewed such as one done by Adler (2010) to determine whether there is a relationship between marital satisfaction as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976) and the independent variables of age. There was a negative correlation between age at the time of marriage and marital satisfaction of participants. In this sample, there is no relationship

between age at time of marriage and marital satisfaction. This lack of a significant correlation indicates that age at time of marriage may not be a strong predictor of future marital happiness as past research has indicated. This may be unique to these respondents, or there may be a mediating variable that was not identified by the instrument. Also, it is possible that with a larger sample size there would have been more of a variety of ages represented. Perhaps a sample more representative of the population would have yielded different results.

Using the dynamic goal theory of marital satisfaction by Li, Tianyuan, Fung and Helene (2011), explaining that concentrating on the goals that spouses hope and strive to reach for in their marriage, which significantly contributed to marital satisfaction; marital goals are considered one of the key elements in the dynamic goal theory of marital satisfaction. According to the theory, when prioritised marital goals are achieved, the married couple is more likely to feel satisfied within their marriage. Married couples typically have three goals: companionship goals, personal growth goals, and instrumental goals. Companionship goals are focused on people's needs for belongingness and relatedness in the marriage. Personal growth goals emphasis a spouse's desire to develop, grow or actualise oneself within the marriage. Where instrumental goals centre on the practical nature of the marriage including sharing household labour and responsibilities

with each other, such as housework, managing family finances, and raising children. In general, new married couples focus on personal growth goals, middle-aged couples emphasize instrumental goals, and older couples strive to reach companionship goals.

The dynamic goal theory of marital satisfaction can best discuss this result in that since we are looking at age and marital satisfaction, this theory addresses marital satisfaction from a developmental point of view across life span. Emphasising however that marital satisfaction may not be limited to age only but rather prioritised goals associated with that age range. Explaining that if an individual's prioritised marital goal is met, that individual is likely to attain marital satisfaction. This clearly explains that the prioritised marital goal within a particular growth spurt is what predicts marital satisfaction and not the age in itself. This theory to a large extent explains the result of the present study with regards to age at the time of marriage and marital satisfaction.

5.2 Limitations

The sample size is relatively smaller than the ones used in most of the studies reviewed which makes it a little difficult for generalisations and statistical power. The sampling technique also poses structural and theoretical question that makes statistical generalisation to any population beyond the sample surveyed difficult and was also not

conducted under perfect conditions. In addition, the items on the scales were relatively smaller which may also go a long way to affect its validity. Furthermore, in the setting where the research was done, most people do not believe in talking ill about their marital relationships coupled with self-report instruments which pose another threat to internal validity.

During the process of data collection the researcher relied completely on the honesty and accuracy of the participants in responding to the question. It is possible that participants may respond in a manner that enhances social desirability; consequently participants might respond in a manner that does not reflect the truth.

5.3 Suggestion and Recommendations

The researcher wishes to urge researchers who may want to research into this area or related areas to select another sampling method that will help to generalise to other population. One should as well choose a larger sample size, and also apply for funding in order to spread the research to other churches or institutions from diverse regions of the country in order to have a better representation of findings that can be generalised to the country at large. Additionally, one should also vary the independent variables to have adequate representation of findings.

Marriage and its related issues are believed to be associated to psychological wellbeing therefore it must be safeguarded to ensure marriages are stable and successful. Sponsors in relation with marriage, family and parenting related issues must as well provide family guide dealing with family activities, discussion topics, skills development exercises, marital enhancement and preparation programs. Further, information on marital success, marital stability and marital quality in addition to positive parenting practices including encouragement, limit setting, problem solving, monitoring and positive involvement that helps in parenting and of course reduces stress associated with parenting should be provided.

Educational institutions must mount programmes that are into family and marital counselling in order to have enough practitioners on the ground. Furthermore, apart from few professional therapists in Ghana, the seminary and mission schools must intensively imbibe family, couple and premarital counselling in their curriculum as stated in my study. Ghanaians easily resort to pastors in the rise of any premarital, marital and family related crises or issue. Agencies, individuals, philanthropists, commercial houses and Non-governmental organisations should as well support either by funding, resources or expertise in order to help maintain marriages and families.

Clinicians must attend to gender differences in power, communication, relationship perceptions, decision-making, and conflict management. Marriage and family therapists' can empower couples by educating them about societal-based expectations for gender role behaviour and gender role influences on their marital satisfactions as well as their self-esteem.

In addition to educating couples and defining gender inequalities, therapists should help clients accept and access the widest possible opportunities, rewards, and benefits of married life. Clinicians should keep in mind that a couple's gender roles may prevent them from recognising and expressing empathy for each other's experience. By encouraging spouses to confront and challenge their own gender biases, they become more receptive to considering their partner's gender biased perspective as well, creating a culture of empathy. By taking a gender-informed approach to therapy, therapists may enact first-order change within the couple as a result of educating men and women about their gender role differences.

The couple's application of this new research and education may promote understanding, self-exploration, expression, and empathy. This may result in a second order change in which the husband and wife understand themselves, each other and the world

differently and thereby producing a new set of rules and new interactions for “doing” gender in a patriarchal society.

Therapists or the clergy who are mainly into premarital counselling in Ghana should re-evaluate their premarital counselling curriculum to cover relevant issues pertaining to premarital counselling as well as marital enhancement programs. Clinical theoretical backgrounds should as well be used with this, the goals, objectives and expectations of the theory used can be evaluated. However, several studies support the potential for premarital preparation programs to produce gains in marital satisfaction and interpersonal skills in couples (Carroll & Doherty, 2003).

However, contradictory research contributes to an ongoing debate over the actual effectiveness of premarital preparation interventions (Fawcett et al., 2010) and I believe the present study could contribute to such findings. It is the responsibility of researchers to conduct more high-quality, longitudinal, and controlled research in the premarital preparation field to determine the best methods of intervention and their effectiveness with a wide range of couples.

Furthermore, limited studies have examined couple’s preferences regarding the content and characteristics of premarital preparation programs (Sullivan & Anderson, 2002). An important next step for researchers is to include the client perspective in order to

identify any discrepancies between couples' needs and what is being offered by practitioners. Thus, premarital preparation needs to be well advertised, accessible, and available to all couples. Helping couples learn that assistance is available to explore and strengthen their relationship is the first step for premarital preparation.

Fawcett et al. (2010) argued that “the time has come for marriage educators to critically examine and reconsider the content, intensity, methods, settings, delivery mechanisms, and target populations of premarital education” (p. 236). If Ghanaian researchers will empirically examine the delivery of premarital preparation in the country, and educators and practitioners will monitor this research and refine their practices, service delivery in this country may become more effective and relevant for Ghanaian couples.

5.3 Summary and Conclusion

This research is one interesting area and of concern to the researcher, which hopes to deduce the psychosocial factors of marital satisfaction. The research covered 200 samples from three (3) selected churches in the E.P church Ho. The first finding supported the hypothesis that, there will be no significant difference in marital satisfaction scores of those who had premarital counselling and those who did not. The second hypothesis

however was not supported which stated that there will be positive correlation between parental stress and marital satisfaction. The prediction that there will be a gender difference in marital satisfaction of respondents was also rejected. The forth hypothesis which suggested a positive correlation between self-esteem and marital satisfaction of respondents was also rejected. The final hypothesis which suggested that there will be a positive correlation between age at the time of marriage and marital satisfaction was also not supported. Invariably, premarital counselling, self-esteem, parental stress, gender and age at marriage have little or no impact on marital satisfaction from findings of this study.

This research has given an insight on how psychosocial factors can affect couples marital satisfaction. Couples can help in the development of their own marital satisfaction if they are aware of some of these factors. Discussions are done and further theories used in support. The study addressed some limitations of previous studies by conducting this in a typical Ghanaian setting and also using psychological factors in addition to demographic and social factors in exploring marital satisfaction of respondents. This information will be helpful for marital therapists, educators, and researchers in their work with couples and attempts to preserve marital quality and to promote in-tact relationships.

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APPENDIX A**QUESTIONNAIRE**

I am a level 700 MPhil student of the Methodist University College, Ghana. You have been selected to participate in this research “Psycho- social factors of marital satisfaction, a study on the married individuals of the E. P church Ho”. Your maximum co-operation will be appreciated. This questionnaire is designed to measure the degree of satisfaction you have in your present marriage. In case you do not understand anything, kindly draw my attention. This information will be treated as confidential.

SECTION 1 (DEMOGRAPHIC DATA)

- 1) Index No: 2) Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐
- 3) At what age were you married?
- 4) How long have you been married?
5. Educational level a) Not educated b) Semi educated.... c) Educated....
6. Ethnic group (please specify)
- 7) Do you have children/child? 8) Did you go through premarital counselling before marriage?

SECTION 2 (INDEX MARITAL SATISFACTION BY WALTER W. HUDSON)

It is not a test, so there are no correct or wrong answers. Answer each item as carefully

and as accurately as you can by placing a number beside each statement as follows

1 - Rarely or none of the time

2 - A little of the time

3 - Sometime

4 - A good part of the time

5 - Most or all of the time

1 I feel my partner is affectionate enough. _____

2 I feel that my partner treats me badly. _____

3 I feel that my partner really cares for me. _____ --

4 I feel that I would not choose the same partner if I had it to do over. _____

5 I feel that I can trust my partner. _____

6 I feel that our relationship is breaking up. _____

7 I feel that my partner doesn't understand me. _____

8 I feel that our relationship is a good one. _____

- 9 I feel that ours is a very happy relationship. _____
- 10 I feel that our life together is dull. _____
- 11 I feel that we have a lot of fun together. _____
- 12 I feel that my partner doesn't confide in me. _____
- 13 I feel that ours is a very close relationship. _____
- 14 I feel that I cannot rely on my partner. _____
- 15 I feel that we do not have enough interests in common. _____
- 16 I feel that we manage arguments and disagreements very well. _____
- 17 I feel that we do a good job of managing our finances. _____
- 18 I feel that I should never have married my partner. _____
- 19 I feel that my partner and I get along very well together. _____
- 20 I feel that our relationship is stable. _____
- 21 I feel that my partner is pleased with me as a sex partner. _____
- 22 I feel that we should do more things together. _____
- 23 I feel that the future looks bright for our relationship. _____
- 24 I feel that our relationship is empty. _____
- 25 I feel there is no excitement in our relationship. _____

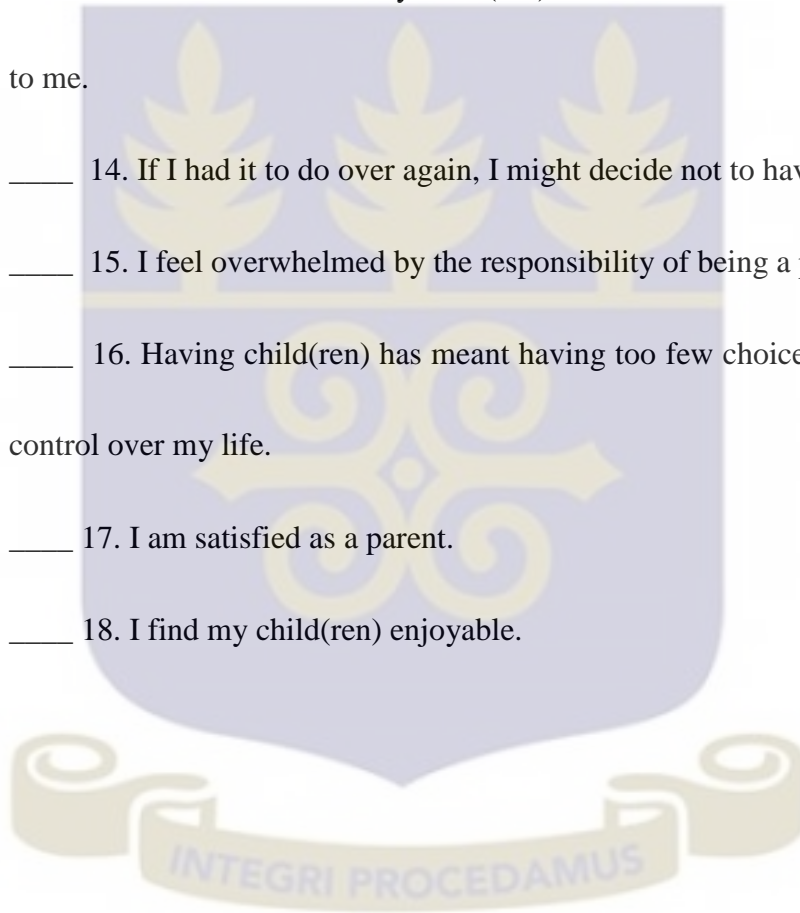
APPENDIX B (Parental stress scale)

The following statements describe feelings and perceptions about the experience of being a parent. Think of each of the items in terms of how your relationship with your child or children typically is. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following items by placing the appropriate number in the space provided.

Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Undecided 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree

1. ____ 1. I am happy in my role as a parent.
2. ____ 2. There is little or nothing I wouldn't do for my child(ren) if it was necessary.
3. ____ 3. Caring for my child(ren) sometimes takes more time and energy than I have to give.
4. ____ 4. I sometimes worry whether I am doing enough for my child(ren).
5. ____ 5. I feel close to my child(ren).
6. ____ 6. I enjoy spending time with my child(ren).
7. ____ 7. My child(ren) is an important source of affection for me.
8. ____ 8. Having child(ren) gives me a more certain and optimistic view for the future.
9. ____ 9. The major source of stress in my life is my child(ren).

10. ____ 10. Having child(ren) leaves little time and flexibility in my life.
11. ____ 11. Having child(ren) has been a financial burden.
12. ____ 12. It is difficult to balance different responsibilities because of my child(ren).
13. ____ 13. The behaviour of my child(ren) is often embarrassing or stressful to me.
14. ____ 14. If I had it to do over again, I might decide not to have child(ren).
15. ____ 15. I feel overwhelmed by the responsibility of being a parent.
16. ____ 16. Having child(ren) has meant having too few choices and too little control over my life.
17. ____ 17. I am satisfied as a parent.
18. ____ 18. I find my child(ren) enjoyable.



APPENDIX C

This questionnaire is designed to measure your self-esteem level. In case you do not understand anything, kindly draw my attention. This information will be treated as confidential.

STATEMENT		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	I am able to do things as well as most other people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6.	I take a positive attitude toward myself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8.	I wish I could have more respect for myself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9.	I certainly feel useless at times.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10.	At times I think I am no good at all.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

