



A STUDY OF SEXUAL RELATED DETERMINANTS AND MARITAL QUALITY
AMONG MARRIED COUPLES IN MALAYSIA

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Malaysia

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SEXUAL RELATED DETERMINANTS AND MARITAL QUALITY

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SEXUAL RELATED DETERMINANTS AND MARITAL QUALITY

Approval Form

This research paper attached hereto, entitled “A Study of Sexual Related Determinants and Marital Quality among Married Couples in Malaysia” prepared and submitted by “Ong Joo Yee, Rebecca Pang Sing Vun and Tan Jing Zhi” in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Social Science (Hons) Psychology is hereby accepted.

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Abstract

Divorce rate had been increasing dramatically in Malaysia over the past few years. One of the main reason was low level of marital quality. Hence, present study determined to examine the mediation effects of sexual satisfaction on sexual desire and compatibility towards marital quality among married individuals in Malaysia. Moreover, this study also aimed to study the moderation effect of marriage length on sexual satisfaction towards marital quality among married individuals in Malaysia. 302 participants who had registered under National Registration Department of Malaysia had participated our study. This study was a quantitative, cross-sectional, and also correlational study. Present study was using online survey method and purposive sampling methods to collect primary data. The results depicted that sexual satisfaction and compatibility significantly affected marital quality. Besides, results also showed that sexual satisfaction significantly mediated the effect of sexual desire and compatibility towards marital quality. However, results of this study indicated that the moderation effect of marriage length on sexual satisfaction towards marital quality was not significant. In a nutshell, marital counsellors and practitioners could put sexual discontentment or dissatisfaction as one of the reason that affected low marital quality of clients as sex-related behaviours or desires might be the factors that were affecting marital relationships of married couples in Malaysia.

Keywords: Marital quality, sexual desire, sexual compatibility, sexual satisfaction, length of marriage, married couples

Declaration

We declare that the material contained in this paper is the result of our own work and that due acknowledgement has been given in the bibliography and references to ALL sources be they printed, electronic or personal.

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List of Abbreviation

Abbreviation	Explanation
EMS	ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale
HISC	Hurlbert Index of Sexual Compatibility
IBM SPSS	International Business Machines Corporation; Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
ISS	Index of Sexual Satisfaction
LPPKN	Lembaga Penduduk dan Pembangunan Keluarga Negara
Max	Maximum
Min	Minimum
MPFS	Malaysian Population and Family Survey
SD	Standard Deviation
SDI – 2	Sexual Desire Inventory 2
SET	Social Exchange Theory
SSRN	Social Science Research Network
VIF	Variance Inflation Factors

Chapter I Introduction

1.1 Background of study

Marital quality had been gaining enormous attention among marriage-related researchers as it included great deal of variables which had been the traditional focus in marital research (Spanier & Lewis, 1980). As the divorce cases is in increasing trend, it has become a crucial matter in Malaysia. According to the Chief Statistician, Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Uzir Mahidin, Malaysia's latest divorce statistics will only be released at the end of 2018 by Department of Statistics Malaysia (The Sun Daily, 2017). Therefore, the most up-to-date divorce rate in Malaysia was the year of 2014, consisted of 33,842 cases of divorce in Malaysia. It has the highest number of divorce cases compared to the past two years, which are 29,253 and 29,583 in year 2012 and 2013 respectively (Ismail, 2016). Furthermore, Fifth Malaysian Population and Family Survey (MPFS) administered by the National Population and Family Development Board (LPPKN, Lembaga Penduduk dan Pembangunan Keluarga Negara) in 2014 also reported the increasing trend of divorce cases in Malaysia.

Overall, marital quality is interpreted as the subjective evaluation of a married couple's relationship from multidimensional perspective (Fincham & Bradbury, 1987). Number of studies showed that marital quality was a crucial determinant that caused marital separation, breakdown, and even divorce (Amato & Booth, 2001; Carr, Freedman, Cornman, & Schwarz, 2014; Previti & Amato, 2004). Good marital quality is vital as poor marital quality can lead to several negative consequences such as poor health condition, poor subjective well-being, infidelity and offspring of post-divorce well-being (Burman & Margolin, 1992; Carr, et al., 2014; Previti & Amato, 2004; Umberson, et al., 2006)

Most of the past studies have well defined that the marital quality is related with health. The results of the lab-based studies from clinical samples proved that body became different when marital disagreement happened, and it impacted on health negatively (Burman & Margolin, 1992). According to Umberson, Williams, Powers, Liu and Needham (2006), their study also revealed that marital quality influence health oddly in the general public. Besides, marital quality was positively associated with subjective well-being such as rating of one's life as a whole or self-reported life satisfaction and experiences of happiness while doing daily activities occasionally (Carr, Freedman, Cornman, & Schwarz, 2014). Additionally, negative changes in marital quality (i.e., reduced happiness, more thoughts of separating) occurred because of cheating and infidelity. Previti and Amato (2004) stated that infidelity was associated with a greater chance of future divorce and it would result in affecting their children to have low level of marital quality in the future associated by the divorce of parents (Amato & Booth, 2001).

There are several factors that were found to determine the quality of marriage. Marital quality can be determined by marital satisfaction whereby the effect is interrelated. Perrone and Worthington (2001) proposed that love, sexual satisfaction, communication, and satisfaction can directly affect marital quality. Furthermore, the presence of children, marital duration, age at marriage of the couple were the significant factors in determining marital quality (Bradbury, et al., 2000; Glenn, et al., 2010; VanLaningham, et al., 2001). Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach (2000) found that existence of children were correlated with lower marital quality as couples might spend less time concentrate and communicate to each other, and different parenting styles might take a toll on their relationship (Allendorf & Ghimire, 2013). Past study depicted that quality of marriage might be weakening by couples over time as they

had lost interest to each other and became less compatible (VanLaningham, Johnson, & Amato, 2001). Besides, Glenn, Uecker and Love (2010) stated that a higher risk of divorce and separation was predictable in those youngsters who married at a young age.

Apart from that, sex plays an important role in the relationship of a married couple. It benefited the couple such as lower cardiovascular risk (Liu, Waite, Shen, & Wang, 2016) and improved women's mood (Gallup, Burch, & Platek, 2002). Undeniably that sex has great impact to a couple's relationship and it brings obvious benefits to them. Therefore, present study attempts to find the importance of marital quality in term of sexual desire and sexual compatibility.

Apart from the factors mentioned above, sexual compatibility was found to be possible factor that influences marital relationship (Mark, Milhausen, & Maitland, 2013). Mark et al. (2013) had done a research revealed that sexual compatibility can be one of the aspects that contributed to the complication of the association between marital relationship and sexual satisfaction are, especially with perceived sexual compatibility (Mark et al.,2013). Followed by the research of Klusmann (2002), level of satisfaction and desire within a relationship had been influenced by the duration of the partnership, and this research had been supported by Murray and Milhausen (2012).

From these studies, the negative effects of poor marital quality had become serious issues which could resulted divorce cases increased dramatically in Malaysia (Ismail, 2016). It is vital to explore the issues mentioned above on adults, which is, do sexual desire and sexual compatibility influence marital quality? Unfortunately, most of the past studies regarding sexual desire and marital quality are yet to establish

specifically in Malaysia context. Thus, this study is to investigate the sexual desire and sexual satisfaction compatibility influence marital quality: mediates by sexual satisfaction. Besides, this study also keens to examine the moderation effect of the length of marriage between the relationship of sexual satisfaction and marital quality.

1.2 Problem statement

Divorce rate in Malaysia had risen throughout the year (Ismail, 2016). Besides, as published in Malaysian Digest (2016), divorce cases in Malaysia were mostly caused by “incompatibility” at 35.3 percent, which means that couples had growing apart, lack of intimacy, for example sexual intercourses. The list followed by infidelity (20.2 percent), irresponsible husband (14.1 percent), reason from in-laws (7.3 percent), financial problems (5 percent), and other reasons (18.1 percent). Moreover, Wolcott and Hughes (1999) denoted that there might have several reasons that would affect the decisions of marriage couples to divorce such as, affection, abusive behaviours or personality traits and socio-economic status. However, numerous past studies showed that marital quality was a crucial determinant that caused marital separation, breakdown, and even divorce (Amato & Booth, 2001; Carr, Freedman, Cornman, & Schwarz, 2014; Previti & Amato, 2004). Therefore, quality of marriage is essential in order to prevent divorce. Hence, present study intended to examine what factors significantly predicted marital quality among married couples in Malaysia.

Besides, several studies indicated numerous number of factors that would predict marital quality, such as love, communication, the presence of children, age at marriage of the couple (Bradbury, et al., 2000; Perrone & Worthington, 2001; Glenn, et al., 2010). In addition, past studies also indicated that sex life among married

couples significantly affect their quality of marriage (Chao, Lin, Ma, Lai, Ku, Kuo, & Chao, 2011; Impett et al., 2008; Perrone & Worthington, 2001; Stanik & Bryant, 2012; Yeh et al., 2006). However, sex-related topic was seldom discussed and not well studied in Malaysia context as the articles that supported the importance were from other countries. Hence, present study aims to focus on sex-related determinants that will predict marital quality.

Moreover, researchers suggested that affectionate interactions that relate to sexual satisfaction positively predicted couples' marital quality (Perrone & Worthington, 2001; Stanik & Bryant, 2012). According to Yeh, Lorenz, Wickrama, Conger and Elder (2006), married couples who were pleased with their sexual relations with their partners most likely to be satisfied with their marriages, in other words, higher marital satisfaction. Furthermore, past studies also showed that there was significant relationship between sexual desirability, compatibility and sexual satisfaction (Chao et al., 2011; Mark, Milhausen, & Maitland, 2013). Besides, past study indicated that there was positive relationship between sexual-related variables, such as sexual compatibility and desirability, and quality of intimate relationship (Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986; Impett et al., 2008). However, there was no study showed that sexual satisfaction had indirect effect between the association of sexual desire, compatibility and marital quality. Therefore, this study wanted to examine whether sexual desire and compatibility will predict marital quality with the mediating effect of sexual satisfaction.

In addition, researchers suggested that the influence of social demographic factors, such as age gender, marital status and duration, may play as mediating or moderating variables that affect relationship behaviours, which is the quality of

marriage, and may cause conflict that may lead to divorce (Wolcott & Hughes, 1999). In the research of Eldridge, Sevier, Jones, Atkins, and Christensen (2007) depicted that marriage length or duration may also serve as a potential moderator by the participants' characteristics of studies producing different results.

There is evidence that showed the length of intimate relationship inversely influenced sexual desire and satisfaction of couples, especially towards women (Impett, Strachman, Finkel & Gable, 2008). However, according to natural evolutionary theory in marital relationship, it stated that marriage stability and quality were shown as an inverted U-shape when affected by the length of marriage (Xu et al., 2016). This provided present study a subject to debate as the results of past studies showed inconsistency. Hence, this study determined to explore whether the association between sexual satisfaction and marital quality would affect by the moderation of the length of marriage among married couples in Malaysia.

There are numbers of marriage related studies that focused on marital quality of married couples as mentioned above (Perrone & Worthington, 2001; Whisman, 2014; Zhang, Fan & Yip, 2016). However, those studies were from North America or other parts of Asia, such as Hong Kong and Taiwan. After searching from several search engines that are accessible through e-database of UTAR library, such as ProQuest, PsychArticles, Social Science Research Network (SSRN), SAGE Journals and so on, and also Google Scholar, there are not many studies from Malaysia focused on marital quality of married couples associated to sex-related variables although this is a critical issue inversely contributed to the divorce rate in Malaysia. Those findings from other countries' might reflect differently to the population of Malaysia which characterized as multi-ethnic society. Therefore, the present study intends to

investigate the relationship between sexual related determinants and marital quality among Married couples in Malaysia.

1.3 Research Question

Based on the problem addressed above, this study suggests three research questions as follow:

1. Do length of marriage, sexual desire, compatibility and satisfaction predicts marital quality of married couple in Malaysia?
2. Does sexual satisfaction mediates in the effect of sexual desire and compatibility on marital quality mediate among married couple in Malaysia?
3. Does length of marriage moderate the relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital quality among married couple in Malaysia?

1.4 Research Objective

The main objective of the study is to examine the relationship between length of marriage, level of sexual desire, compatibility, satisfaction and marital quality among married couple in Malaysia. Specifically, this study proposed several research objectives for reaching the aim of the study, there are:

1. To examine whether the length of marriage, level of sexual desire, compatibility and satisfaction will predict marital quality among married couple in Malaysia.
2. To examine the mediation effect of sexual satisfaction in the effect of sexual desire and compatibility on marital quality among married couple in Malaysia.
3. To examine the moderation effect of the length of marriage on the relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital quality among married couple in Malaysia.

1.5 Research Hypothesis

H₁: Sexual satisfaction significantly mediated the relationship between sexual desire and marital quality among married couples in Malaysia.

H₂: Sexual satisfaction significantly mediated the relationship between sexual compatibility and marital quality among married couples in Malaysia.

H₃: Length of marriage significantly moderated the relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital quality among married couples in Malaysia.

1.6 Significance of study

As shown in the previous study, sexual desire, sexual compatibility, and sexual satisfaction play a role in affecting the marital quality. Little to known that numbers of negative effects of an unsuccessful marriage which possibly will influence on psychological growth of the children, emotional break down of both husband and wife when they divorce and there will be more single parenthood take place in the society. To aid this concern in this society, this study urges to know if sexual compatibility and sexual desire will help in strengthen the quality of a marriage. Will sexual satisfaction be one of the mediator that will influence sexual desire and sexual compatibility in achieving a good quality of marriage lives? If there is a risk which dissatisfaction happened in marriage couples' sexual life, the result of this study will help participants to understand more and figure out what are the possible causes to search for a solution.

The results of this study will be able to help in divorce prevention. Statistics and articles shows that divorce cases happened very commonly in Malaysia (Ismail, 2016; Malaysian Digest, 2016; The Sun Daily, 2017). Therefore, the first aim is to create awareness for divorce prevention. In fact, Malaysia is an Islamic country and as Asians, we are considered as "Collectivism", which means we seldom discuss about the topic related to sex openly. Most of us will choose to ignore this kind of topic but the reason that drive us to focus on marital quality, sexual desire, sexual compatibility and also sexual satisfaction is because we have an idea that they play a significant role in marriage. It is undeniable that self-reflection are instilled in when participants are going through the questions on their marriage, marital quality and their sex life relationship.

Statistics shown the divorce rate in Malaysia is increasing, results of the study will be helpful for counsellor to identify the reason behind poor quality of marriage and provide help to their clients. This study will aid counsellor or therapist to understand clients' situation not only from the aspect of physically and mentally but also the impact of their sexual life whether sexual compatibility and sexual desire will affect the marital quality. Investigation on this area will enhance and help marriage couples in their marriage quality. Thus, the results of this finding should make an important contribution to the field in understanding the effects of marital quality in sexual context.

1.7 Definitions

1.7.1 Marital Quality

Conceptual: Marriage are being evaluated across various aspects globally (Fincham & Bradbury, 1987), which involve the strength and limitation (positive & negative) of aspects of marriage, attitudes, and reports of behaviours and interaction patterns.

Therefore, high marital quality is highly explained by the self-reported satisfaction of the relationship, mainly depends on the positive attitudes toward their partner, low levels of negative behaviour and aggressive behaviour (Robles, Slatcher, Trombello, & McGinn, 2014). There are lot of committed, intimate inter-relationships that can be found from the past research, marital quality is one of them.

Operational: Marital Satisfaction subscale of the ENRICH scale (Olson et al., 1989) will be used in this study to assess the marital quality. Individual who scores high in this scale reflects a high degree of marital quality.

1.7.2 Sexual desire

Conceptual: Sexual desire is not well defined in the literature. However, the definitions sexual desire of the drive, need or motivation to engage in sexual activities is largely accepted (Impett, Strachman, Finkel, & Gable, 2008). Also, it can be described as the experience of fantasies, sexual thoughts, and the urge to captivate in sexual intercourse (Basson, 2002). Often, couples' sexual desires are high at the beginning of a romantic relationship because it helped them to be able to stay connected to each other intimately. Researchers found out that women showed low sexual desire than men.

Operational: In this study, sexual desire assesses by referring to the score of Sexual Desire Inventory 2 (Spector, Carey & Steinberg 1996) is a brief version which consists of 14-item scale that determined to examine the multidimensional construct of sexual desirability in an interrelationship context. Individual who scores high in this questionnaire shows high level of sexual desire.

1.7.3 Sexual Compatibility

Conceptual: Sexual compatibility refers to both partner share the same level, same interest and are having the same sexual values in sex (Hurlbert, Apt, Hurlbert & Pierce, 2000). In another study, it is defined as the behavioural and cognitive components of a sexual relationship are correspondent (Apt, Hurlbert, Sarmiento, & Hurlbert, 1996a). It is very important in helping couples' sexual experiences in an intimate relationship.

Operational: The level of sexual compatibility will be measured by using Hurlbert Index of Sexual Compatibility (HISC; Hurlbert, White, Powell, & Apt, 1993), scores

range from 0 to 100. In this study, respondents who score high depicts greater levels of sexual compatibility.

1.7.4 Sexual satisfaction

Conceptual: As mentioned in Lawrance and Byers (1998), sexual satisfaction refers to one's feeling, or attitude arise from the subjective evaluation of both dimensions for positive and negative in relations of one's sexual relationship. (Pop & Rusu, 2015).

According to Long (2005), for women, sexual satisfaction plays an important role in women's marital relationships and to which extend of the couples' intimacy and the sense of belonging in the sexual relationship.

Operational: Sexual satisfaction for present study will be measured by the Index of Sexual Satisfaction (Hudson, 1998) to measure the level of sexual satisfaction. Low scorer in this assessment indicates greater level of sexual satisfaction between married couple.

1.7.5 Marriage Couple

Conceptual: According to Jejunum (2003), marriage is known as two adults are united as spouses in a contractual relationship by law.

Operational: Marriage couple refers to couples who has been registered under National Registration Department (*Jabatan Pendaftaran Negara*).

1.7.6 Length of Marriage

Conceptual: Length of marriage will be counted once couple register their marriage under National Registration Department (*Jabatan Pendaftaran Negara*).

Operational: The years and months after marriage registration under National Registration Department (*Jabatan Pendaftaran Negara*) will be counted as the length of marriage.

1.8 Summary

This chapter introduce the issues related to the present study. As discussed in the research background, the importance of marital quality is highlighted as divorce cases is in increasing trend in Malaysia. The statement of problem was delivered specially focusing on sexual variables such as sexual compatibility, sexual desire, and sexual satisfaction that influence married couples in Malaysia. Meanwhile, this chapter also introduce the research questions, objectives and hypothesis of the current research. The main objective of the study is to examine the relationship between length of marriage, level of sexual desire, compatibility, satisfaction and marital quality among married couple in Malaysia. Eventually, the significance of present study and definition of terms used in this study is explained.

Chapter II Literature Review

2.1 Review Analysis

2.1.1 Marital Quality

Marital quality was defined as the subjective rating of a married couple's relationship from different dimensions and evaluations (Fincham & Bradbury, 1987). John, Seme, Roro, and Tsui (2016), in Peri-Urban Ethiopia, did a study on understanding what is marital quality to the couples and the result showed that trusting a partner, commitment in a relationship and dealing with or resolving conflicts are dominant the basic marital relationship among peri-urban Ethiopian couples. Marital quality can be measured using self-reported attitudes towards one's partner and marriage, grading of the partners' behaviours, or both (Robles, Slatcher, Trombello, & McGinn, 2014).

Marital quality is a very important aspect in a marriage as it affects the couple in different dimensions. Miller, Hollist, Olsen, and Law (2013) proposed that happy marriage could improve health. The researchers used data from the Marital Instability Over the Life Course Study, which gathered six times from 1681 married people who between age 18 and 55 from 1980 to 2000. The study used self-reporting of happiness within the marriage and the degree of companionship. The findings revealed that argument and enmity in the marriage lead to poorer health. The result was consistent with Choi and Marks's research in 2013.

On the other hand, a research found that adults who do not always gain spiritual support from the spouse, who do not have constant conversations or mutual agreement with their spouse, whose spouse has health issues, or who assess their

current sex life as not happy demonstrated stronger emotional and social loneliness (Gierveld, Groenou, Hoogendoorn, & Smit, 2009). In other words, good marital quality served as a removal of loneliness.

Nevertheless, poor marital quality can lead to several negative consequences such as poor health condition, poor subjective well-being, infidelity and offspring of post-divorce well-being (Burman & Margolin, 1992; Carr, et al., 2014; Previti & Amato, 2004; Umberson, et al., 2006). Studies proved that impairs immune response and increases cardiovascular reactivity (Burman & Margolin, 1992), marital tension (Umberson, Williams, Powers, Liu, & Needham, 2006) should be concerned when the quality of marriage is poor as it effects on health. Besides, marital quality is positively associated with subjective well-being. Carr, Freedman, Cornman, and Schwarz (2014) conducted a study with a sample of 722 respondents and the result showed that marital satisfaction was significant correlated with life satisfaction and occasional happiness. Previti and Amato (2004) stated that poor marital quality may result in infidelity and it is associated with a greater chance of future divorce too. Lastly, another serious impact of poor marital quality was it would affect their children to have low level of marital quality in the future associated by the divorce of parents (Amato & Booth, 2001).

Allendorf and Ghimire (2013) did a study regarding what determine the quality of marriage in a society that practiced marriage Blanc and it involved a sample of 329 married respondents aged 17 and above. The result reviewed that gender, education, and spouse options are the factors that affect marital quality in a society that practiced marriage Blanc. Women reported that they were less pleasurable with their marriages than men. Additionally, the result demonstrated that the higher the

education, the greater the quality of marriage. Respondents who had chance to opt their own spouse reported greater marital quality compared to those who did not.

Mirecki, Chou, Elliot, and Schneider (2013) conducted a study to explore whether marital satisfaction and quality between first and second marriages would be affected by different factors. This research concluded that those who were in their first marriages are tending to report greater levels of marital satisfaction than those who married for the second time. However, the level of marital satisfaction in second marriages was affected by the level of education of married couples. Researchers depicted that married couples in first marriages had higher marital satisfaction than those who were in their second marriages.

2.1.2 Relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital quality

Sexual satisfaction will affect one's marital quality. Yeh, Frederick, Lorenz, Wickrama, Conger, and Elder (2006) on a sample of 283 participated in a longitudinal study stated that sexual satisfaction plays a role in which consequently affect both marital quality and marital instability. They argue that sexual satisfaction serves as an important reward with positive interactive experiences that able to contribute to marriage couples' positive evaluations on marriages. Furthermore, this study also found that couples who were satisfied with their sex lives more likely to be happy and pleased with their marriages, which results in better marital quality. Besides, the research suggested that sexual satisfaction in marriages are essential even though sex may have different meanings to men and women, but the influences of sexual satisfaction is similar to both men and women.

There was a research done by Chao, Lin, Ma, Lai, Ku, Kuo and Chao (2011) in Taiwan about the interconnection among sexual satisfaction, sexual desire, and

quality of life in middle aged and older adults. Participants were randomly selected and approximately 450 participants were enrolled in this study, most of them are from Tainan Kaoshiung city and mainly community in the main southern Taiwan. It is notable that sexual desire has significant and is impacting directly on sexual satisfaction.

As mentioned above, this study foresees that sexual satisfaction could be one of the effect in influencing marital quality among young adults in Malaysia. This study is keen to find out whether sexual satisfaction is playing an outstanding cause on marital quality. However, those studies have not investigated the mediation effect of sexual satisfaction between sexual compatibility, sexual desire and marital quality. Hence, this study will be conducted to understand the underlying process of the effect of sexual compatibility and desire on marital quality by considering the potential mediating effect of sexual satisfaction.

2.1.3 Relationship between sexual compatibility and marital quality

Sexual compatibility is also a factor that cannot be ignored in determining the marital quality. However, there are limited article that determined the relationship associated with sexual compatibility and marital quality. According to Mark, Milhausen, and Maitland (2013), they proposed that sexual satisfaction seems to be correlated with an individual's perceiving sexual compatibility with their partner. For instance, the more sexually compatible the couple are, the more sexually satisfied the couple are. The study included 133 college-age heterosexual couples. The result found out that perceived sexual compatibility not merely affected level of sexual satisfaction, but also predicted relationship satisfaction. Past study indicated that the relationship between perceived sexual compatibility and sexual satisfaction were

strong. Besides, perceived sexual compatibility was consistently related with sexual and relationship satisfaction in married couples.

Hurlbert, Apt, Hurlbert, and Pierce (2000) did a study that involved a sample of 54 women with hypoactive sexual desire disorder to measure about their perceived sexual compatibility. Women who had a feeling of compatible with their partners sexually reported that they experienced less depression and sexual pressure and higher level of sexual desire and motivation. Other than that, women who felt sexually compatible with their companions reported that they are urging to have sex than those who did not.

Besides, other research proposed that perceived sexual compatibility may influence the sexual relationship differently in female and male. Female may value the important of sexual compatibility more than male (Hurlbert, Apt, & Rabehl, 1993). They may think that the degree of intimacy within their relationship are the same as their sexual compatibility (Offman & Matheson, 2005). However, men tend to value more on sexual compatibility in term of desire frequency of having sex but not for woman. According to Nicolosi, Moreira, Villa, and Glasser (2004), their study revealed that sexual compatibility in term of desire frequency of having sex was a good determinant of sexual functioning. The research are carried out between 1997 to 1998 and it involved 600 male participants who aged from 40 to 70 years old and it is carried out in Brazil, Italy, Japan and Malaysia. Besides, Offman and Matheson (2005) found that both gender's self-perceived sexual compatibility are able to predict their sexual satisfaction for.

Past studies showed that is a correlation between sexual satisfaction and marital quality. Unfortunately, sexual compatibility is a very unique and rare topic

and there is not much research about the relationship between sexual compatibility and sexual satisfaction can be found. Present study looks forward to find out the result of whether marital quality will be affected by sexual compatibility among marriage couples in Malaysia.

2.1.4 Relationship between sexual desire and marital quality

In the research on romantic relationship, sexual desire always found to be high in the early stage of romantic relationship. In maintain a higher level of sexual desirability is essential in a relationship maintaining the lineage of a relationship. However, many research have proposed that the urge in sexual desire will shrink over time. As some of them believe it is because couples have transitioned from a passionate love stage to a companionate love stage across the relationship journey (Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986). There are also researchers claimed that increasing or keep the desirability high relationship is possible in a long-term relationship. According to sex researchers or sexual therapists mentioned in the study above, by keeping sexual desire high and keep the passion alive will help in preserving the relationship.

There is little or no scientific support for the study of sexual desire affect marital quality precisely. However, study shows that sexual desire will affect sexual satisfaction in a marriage by some means. Murray and Milhausen (2012) conducted a longitudinal study where they collected data twice at different time point. It was to analyze the length of relationship and its results on sexual desire. With 170 participants, age range was 18 to 25. The result of the research found that sexual desire in men would not be affected by the length of relationship, it will remain constantly high whereas women's the desirability in sexual activity will be lessen as

time goes by. Thus, it shows a difference for men and women in experiencing sexual desirability in a relationship. Furthermore, study stated that in a relationship there might be other factors such as child bearing will influence sexual desire when the relationship is developing depends on one's gender. Nonetheless, study raised that connection between sexual satisfaction and sexual desire. It stated that inconsistency of the levels of desire are highly related to sexual satisfaction.

Besides, a study by Ferreira, Narciso and Novo (2012) conducted a study on sexual desire in couple relationship. Results in the study showed changes in sexual desire will influence couple satisfaction simultaneously. Moreover, the study recommended couple differentiation as mediator or moderator among sexual desire and intimacy. At the end of the study, couple differentiation is positively correlated with marital satisfaction.

Another study was conducted by Brezsnyak and Whisman (2004), they foresee sexual desire will eventually affects marital satisfaction. In this study, they enrolled 60 legally married couples from the community as their participants. The results show if couples are happy in the relationship, it will more probably to increase sexual activities as it is one of the way to show intimacy in a relationship for both husband and wife. Contrarily, when the relationship shows low in sexual desire, it develops disappointment in the relationship. It can be concluding by high level of desirability in relationship showed high satisfaction in marital relationship whereas low sexual desirability showed low in marital satisfaction.

Chao, Lin, Ma, Lai, Ku, Kuo and Chao (2011) hypothesized that life quality would positively associated with sexual satisfaction. Moreover, sexual desire would indirectly predict quality of life. A total of 283 participants were recruited randomly

in this study over 15 states of Taiwan. Results from past study indicated that sexual desire did not have direct impact on quality of life, but directly affected sexual satisfaction. Hence, sexual satisfaction would indirectly affect the relationship between sexual desire and quality of life.

Moreover, Chartier (2009) did a study to examine the association between the sexual desire and sexual satisfaction of women. A convenience sample consisted of 77 individuals, 45 women and 32 men was obtained. Three aspects of sexual desire were examined in this study which were biological, psychological, and social. The result showed that women's sexual desire significantly associated with sexual satisfaction on identified psychological (psychological arousal and sexual confidence) and social factors (sexual integrity), but not on any of the specified biological factors assessed in this study.

In the past studies, it shows that is a correlation between sexual desire and marital quality. However, in Malaysia it seldom mentioned about sexual desire in affecting marital satisfaction or quality. Present study look forward to find out the result of whether marital quality will be affected by sexual desire among marriage couples in Malaysia.

2.1.5 Sexual Satisfaction as mediator

To most couples, sexual satisfaction is crucial in every stage of a relationship (Byers, 1999). Women sexual satisfaction may less have determined by the physical interpersonal aspects of sexual intercourse but more on the interpersonal, affective, relationship aspects in a relationship was one of the finding from the study.

Furthermore, this study also found that sexual exchanges such as costs and rewards

act as an important effect on the sexual satisfaction of heterosexual couples in long term relationship compared to those who are in dating relationship.

Besides, according to the review of Christopher and Sprecher (2000), it stated that sexual satisfaction could be predicted by sexual and non-sexual facet of cognitions and behaviours. Study also revealed that sexual communication and self-disclosure associated with relationship satisfaction as mediated by sexual satisfaction. This review article also depicted that the declination of sexual satisfaction over time would increase the intention of married couples to divorce (Christopher & Sprecher, 2000).

Therefore, present study wants to examine whether sexual satisfaction plays an indirect role, which is a mediating variable, between the relationship of sexual desire, compatibility and marital quality.

2.1.6 Length of marriage as moderator

The duration of marriage was one of the variables that many researchers wanted to study about. For instance, Eldridge and colleagues (2007) had collected data from 182 married couples that were from different parts of America, such as Washington, California and Los Angeles. This study wanted to examine that whether the marriage length and distress level would influence the conflict structure of married couples. The results showed that marriage length and the distress level significantly predicted both conflict structures, which were wife-demand/husband-withdraw and husband-demand/wife-withdraw. This indicated that the higher the distress level, the longer the length of marriage, the more inflexible and unresponsive to changes in the matter that they discussed (Eldridge, Sevier, Jones, Atkins, & Christensen, 2007). Besides, researchers also stated that distress level, topic novelty and length of

marriage might have moderation effect on the relationship between the conflict structure and demand-withdraw communication (Eldridge et al., 2007).

Past study depicted that married couples will undergo a moment “honeymoon period” which marital satisfaction is remarkably high and chances of getting divorce is quite low (Xu et al., 2016). “Honeymoon period” will happen in early stage of marriage. However, the quality and satisfaction of marriage will decrease gradually over time. As time goes by, feeling of passion for each other start to fade; many problems and concerns start to develop. Eventually, married couples will feel their partners less attractive overtime (Luckey, 1966).

Besides, according to natural evolutionary theory, the attraction of marriage, which are the physical attractiveness between married couples and the actual attractiveness of the idea of being married, is the key factor to marriage stability and quality. When the attraction of marriage between couples decrease and other factors that will affect marital quality appear, the possibility of divorce will increase dramatically (Xu et al., 2016). However, the results that the researchers obtained from China was inconsistent with the theory. The results depicted that the declination in marital satisfaction and the rise in divorce risk did not advance consistently over time. The reasons were because the longer the duration of marriage, the more resources, such as time, money and so on, both spouses had invested in the marriage. Consequently, both couples would encounter huge losses if they choose to divorce. Hence, marriage duration indicates the level of investment from both partners (Christopher & Sprecher, 2000). Thus the longer the length of marriage, the less likely a couple is to divorce (Xu et al., 2016).

Moreover, Christopher and Sprecher (2000) reviewed that the length of marriage would influence the marital quality of married couples. Researchers also stated that the frequency of sexual intercourse between young married couples decreased and predicted the low level of marital quality, moderated by the duration of marriage (Christopher & Sprecher, 2000).

In addition, the study of Pruchno, Wilson-Genderson, and Cartwright (2009) determined to explore the influence of variables, such as sex, race, length of marriage and so on, between the pattern of change in depressive symptoms and marital satisfaction of patients and spouses. 315 patients and 315 spouses had been recruited to participate in this study. The results depicted that the longer the marriage duration of couples, the lesser the marital happiness. Furthermore, this study also indicated that the length of marriage had negative moderation effects on the relationship between both middle-aged couples that with or without depressive symptoms and marital satisfaction (Pruchno et al., 2009).

In conclusion, there were inconsistent results based on past studies. This leads to our present study to determine whether length of marriage has moderating effect on the relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital quality.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theory that this study will be using is the theory of social exchange. It is used to explain the association among the variables of the length of marriage, sexual desire, compatibility, satisfaction and marital quality.

Social Exchange Theory (SET) was first proposed by George Homans who have combined several theories and fields in order to develop SET (Cook & Rice,

2001; Redmond, 2015). This theory is one of the important theoretical perspective in the field of social psychology. It is used to examine the behaviours and thoughts in different social settings, such as workplaces (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), marriage and romantic relationships (Nakonezny & Denton, 2008), and familial relationships (Redmond, 2015). Researchers agreed upon the definition of social exchange as the exchange of the activities between at least two individuals in terms of cost and rewards (Redmond, 2015). Researchers insisted to employ SET to seek explanation of the impacts of the costs and rewards between individuals on the development, maintenance, and decay of the exchange relationships (Nakonezny & Denton, 2008; Redmond, 2015).

According to researchers, individuals would like to receive valued rewards from other parties after they had forfeit something of worth, in order words, paid the costs (Cook & Rice, 2001; Redmond, 2015). Rewards were considered as satisfaction, gratification and attainment of needs in social exchange. Besides, Homans proposed that value of a reward may differ among individuals, hence, same rewards may not be considered as rewards to different individuals (Redmond, 2015). For instance, chicken nuggets could be a reward to someone else but to someone that was on diet, it was not considered as a reward, and might even had negative value.

Past studies that applied SET stated that married couples produce positive outcomes based on costs and rewards, but both of them ought to value the same activity upon a relational level to sustain comparative interests (Redmond, 2015). Therefore, if couple has high level of sexual compatibility (costs and rewards), it will yield positive outcomes, that is higher level of marital quality (profits), compare to

those couple that has different sexual compatibility (Nakonezny & Denton, 2008; Redmond, 2015). If they were sexually incompatible, they would experience inequity.

In other words, if both couple satisfied with the efforts and energy they put in sexual intercourse (costs) and fulfilled their sexual desire (rewards), this would gain high level of marital quality (positive outcome) (Redmond, 2015). Moreover, the sexual attraction of married couples are foreseen to differ proportionally with the perceived rewards of the marital quality and inversely with the perceived costs from SET perspective (Nakonezny & Denton, 2008). Therefore, marital couples examine their marital quality through a subjective calculation method in which the perceived rewards and costs experienced in their marriage are considered and then added up to discover the net profit.

Furthermore, based on the model of commitment, married couples that had higher satisfaction in relationship and level of investment in relationship, which is the length of intimate relationship, would have higher commitment to their relationship (Christopher & Sprecher, 2000). On the other hand, if individuals did not receive expected rewards, or even did not receive any, and lead to low level of satisfaction with relationship, it might cause relationship termination, such as break up or divorce, due to the lacked reinforcement (Aronson, Wilson, & Akert, 2014; Cook & Rice, 2001).

In a nutshell, Social Exchange Theory proposes a framework in social interactions between married couples by interpreting how costs and rewards predict the outcomes. Hence, this study is using SET to describe and explain the relationship between the length of marriage, sexual desire, compatibility, satisfaction and marital quality.

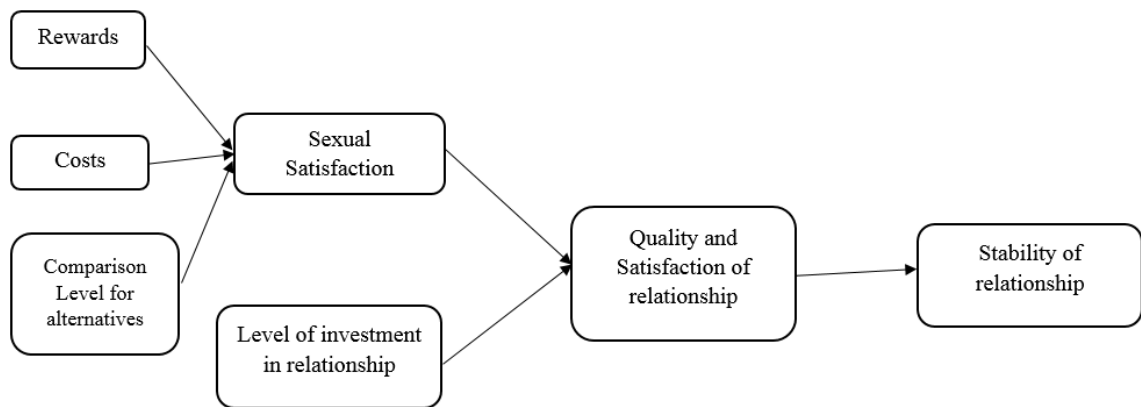


Figure 2.1. The interpersonal exchange model of sexual satisfaction by Lawrence and Bryers (1995) (Adapted from Christopher & Sprecher, 2000).

2.3 Conceptual Framework

In current study, there are two independent variables, and they are sexual desire and sexual compatibility, that will predict one dependent variable, which is marital quality, mediates by sexual satisfaction. Past research did not state the direct relationship between sexual desire, compatibility and marital quality. However, studies indicated that sexual desire and compatibility predicted sexual satisfaction (Brezsnyak & Whisman, 2004; Mark, Milhausen, & Maitland, 2013) and sexual satisfaction has strong effect towards marital quality (Yeh, et al, 2006). Hence, this study determined to examine the mediation effect of sexual satisfaction between the association of sexual desire, compatibility and marital quality. Besides, research also showed that the duration of marriage would have impact on marital outcomes (Eldridge, et al., 2007). Therefore, present study aimed to examine whether sexual satisfaction can predict marital quality with the moderation of the length of marriage. Figure 2.2 indicates the conceptual framework of this study that related to the

association among sexual desire, compatibility, satisfaction, the length of marriage and marital quality.

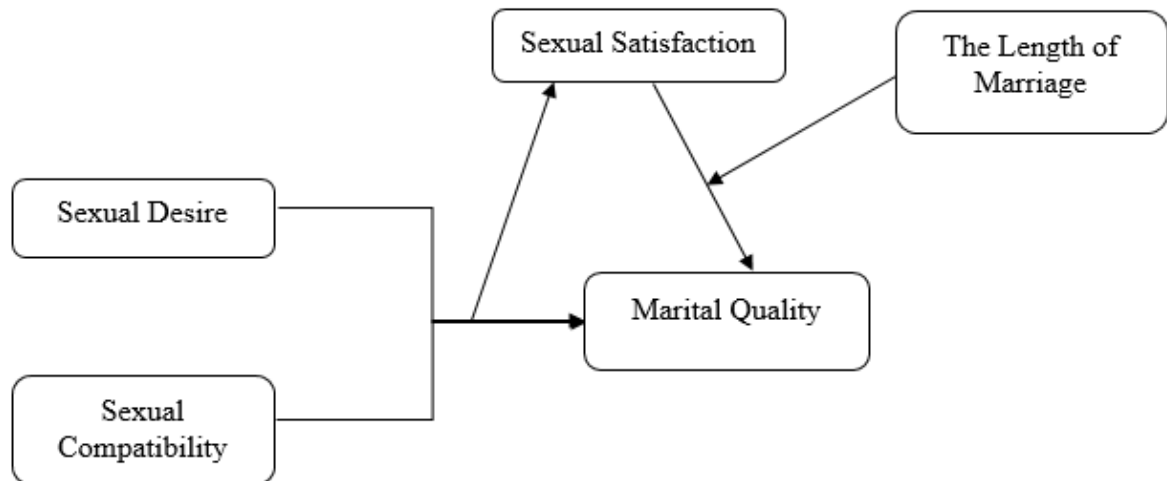


Figure 2.2. Conceptual framework of A Study of Sexual Related Determinants and Marital Quality among Married Couples in Malaysia.

2.4 Summary

This chapter has reviewed all the variables, which are sexual desire, compatibility, satisfaction, length of marriage and marital quality, from the past studies. Besides, it has also depicted the relationship between independent variables, which are sexual desire, compatibility, satisfaction and marital quality. Furthermore, sexual satisfaction has been discussed as a mediator in past studies. In addition, the length of marriage of married couples have also been reviewed as a moderator in several previous studies. Chapter 2 has also explained the relationship between the variables in present study by using Social Exchange Theory in the subtopic of

theoretical framework. Lastly, the conceptual framework of this study has been introduced.

Chapter III Methodology

Present study aimed to examine whether sexual desire and compatibility significantly influence marital quality of married couples in Malaysia, which mediated by sexual satisfaction and moderated by the length of marriage. This chapter was separated into several subsections. Firstly, the research design of present study was mentioned. Secondly, research subject, sampling method, and sample size were discussed separately in different subsections respectively. Besides, one of the subsections was also discussed the procedures, which were the research and translation procedure, of this study. Furthermore, the next subsection explained and introduced all of the instruments that this study will be using. Finally, the last section explained how the data were collected for this study will be analyzed.

3.1 Research Design

Quantitative research design was used for this study to collect numerical data (Bluman, 2009). Moreover, present study was a cross-sectional study as the data was collected once from the participants (Bluman, 2009). Besides, this present study was a correlational study as this study intended to identify the relationship between the variables, including the relationships between the length of marriage, sexual desire, compatibility, satisfaction and marital quality among married couples in Malaysia (Bluman, 2009). Furthermore, the survey method of this study was self-administered online survey (Bluman, 2009). Participants that participated in this study was anonymous in order to protect the privacy of the participants. However, the demographic information, such as age, race, gender, income, relationship status and length of marriage of the participants were collected. An online survey platform, Qualtrics, was used to obtain necessary information and data on the respective

variables under study. The data that have been collected was only accessible by the researchers and supervisor.

3.2 Research Subject

The target population of this study was married couples, both men and women, in all states of Malaysia, which consisted of 13 states, which are Johor, Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Selangor, Perak, Pulau Pinang, Perlis, Kedah, Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, Sabah, and Sarawak, and 3 federal territories, which consisted of the federal territory of Kuala Lumpur, Labuan, and Putrajaya. According to the statistics by Department of Statistics Malaysia (2017), the total number of the population in 2016 was 31.6 million and estimated that the total number will rise to 32 million. The total amount of gender in Malaysia are 16.5 million of male and 15.3 million of female. The estimated percentage of population of different races are 68.8% of Bumiputera, 23.2% of Chinese, 7.0% of Indian, and 1.0% of other races in year 2017 (Department of Statistic Malaysia, 2017). Lastly, statistic showed that the estimated percentage of married couples in Malaysia is 59.6% in the year of 2010 (Department of Statistic Malaysia, 2011). As mentioned above in Chapter 1, the latest statistic will only be updated at the end of 2018 (The Sun Daily, 2017).

3.3 Sample Size

A statistical power analysis using Gpower was performed to estimate the sample size needed for this research (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). The effect size used in this research is .15 which resembled the medium level along with $\alpha = .05$, power = .95 and number of predictors = 4. The results of the power analysis showed that a minimum of 129 participants would be needed to achieve an appropriate power level for this study. To consider the possibility of having missing

value or respondent who dropout, another 10% was added in the estimation on top of the suggested sample size. Hence, present study initially aimed to recruit a minimum of 142 respondents in the study.

3.4 Sampling Method

Non-probability sampling method was used in this study, purposive sampling method was adopted to collect data (Bluman, 2009). The adoption of purposive sampling method was required lesser money and time to be accomplished. Besides, it is difficult to use randomization sampling method, which was a type of probability sampling method, as this was a nationwide marital-related study. Therefore, purposive sampling method was considered as the most suitable sampling method to apply in marriage related study. The participants of this study were recruited by the researchers based on certain predetermined conditions by the researchers. The targeted population not only must be Malaysian, and also, they must be legally married and registered under National Registration Department (*Jabatan Pendaftaran Negara*). Hence, those that did not meet the criteria and conditions which were set by researchers, such as non-Malaysian, marital status is widowed, separated, divorce or single, was excluded from the study.

3.5 Procedure

3.5.1 Research Procedure

Qualtrics, an online survey program was used to collect data in present study. First of all, UTAR Scientific & Ethical Review Committee from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Kampar campus approved the ethical clearance for this study. Before the data collection begin, a pilot test would be conducting to test the reliability of the

instruments. Thus, 27 participants involved in the pilot study regardless of the ethnicity.

After we have done with the pilot study, the link of the online survey form would be sent through social media as Facebook, Instagram, Email and Whatsapp to reach our target participants in Malaysia. The survey was only available in English version as there was no translation was done in this study. First, when the participants clicked on the link given by the researchers, there was shown with an online informed consent form. Agree upon the participants were lead them to another link which consisted questionnaires. There were 5 sections, which were demographic information, followed by the questionnaires ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS), Hurlbert Index of Sexual Compatibility (HISC), Sexual Desire Inventory 2 (SDI - 2), Index of Sexual Satisfaction (ISS) respectively. Everything about this study was done private and confidentiality, no personal data was leaked. The explanation of the private and confidential and consent was understood clearly in the online survey to avoid any misapprehension during the present study.

Researchers' contact information was provided in the survey informed consent page for the participants to contact the researchers if there was any questions throughout the study. Participation in this study was voluntarily, participants need to understand that withdrawal was accepted if participants felt uncomfortable caused by the questions that were given throughout the study. Once participants completed all the questions in the online survey, they just need to submit their response and the results were ready to be analyzed.

3.6 Research Instrument

This study consisted two independent variables, which were sexual desire and compatibility; one mediation variable, which was sexual satisfaction, one moderator variable, which was length of marriage; and one dependent variable, which was marital quality. Different instruments were used to measure all variables except length of marriage was asked in the demographic data questionnaire.

3.6.1 Demographic Information

Demographic information was collected from the participants. It included basic demographic information and it assisted the researchers to understand participant's gender, age, and ethnicity. Moreover, the participants were required to fill in their sexuality (e.g., heterosexual or non-heterosexual). Besides, the information regarding relationship status (e.g., married, widowed, separated, divorced, or single) and length of current romantic relationship was collected to understand the participant's marital status and condition.

3.6.2 ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS)

ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (Fowers & Olson, 1993) was used in this study to measure the marital quality among married couples in Malaysia. EMS is a 5-point Likert scale, which ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Besides, this scale is a 15-item scale that consists of Idealistic Distortion scales, which includes 5 items, they are items 1, 4, 6, 9, and 13, and the remain items are in Marital Satisfaction scales, which consists of 10 items. Items 2, 5, 8, 9, 12, and 14 are reversed items. If the respondent chose 5, which is strongly disagree, it would consider as 1; if 4, which is disagree, it would consider as 2; 3, which is neutral,

remains unchanged (Fowers & Olson, 1993). Furthermore, his scale consists of items such as “My partner and I understand each other perfectly.” and “I am not pleased with the personality characteristics and personal habits of my partner.” The Cronbach’s alpha internal reliability of this scale is .86. According to Fowers and Olson (1993), the higher the test score, the better the marital quality of married couples.

3.6.3 Hurlbert Index of Sexual Compatibility (HISC)

Hurlbert Index of Sexual Compatibility was used in present study to test the level of sexual compatibility among married couples in Malaysia (Hurlbert, White, Powell, & Apt, 1993). This scale is a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (all the time). Moreover, HISC consists of 25 items. Within this item, items 4, 5, 9, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 23 are reversed items. It means that if participants chose 1 (never), it would consider as 5; if participants chose 2 (rarely), it would consider as 4; if participants chose 3 (some of the time), it remained unchanged (Hurlbert, White, Powell, & Apt, 1993). Some sample items are “My partner sexually pleases me.” and “I think my partner desires too much sex.” The reliability of HISC is .81 (Hurlbert, White, Powell, & Apt, 1993). The score of the scale indicates that the degree of sexual compatibility among married couples.

3.6.4 Sexual Desire Inventory 2 (SDI - 2)

In this study, Sexual Desire Inventory-2 (SDI-2) was used to measure the sexual desire between marriage couples (Spector, Carey, & Steinberg, 1996), inclusive of 14 items. This questionnaire is using an 8-point Likert scale. In this questionnaire, two independent factors were presented. They were labelled Dyadic Sexual Desire and Solitary Sexual Desire. Items 1-9 carrying high weightage on

Dyadic aspect while on the items 10-13 was carrying another high weightage for Solitary aspect. Item 9 and 13 focus more on perceived sexual desire in comparison to peers rather than the quantity of sexual desire. Item 14 was made not to lead to either dimension of sexual desire (which means not consider as sexual desire). Items examples are “During the last month, how often would you have liked to engage in sexual activity with partner (e.g. Touching each other genitals, intercourse, etc.)” and “How strong is your desire to engage in sexual behavior by yourself?” The Cronbach’s alpha internal reliability of this scale was examined differently for Dyadic desire scale and Solitary desire scale, which are .86 and .96 respectively (Spector, Carey, & Steinberg, 1996). The degree of the score represented the level of the sexual desire of the married couples.

3.6.5 Index of Sexual Satisfaction (ISS)

Index of Sexual Satisfaction was used to determine the sexual dissatisfaction of married couples in Malaysia (Hudson, 1998). It consists of 25 items and it is a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (None of the time) to 7 (All of the time). Reversed items such as items 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15, 18, 20, 24, and 25 need to be reversed before summing them up. This scale consists items such as “I feel that my partner enjoys our sex life.”, “Sex with my partner has become a chore for me.” and so on. Cronbach’s alpha for ISS is .92 (Hudson, 1998). The higher the score of this scale, the higher the degrees of sexual satisfaction.

3.7 Reliability

The scales that were used for present study had been pilot tested. A total of 41 responses aged 21 to 67 years old were collected. However, only 27 responses fulfilled our requirements to run the pilot study. On the other hands, the actual study

was conducted for a month from 16 October 2018. 255 married participants aged 18 to 60 years old were recruited. The result for reliability coefficients for all the instruments used in the pilot and study were as Table 3.1. All the measurements used in both pilot and actual study were reliable in the present study as the Cronbach's alpha were higher than .60.

Table 3.1

Reliability Coefficient for All the Measures Used in Pilot and Actual Study

Measure	Cronbach's alpha			
	No. of Item	Original Scale	Pilot Study (n =27)	Actual Study (n = 255)
ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS)	5	.86	.684	.903
Hurlbert Index of Sexual Compatibility (HISC)	25	.81	.875	.924
Sexual Desire Inventory 2 (SDI - 2)	14	.86 to .96	.808	.881
Index of Sexual Satisfaction (ISS)	25	.92	.846	.943

3.8 Exploratory Data Analysis

Test of Normality. To be normal distributed scales, the value of skewness and kurtosis of different scales must fall between -2.0 and +2.0 (Kim, 2013). According to Table 3.2, the distributions of scores of ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS) was negatively skewed (-.175), Hurlbert Index of Sexual Compatibility (HISC) was positively skewed (.117), Sexual Desire Inventory 2 (SDI - 2) was positive skewed (.159) and Index of Sexual Satisfaction (ISS) was negatively skewed (-.209). As the results showed were in between -2.0 and +2.0, hence all the data were normally distributed in the present study.

Table 3.2

Normality for all the Variables Using EDA and Skewness Kurtosis (N=255)

Measure	SD	Mean	5% Trimmed Means	Skewness	Kurtosis
ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS)	10.006	51.89	51.92	-.175	-.342
Hurlbert Index of Sexual Compatibility (HISC)	10.649	82.20	82.07	.117	-.024
Sexual Desire Inventory 2 (SDI - 2)	14.819	44.93	44.78	.159	-.23
Index of Sexual Satisfaction (ISS)	22.23189	119.0549	119.1612	-.209	-.732

Note. SD: Standard Deviation

Multicollinearity. Pearson's Product-moment correlation coefficient was conducted to see the multicollinearity in which there was any single predictor variables highly correlated to others independent variables. Multicollinearity happened when the r -value reached .90 and above (Graham, 2003). Table 3.3 showed that there was variable highly correlated in the present study ranged between .242 and .870. However, only length of marriage was negatively with other variables ranged between -.060 to -.262.

Table 3.3

*Pearson's Product-moment Correlation Coefficients Matrix between the Study**Variables in Overall Sample (N=255)*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS)	1				
2. Hurlbert Index of Sexual Compatibility (HISC)	.686***	1			
3. Sexual Desire Inventory 2 (SDI - 2)	.711***	.870***	1		
4. Index of Sexual Satisfaction (ISS)	.242***	.243***	.261***	1	
5. Length of Marriage	-.060	-.066	-.262**	-.101	1

Note. ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Multicollinearity was measured using tolerance value and variance inflation factor (VIF). Referring to Table 3.4, there was result of multicollinearity test for all the independent variables. Multicollinearity was predicted as the lower value of the tolerance effects (less than .02 or .01) (Graham, 2003). According to Table 3.4, the tolerance values were ranged from 0.243 to 0.931, therefore, there was no multicollinearity between all the variables. Besides, multicollinearity happened when the VIF value was above 10 (Graham, 2003). The VIF values found were ranged from 1.074 to 4.156. Hence, there was no highly correlated variables in the present study as the VIF values were lower than 10.

Table 3.4

Result of Multicollinearity Test for All the Independent Variable (N=255)

Model		Tolerance Value	VIF
1	(Constant)		
	Hurlbert Index of Sexual Compatibility (HISC)	.243	4.116
	Sexual Desire Inventory 2 (SDI - 2)	.931	1.074
	Index of Sexual Satisfaction (ISS)	.241	4.156

Note. VIF: Variance Inflation Factors

3.9 Data Analysis

Various statistical techniques were adopted in the data analyses. Univariate, bivariate and multivariate were also included in this study for analysing the data.

Descriptive statistics was used to present quantitative descriptions in a manageable form. Descriptive statistics was to make the large amounts of data into a simpler summary and it minimized a great deal of data (Research Methods Knowledge Base, 2006). Descriptive statistics was generated through the IBM SPSS v20. The descriptive statistics revealed the general pattern of all variables understudied.

Furthermore, influential statistics was used and explained as it was to make judgements from the data to more ordinary status and utilize the descriptive statistics to understand what happened in our data. Thus, Pearson correlation and Multiple Regression were applied to determine the association between variables. Moreover, mediation and moderation analysis using Hayes' SPSS Macro PROCESS were conducted to examine the mediation and moderation effect of mediator and moderator in the relationship between variables understudies.

3.10 Summary

In conclusion, present study was a quantitative research. Moreover, it used cross-sectional and correlational methods. It was also uses self-administered online survey methods to collect data from 302 married individuals in Malaysia. The sampling method that was used in this study was non-probability sampling method, which was purposive sampling method. The questionnaire for this study consisted of demographic information, ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS), Hurlbert Index of Sexual Compatibility (HISC), Sexual Desire Inventory 2 (SDI-2), and Index of Sexual Satisfaction (ISS). Collected data was analyzed by using different statistical analysis techniques, which are Pearson's Correlation Coefficient, Multiple Regression Analysis, and Hayes' SPSS Macro PROCESS.

Chapter IV Result

This chapter would be discussing the findings that were analysed from the collected responses of married couple in Malaysia. The results would be analysed by using statistical software, which is IBM SPSS Statistics 21. The results were analysed based on the objectives of present study, which were to examine the effects of sex-related variables on marital quality. The tests that would be used in this study included descriptive analysis, reliability test, and inferential analysis by using Cronbach's alpha reliability, Pearson's correlation analysis, multiple linear regression, and PROCESS macro analysis.

4.1 Data Cleaning

Responses were collected from a total of 302 respondents participated in this study. However, only 255 responses were used in this study. 47 responses were rejected due to incompleteness of questionnaire and did not fulfil the requirement to participate in this study.

4.2 Descriptive Statistic

Respondents' background. The total number of 255 married participants were collected in the present study. According to Table 4.1, 111 males (43.5%) were collected which was lesser than females (144, 56.5%). Most of the participants were Chinese (87.8%), Indian (7.5%), followed by Malay (3.5%), and other did not specify their ethnicity (1.2%). On the other hand, most of the participant's religion were Christianity (43.5%), followed by Buddhism (31.0%), Taoism (10.2%), Islam (4.3%), Hinduism (4.9%), Atheist (5.9%) and others (0.8%) is free thinker.

Table 4.1

Age, Gender, Ethnicity, Religion (N=255)

	n (%)	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Age		31.17	11.07	20	67
Gender					
Male	111 (43.5)				
Female	144 (56.5)				
Ethnicity					
Chinese	224 (87.8)				
Malay	9 (3.5)				
Indian	19 (7.5)				
Others	3 (1.2)				
Religion					
Buddhism	79 (31.0)				
Christianity	111 (43.5)				
Islam	11 (4.3)				
Hinduism	13 (5.1)				
Taoism	26 (10.2)				
Atheist	13 (5.1)				
Others	2 (.8)				

Note. SD: Standard Deviation

Based on Table 4.2, average monthly income of the participants who were above RM3000 was 57.6%, between RM1200 - RM3000 fall on 25.2%, and below RM1200 was 17.2%. Furthermore, more than half of the participants had completed their bachelor's degree or equivalent (51.4%), 17.3% of them completed pre-university or equivalent, 14.1% of them completed upper secondary school, 8.6% of them completed master's degree, 4.7% of them completed lower secondary school and lastly for primary school and no schooling completed had the same percentage, which was 0.8% of the participants. The mean of length of marriage was 10.09 years (SD = 9.80), where the minimum was one month, and maximum was 42 years.

Table 4.2

Monthly Income (RM), Educational Level, Length of Marriage (N=255)

	n (%)	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Average Monthly Income (RM)					
Below 1200	43 (17.2)				
1200 – 3000	63 (25.2)				
Above 3000	144 (57.6)				
Educational Level					
Primary School (UPSR)	2 (.8)				
Lower Secondary School (PMR/PT3)	12 (4.7)				
Upper Secondary School (SPM)	36 (14.1)				
Pre-University/ Diploma/ STPM/ Equivalent	44 (17.3)				
Bachelor's Degree/ Equivalent	131 (51.4)				
Master's Degree/ Equivalent	22 (8.6)				
PhD/ Equivalent	6 (2.4)				
No schooling completed	2 (.8)				
Length of Marriage (years)		10.09	9.80	0.08	42

Note. SD: Standard Deviation; Min: Minimum; Max: Maximum

By referring to Table 4.3, 85 (33.3%) of the participants were from Johor, 53 (20.8%) from Selangor, 26 (10.2%) from Perak, 25 (9.8%) from Pahang, 21 (8.2%) from Penang, 18 (7.1%) from Sabah, 14 (5.5%) from Negeri Sembilan, 7 (2.7%) from Melaka, 3 (1.2%) from Kedah, 2 (0.8%) from Perlis and lastly 1 (0.4%) from Sarawak.

Table 4.3

State (N=255)

State	n (%)
Johor	85 (33.3)
Melaka	7 (2.7)
Negeri Sembilan	14 (5.5)
Selangor	53 (20.8)
Perak	26 (10.2)
Penang	21 (8.2)
Perlis	2 (.8)
Kedah	3 (1.2)
Pahang	25 (9.8)
Sabah	18 (7.1)
Sarawak	1 (.4)

Based on Table 4.4, 22 respondents (8.7%) experienced sexual infidelity, whereas 26 participants (10.3%) experienced emotional infidelity in current relationship. Besides, 18 participants (7.1%) reported that they were engaged in sexual infidelity, whereas 20 respondents (7.9%) were emotionally infidel towards their spouses. Furthermore, 72 participants (28.7%) reported that they would forgive their spouses if they engaged in sexual infidelity, and 90 participants (35.9%) were willing to forgive their spouse if they engaged in emotional infidelity.

Table 4.4

Sexual Infidelity, Emotional Infidelity, Spouse's Sexual Infidelity Experience, Spouse's Emotional Infidelity Experience in Current Relationship, Forgiving Sexual Infidelity, Forgiving Emotional Infidelity of Participants (N=255)

	n (%)
Sexual Infidelity	
Yes	22 (8.7)
Emotional Infidelity	
Yes	26 (10.3)
Spouse's Sexual Infidelity Experience	
Yes	18 (7.1)
Spouse's Emotional Infidelity Experience	
Yes	20 (7.9)
Forgiving Sexual Infidelity	
Yes	72 (28.7)
Forgiving Emotional Infidelity	
Yes	90 (35.9)

Table 4.5 showed the frequency distributions of different variables, including marital quality, sexual desire, sexual compatibility, and sexual satisfaction. All the means and standard deviations of the variables were calculated by using IBM SPSS Statistic 21. The mean score for marital quality was 51.89 (SD = 10.01). Besides, the mean score of sexual desire was 44.93 (SD = 14.82), whereas sexual compatibility was 82.20 (SD = 10.65). Finally, the mean score of sexual satisfaction was found to be 119.05 (SD = 22.23).

Table 4.5

Frequency Distribution of Marital Quality, Sexual Desire, Sexual Compatibility, and Sexual Satisfaction. (N=255)

	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Marital Quality	51.86	10.01	28	75
Sexual Desire	44.93	14.82	12	80
Sexual Compatibility	82.20	10.65	58	110
Sexual Satisfaction	119.05	22.23	73	168

4.3 Inferential Statistic

Research question 1: Do length of marriage, sexual desire, compatibility and satisfaction predict marital quality of married couple in Malaysia?

Table 4.6 shown that marital quality was positively correlated with sexual compatibility, $r(254) = .686, p < .001$, sexual desire, $r(254) = .711, p < .001$, sexual satisfaction, $r(254) = .252, p < .001$. Sexual Compatibility was positively correlated with sexual desire, $r(254) = .870, p < .001$ and sexual satisfaction, $r(254) = .243, p < .001$. Furthermore, sexual desire was positively correlated with sexual satisfaction, $r(254) = .261, p < .001$. However, length of marriage was negatively correlated with sexual desire $r(254) = -.060, p < .01$, while the other variables are not statically correlated, sexual compatibility $r(254) = -0.66, p = .295$, sexual satisfaction $r(254) = -.262, p = .109$ and marital quality $r(254) = -.101, p = .337$.

Table 4.6

Pearson's Correlation Coefficients of Variables (N=255)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. Marital Quality	1				
2. Sexual Compatibility	.686***	1			
3. Sexual Desire	.711***	.870***	1		
4. Sexual Satisfaction	.242***	.243***	.261***	1	
5. Length of Marriage	-.060	-.066	-.262**	-.101	1

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table 4.7 showed the result of predictors, sexual Compatibility, sexual desire, and sexual satisfaction toward marital quality among married couples in Malaysia. Marital quality accounted for a significance of 53 % of the variance in the compliance, $R^2 = .53$, $F(3,251) = 93.14$, $p < .001$. Result showed that sexual satisfaction ($\beta = .457$, $t = 5.17$, $p < .001$) appeared to be the strongest predicted of marital quality, followed by sexual compatibility ($\beta = .274$, $t = 3.11$, $p = .002$). In contrast, sexual desire ($\beta = .056$, $t = 1.24$, $p = .22$) found insignificant in predicting marital quality in this model. The Cohen's f^2 effect size was 1.128, indicated large effect.

Table 4.7

Multiple Regression Analysis in Marital Quality from Sexual Compatibility, Sexual Desire, and Sexual Satisfaction among Married Couples in Malaysia (N=255)

Predictor	F	R²	df	β	t	p
Model	93.14***	.53	(3,251)			
Sexual Compatibility				.274	3.11	.002
Sexual Desire				.056	1.24	.216
Sexual Satisfaction				.457	5.17	.000

Note. *** $p < .001$

Research question 2: Does sexual satisfaction mediate in the effect of sexual desire and compatibility on marital quality among married couple in Malaysia?

H₁: Sexual satisfaction significantly mediated the relationship between sexual desire and marital quality among married couples in Malaysia.

Figure 4.1 illustrated the outcomes for the hypothesized indirect effect of sexual desire on marital quality with the mediating effect of sexual satisfaction. Results showed mediation effect occurred in which sexual desire was a significant predictor of sexual satisfaction, $\beta = .39$, $t = 4.30$, $p < .001$, whereas sexual satisfaction significantly predicted marital quality, $\beta = .31$, $t = 15.19$, $p < .001$. However, the result showed insignificant towards the direct effect of sexual desire towards marital quality, $\beta = .04$, $t = 1.33$, $p = .19$. After the effect of sexual satisfaction was controlled, sexual desire was statistically significant with marital quality, $\beta = .16$, $t = 3.97$, $p < .001$. The standard error of the mean indirect effect was .05, and the 95% confidence interval of the mean indirect effect was .07 (lower limit) and .18 (upper limit). Therefore, the mediating effect of the sexual satisfaction were found significant, $\beta = .12$, $SE = .03$, 95% CI [.07, .18]. The effect size was .06 indicated large effect. Therefore, *H₁* was accepted.

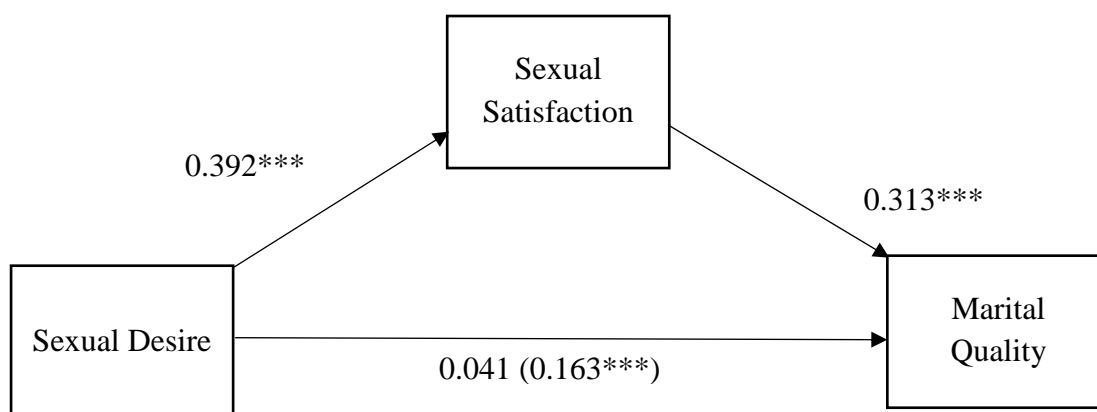


Figure 4.1. Mediation model showing the mediation effect of sexual satisfaction on sexual desire and marital quality. Values shown are unstandardized coefficient. Total effect of sexual desire is shown in the parenthesis.

Note. ** $p < .01$

H_2 : Sexual satisfaction significantly mediated the relationship between sexual compatibility and marital quality among married couples in Malaysia.

Figure 4.2 showed the outcomes for the hypothesized indirect effect of sexual compatibility on marital quality with the mediating effect of sexual satisfaction. Results showed mediation effect happened in which sexual compatibility was positively affected sexual satisfaction, $\beta = 1.82$, $t = 28.06$, $p < .001$, while sexual satisfaction significantly predicted marital quality, $\beta = .211$, $t = 5.32$, $p < .001$. Besides, result showed that sexual compatibility significantly predicted marital quality in direct effect, $\beta = .26$, $t = .08$, $p = .002$. In the total effect model, after controlled the effect of sexual satisfaction, sexual compatibility was statistically affected marital quality, $\beta = .64$, $t = 14.99$, $p < .001$. The standard error of the mean indirect effect was .05, and the 95% confidence interval of the mean indirect effect was .23 (lower limit) and .54 (upper limit). Therefore, the mediating effect of the sexual satisfaction were found significant, $\beta = .38$, $SE = .08$, 95% CI [.23, .54]. The effect size was 0.45 indicated substantial effect. Thus, H_2 was accepted.

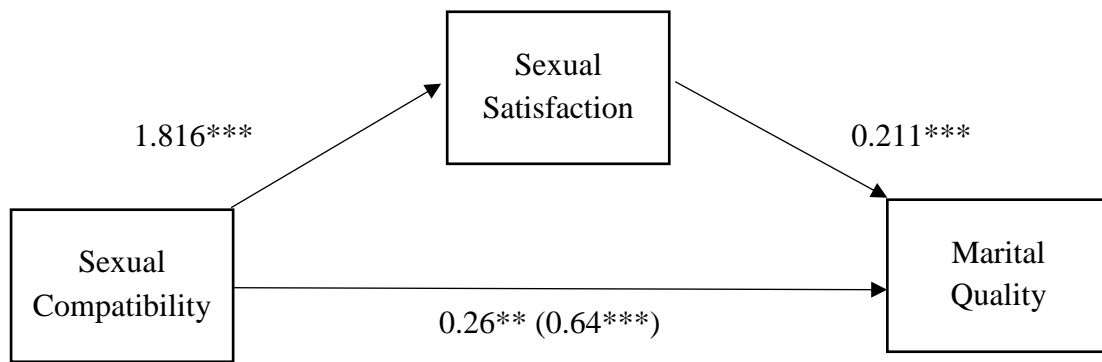


Figure 4.2. Mediation model showing the mediation effect of sexual satisfaction on sexual compatibility and marital quality. Values shown are unstandardized coefficient. Total effect of sexual compatibility is shown in the parenthesis.

Note. ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Research question 3: Does length of marriage moderate the relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital quality among married couple in Malaysia?

H₃: Length of marriage significantly moderated the relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital quality among married couples in Malaysia.

According to the results as shown in Table 4.6, there were no correlation between length of marriage and marital quality, and sexual satisfaction. The interaction effect of length of marriage on sexual satisfaction towards marital quality was not significant ($\beta = .41, p = .68$). Therefore, *H₃* was not accepted.

Chapter V Discussion & Conclusion

This chapter discuss the answer to the questions of (1) determining the length of marriage, sexual desire, compatibility and satisfaction towards marital quality of married couples in Malaysia, (2) determining whether sexual satisfaction mediates in the effect of sexual desire and compatibility towards marital quality among married couples in Malaysia, (3) determining the length of marriage moderate the relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital quality among married couples in Malaysia. Past studies were used to justify the further discussion in this chapter. Besides, implication of significant results and recommendations for future research were also presented in the discussion.

5.1 Discussion

Result of this study indicated that couple who have high sexual compatibility will lead to high quality of marriage life which in line with the study conducted by Hurlbert et al. (2000). There was a positive correlation between sexual compatibility and marriage quality. In Hurlbert et al. (2000) study, individual who showed higher sexual compatibility experienced less sexual stress and less depression in marriage. Whereas in Mehrabian (1989) study, compatibility was a crucial variable in marriage as it was understood as a shared liking of same sexual activities and circumstances, however it also required couple to share the same understanding and same values of sex. On the other hand, sexual compatibility was tested in the presence of other variables such as sexual desire, sexual satisfaction and length of marriage in present study. There was still a significant direct effect between sexual compatibility and marital quality in the presence of other variables. Sexual compatibility worked in two ways, it required cooperation from both husband and wife to communicate to have

higher sexual compatibility. In Mark, Milhausen and Maitland (2013), it mentioned that couples who had strong communication skills helped them to understand more about their partner and it helped them to have a better marriage satisfaction.

Present study proved that there was a positive correlation between sexual desire and marital quality. This finding was consistent with previous studies (Javed, Gul & Siddiqa, 2016; Brezsnyak & Whisman, 2004). Couples reported that absence of sexual desire led to dissatisfaction and frustration which will affect the quality of marriage. Every individual has a unique desire for sex. According to Davies, Katz, and Jackson (1999) studies, both women and men stated that their desire for sex is not similar to each other. In conjunction with that, sexual desire was then tested again with the presence of other variables in present study. The result showed insignificant for sexual desire to predict marital quality when other variables were present. The reason for sexual desire to be insignificant was because of the satisfaction they got from their sexual activity. Women perceived sexual desire as romantic and more interpersonal where as men do not perceived it that way (Regan and Berscheid, 1995). Therefore, sexual desire did not predict marital quality in the present of other variables which showed consistency with Regan and Berscheid (1995) study.

Furthermore, a significant correlated relationship shown between sexual satisfaction and marital quality which means there was a direct effect between these two variables. The finding was consistent with previous study, Young, Luquis, Denny and Young (1998) stated that there were differences of individual perceiving sexual satisfaction in marriage. Men would look at overall marital quality for sexual satisfaction. On the other man, women would look at the quality of the sexual satisfaction to determine marital quality. Therefore, present study showed that in order to predict marriage quality, one has to be satisfied sexually in relationship.

According to the model presented in this study, sexual satisfaction was proven that it was significantly predict marital quality in the presence of other variables. In other words, it means quality of marriage is high when one is satisfied sexually in a marriage regardless of the present of other variables. In Christopher and Sprecher (2000), the meaning of sex was an expression towards their partner.

Besides, finding of mediating effect for sexual satisfaction between sexual compatibility and marital quality showed a significant effect. Individual were less distressed when the compatibility was high in a marriage. In Mark, Milhausen and Maitland (2013) studies, it discovered that the couples experienced a greater sexual satisfaction when they shared similar liking values in sexual activity. In their discussion, it mentioned that with the greater sexual satisfaction, the more satisfied of the relationship of marriage will be. Partial mediation of sexual satisfaction was found in present study. In other words, it means the greater the sexual compatibility it will led to a greater sexual satisfaction and with that it increased marital quality as well. In Offman and Matheson (2005) studies proved that couples' sexual satisfaction were influenced by their perception and their partner's perception of compatibility. Studies found out that sexual compatibility was perceived as intimacy, which increased the value of perceived sexual compatibility on relationship satisfaction.

On the other hand, full mediation of sexual satisfaction was found between sexual desire and marital quality. Present study found out that in bivariate level, sexual desire was a significant predictor towards marital quality. However, by considering two other factors by placing it in a mediation model, it turned out to be insignificant towards marital quality. As discussed above, sexual desire is uniquely planted in every individual. In Regan and Berscheid (1995) studies, it mentioned that both couples perceived sexual desire differently especially in gender stereotype. In

men perspectives, vulnerability, submissiveness and helplessness in a woman caused increased in sexual desire where as women looked at financial and social status in men. Present study showed sexual desire was insignificant in the presence of other variables. In study, sexual desire still appeared even without love. Therefore, it could not predict marital quality when other variables were present in the study.

Findings exhibited that length of marriage did not significantly moderate the relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital quality. Current results are in contrast with Lazar (2016) study which indicated that sexual satisfaction and marital satisfaction grew stronger as the time goes by. However, another study showed that divorce cases for younger marriage couple were reported higher than old marriage group due to decrease in sexual satisfaction which led to decrease in sexual activity (Glass and Wright, 1977). On the other hand, present study demonstrated that length of marriage did not affect the predictive role of sexual satisfaction and marital quality. It explained that there was no major impact on marital quality regardless of young or old marriage group. Marital quality will still increase when sexual satisfaction was found to be high in a marriage. Therefore, further studies are required to affirm the results as there were inconsistent past studies results and also to the advance of frontier understanding.

5.2 Implication

5.2.1 Theoretical Implication

According to Social Exchange Theory that proposed by George Homans (Cook & Rice, 2001; Nakonezny & Denton, 2008), the interactions between couples, which were the costs and rewards in certain relationship, such as workplace or marriage relationship, would affect the outcome of the relationship. Similar with present study, when marriage couples had mutual stand and understanding on sex-

related behaviors or desires, which could be known as sexual compatibility between couples, it would affect them to have positive outcome, such as high marital quality.

The results of the study further supported the theoretical construct in the marital research.

Besides, based on the interpersonal exchange model of sexual satisfaction that proposed by Lawrence and Bryers, sexual satisfaction had mediation effect on the costs and rewards of relationships and the quality of relationships (Christopher & Sprecher, 2000). Present study had examined and proven that there were mediation effect of sexual satisfaction on sexual desire and compatibility towards marital quality. Thus, the results of this were in line with the concept of the theory. If the sexual desire of individuals were being met and they were sexually compatible, it would lead to high sexual satisfaction and thus improved their marital quality.

The results of this study could be a source of references for married couples to better understand some underlying variables that would lead to high level of marital quality. Present study indicated that sexual compatibility significantly predicted marital quality. Besides, results also showed that sexual desire and compatibility significantly influenced marital quality by the mediation of sexual satisfaction. These results had filled the research gap in this field of study specifically in Malaysia context. As to our knowledge, there were little or no strong evidence that supported the variables related to our study that established in Malaysia. Thus, this study could contribute to local context and the literatures in marriage related study as there were no study that were examining sexual desire and compatibility would predict marital quality that mediated by sexual satisfaction by providing the empirical evidence. These basic foundations that could attract attentions of researchers and practitioners to further study sex-related determinants towards marital quality in Malaysia.

5.2.2 Practical Implication

Divorce case was high according to statistics in Malaysia (Ismail, 2016). One of the reasons that leads to high divorce rate was because of low marital quality (Carr, Freedman, Cornman, & Schwarz, 2014). Therefore, the results of the study provide overview that the importance of considering sexual related factors that would cause low marital quality to avoid instability in married relationships. Thus, present study might shed lights on the sexual aspect would matter in marriage among married couples.

Therefore, marital counsellors and therapists could put sexual discontentment into consideration as one of the reason that affected low marital quality of clients as sex-related behaviours or desires might be the factors that were affecting their marital relationships. Therefore, practitioners and therapists could provide intervention that focused on the sex life of couples. On the whole, present study would help counsellors and therapists to understand the marital quality of clients not only influenced by the aspect of finance or life satisfaction but also from their sexual life and satisfaction.

Furthermore, this study could create awareness and do reflections for married couples, while doing the questionnaire, and encouraged them to communicate with their spouses in sex-related topics and understand each other in order to be sexually compatible with each other. This could increase the level of sexual satisfaction and lead to good marital quality.

5.3 Limitations

Firstly, the present study constrained from the usual limitation of a mediation study. The mediation effect of sexual satisfaction was not able to be fully examined. It might because of it only limited to hypothetical mediation model, the mediating effect of sexual satisfaction cannot be confirmed but proposed.

Second, the population distribution in term of ethnicity also could hampers the generalizability of the findings. The result of present study was not accurate to be generalized to all Malaysian. According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia 2018, the ethnicity composition for Bumiputera is 69.1%, 23.0% for Chinese, 6.9% for Indians, and 1.0% for others. The sampling method and the respondents were unable to generalized due to Chinese married couples took a large composition in the present study.

Moreover, present study cannot guarantee about the honest answers as it covered the sensitive issue. Besides, it might because of the survey method and method design increased the possibility of dishonest answers.

Lastly, the variable selection might be too limited to only sex related topics as it might have other possible factors contribute to marital quality.

5.4 Recommendations

Some recommendations were suggested to improve the future study. First of all, future researchers are suggested to use longitudinal study to examine the underlie mediating effect of sexual satisfaction. Furthermore, future researchers can adopt ratio quota sampling method to collect the data. Therefore, it may help to balance and more approaching to the composition of ethnicity in Malaysia.

Besides, since present study was using online survey to collect data, future researchers are suggested that changing the method of collecting data to paper and pen survey. Future researchers can explain the inform consent to the participants immediately to empower the validity of the data as some of the participants may feel risky or worried about disclosure of the data. Moreover, future study can further study on other possible factors that might contribute to marital quality to have a better review in this field.

5.5 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to study on the relationship between sexual compatibility, sexual desire, and sexual satisfaction towards marital quality of married couples in Malaysia. Besides, the present study also examined the moderating effect of length of marriage between sexual satisfaction and marital quality. To be more in-depth, present study also studied the mediating effect of sexual satisfaction in the association between sexual compatibility and marital quality, and between sexual desire and marital quality.

The data collection was cross-sectional, and 255 respondents participated in the study. The data collected by online survey, Qualtrics, and the participants answered the questions online. The respondents were recruited through purposive sampling method. The instruments used in this study consisted of demographic information of the respondents, ENRICH Marital Satisfaction scale (EMS), Hurlbert Index of Sexual Compatibility (HISC), Sexual Desire Inventory 2 (SDI-2), and Index of Sexual Satisfaction (ISS).

There was correlation found between the variables in present study. A significant result was found that sexual compatibility was the predictor of marital quality. However, sexual desire was not a significant predictor of marital quality. Furthermore, the mediating effect of sexual satisfaction between sexual compatibility and marital quality, and between sexual desire and marital quality was found to be significant. Nevertheless, the moderating effect of length of marriage was found to be not significant.

In conclusion, this study could be a guide or reference for the married couple to understand the possible predictors of their marital quality. As there could be a research gap in the field of sexual related research, the present study had improved the

research database in Malaysia. The present study also helped the marital counsellors or therapists to improve their interventions and understanding of sexual related factors as it might be contributed to the marital quality.

5.6 Summary

In conclusion, this chapter discussed the results found in present study which consistent or not consistent with the past studies. Besides, some suggestion on practical implication was discussed in this chapter to aid the married couples. Theoretical implication was also discussed with the variables of present study. Lastly, some recommendations and limitations were provided to improve the future study and conclusion to comprehend the entire idea of the present study.

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Appendix A



SEXUAL RELATED DETERMINANTS AND MARITAL QUALITY AMONG
MARRIED COUPLES IN MALAYSIA
UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

Introduction

This research study is being conducted to study **A Study of Sexual Related Determinants and Marital Quality among Married Couples in Malaysia** as a requirement for the subject UAPZ3013 Final Year Project I. To collect the required data, your participation is needed for our research study.

Procedures

This questionnaire consists of five parts, Section A, Section B, Section C, Section D, and Section E. It will take approximately 20 minutes to complete this questionnaire.

Confidentiality

All information provided by the participants will be subjected as **private and confidential**. The information used is solely for this research. The information provided will never reveal to the third party nor used for any other purposes others than study. All the information will be kept in a secure database and only accessible to our group members and supervisor.

Participation

You are at **liberty to withdraw** your consent to the research and discontinue participation at any time.

Enquiries

If you have any questions, please contact us at ezratan1@utar.my.

I have read and understood the above consent form and hereby declare my desire to participate in this study.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Section A**Please choose and answer your personal details**Gender : Female Male

Age : _____

Relationship status : Married Widowed Separated Divorced SingleEthnicity : Malay Chinese Indian Other please state: _____Sexuality : Heterosexual (i.e., romantically interested in opposite sex) Non-heterosexual (i.e., gay, lesbian, bisexual etc.)If you are a **non-heterosexual**, please state your sexuality: _____

Length of current romantic relationship (if applicable): _____year(s)_____month(s)

Section B**ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale**

This section designed to measure the degree of satisfaction you have in marriage life. It is not a test, so there are not right or wrong answers. Answer each item as carefully and accurately as you circle a number each one as follows:

Items	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My partner and I understand each other perfectly.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I am not pleased with the personality, characteristics and personal habits of my partner.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am very happy with how we handle role responsibilities in our marriage.	1	2	3	4	5
4. My partner completely understands and sympathizes with my every mood.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am not happy about our communication and feel my partner does not understand me.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Our relationship is a perfect success.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I am very happy about how we make decisions and resolve conflicts.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am unhappy about our financial position and the way we make financial decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I have some needs that are not being met by our relationship.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am very happy with how we manage our leisure activities and the time we spend together.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I am very pleased about how we express affection and relate sexually.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I am not satisfied with the way we each handle our responsibilities as parents.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I have never regretted my relationship with my partner, not even for a moment.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I am dissatisfied about our relationship with my parents, in-laws, and/or friends.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I feel very good about how we each practice our religious beliefs and values.	1	2	3	4	5

Section C

Hurlbert Index of Sexual Compatibility

This questionnaire designed to measure the degree of compatibilities you have in the sexual relationship with your partner. It is not a test, so there are not right or wrong answers. Answer each item as carefully and accurately as you circle the number each one as follows:

Items	Never	Rarely	Some of the time	Most of the time	All of the time
1. My sexual beliefs are similar to those of my partner.	0	1	2	3	4
2. I think my partner understands me sexually.	0	1	2	3	4
3. My partner and I share the same sexual likes and dislikes.	0	1	2	3	4
4. I think my partner desires too much sex.	0	1	2	3	4
5. My partner is un willing to do certain sexual things for me that I would like to experience.	0	1	2	3	4
6. I feel comfortable during sex with my partner.	0	1	2	3	4
7. I am sexually attracted to my partner.	0	1	2	3	4
8. My partner sexually pleases me.	0	1	2	3	4
9. My partner and I argue about the sexual aspects of our relationship.	0	1	2	3	4
10. My partner and I share the same the same level of interest in sex.	0	1	2	3	4
11. I feel uncomfortable engaging in some of the sexual activities that my partner desires.	0	1	2	3	4
12. When it comes to sex, my ideas and values are different from those of my partner.	0	1	2	3	4
13. I do not think I meet my partner's sexual needs.	0	1	2	3	4
14. My partner and I enjoy the same sexual activities.	0	1	2	3	4
15. When it comes to sex, my partner and I get along well.	0	1	2	3	4
16. I think my partner is sexually attracted to me.	0	1	2	3	4
17. My partner enjoys doing certain sexual things that I dislike.	0	1	2	3	4
18. It is hard for me to accept my partners' views on sex.	0	1	2	3	4
19. In our relationship, my partner places too much importance in sex.	0	1	2	3	4
20. My partner and I disagree over the frequency in which we should have sex.	0	1	2	3	4
21. I have the same sexual values as my partner.	0	1	2	3	4
22. My partner and I share similar sexual fantasies.	0	1	2	3	4
23. When it comes to sex, my partner is unwilling to do certain things that I would like to experience.	0	1	2	3	4
24. I think I sexually satisfy my partner.	0	1	2	3	4
25. My partner and I share about the same level of sexual desire.	0	1	2	3	4

Section D

Sexual Desire Inventory


This section asks about your level of sexual desire. By desire, we mean *interested in* or *wish for sexual activity*. For each item, please circle the number that best shows your thoughts and feelings.

1. During the last month, *how often* would you *have liked* to engage in sexual activity with a partner (for example, touching each other's genitals, giving or receiving oral stimulation, intercourse, etc.)?
 - 0) Not at all
 - 1) Once a month
 - 2) Once every two weeks
 - 3) Once a week
 - 4) Twice a week
 - 5) 3 to 4 times a week
 - 6) Once a day
 - 7) More than once a day

2. During the last month, *how often* have you had sexual thoughts involving a partner?
 - 0) Not at all
 - 1) Once or twice a month
 - 2) Once a week
 - 3) Twice a week
 - 4) 3 to 4 times a week
 - 5) Once a day
 - 6) A couple of times a day
 - 7) Many times a day

3. When you have sexual thoughts, *how strong* is your desire to engage in sexual behaviour with a partner?

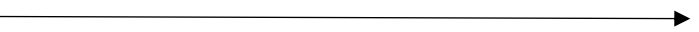
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

No Desire 

Strong Desire

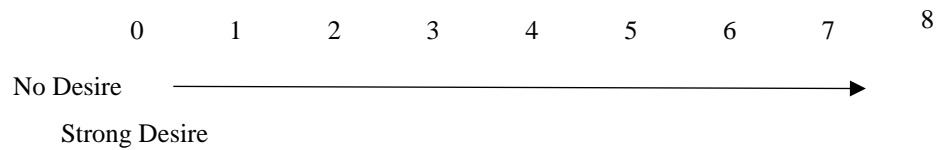
4. When you first see an attractive person, *how strong* is your sexual desire?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

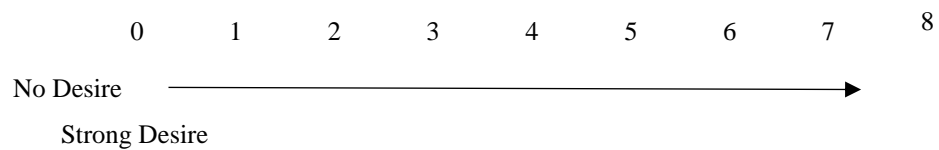
No Desire 

Strong Desire

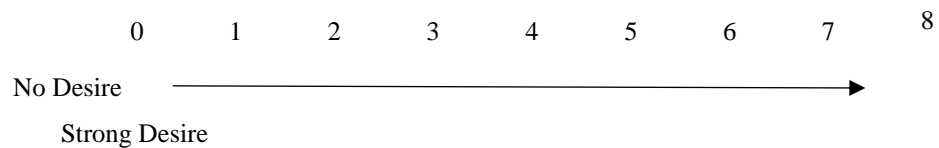
5. When you spend time with an attractive person (for example, at work or at school), **how strong** is your sexual desire?



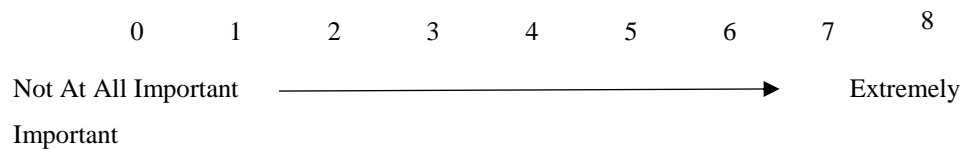
6. When you are in romantic situations (such as candle-lit dinner, a walk on the beach, etc.), **how strong** is your sexual desire?



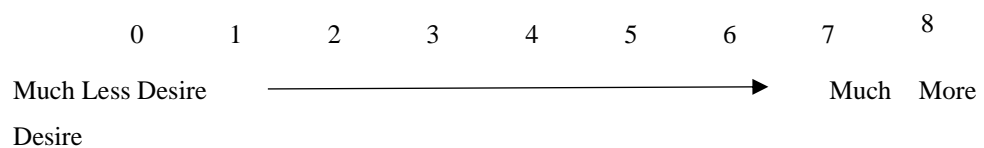
7. **How strong** is your desire to engage in sexual activity with partner?



8. **How important** is it for you to fulfil your sexual desire through activity with a partner?



9. Compared to other people of your age and sex, how would you rate your desire to behave sexually with a partner?



10. During the last month, **how often** would you **have liked** to behave sexually by yourself (for example, masturbating, touching your genitals, etc.)?

- 0) Not at all
- 1) Once a month
- 2) Once every two weeks
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Twice a week
- 5) 3 to 4 times a week

- 6) Once a day
- 7) More than once a day

Section E**Index of Sexual Satisfaction (ISS)**

This questionnaire designed to measure the degree of satisfaction you have in the sexual relationship with your partner. It is not a test, so there are not right or wrong answers. Answer each item as carefully and accurately as you circle the number each one as follows:

Items	None of time	Very rarely	A little of the time	Some of the time	A good part of the time	Most of the time	All of the time
1. I feel that my partner enjoys our sex life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Our sex life is very exciting.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Sex is fun for my partner and me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Sex with my partner has become a chore for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I feel that our sex is dirty and disgusting.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Our sex life is monotonous.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. When we have sex it is too rushed and hurriedly completed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I feel that my sex life is lacking in quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. My partner is sexually very exciting.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I enjoy the sex techniques that my partner likes or uses.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I feel that my partner wants too much sex from me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I think that our sex is wonderful.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. My partner dwells on sex too much.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I try to avoid sexual contact with my partner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. My partner is too rough or brutal when we have sex.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. My partner is a wonderful sex mate.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. I feel that sex is a normal function of our relationship.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. My partner does not want sex when I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. I feel that our sex life really adds a lot to our relationship.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. My partner seems to avoid sexual contact with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. It is easy for me to get sexually excited by my partner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. I feel that my partner is sexually pleased with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. My partner is very sensitive to my sexual needs and desires.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. My Partner does not satisfy me sexually.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. I feel that my sex life is boring.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

