

Attachment Style, Marital Satisfaction, and Mutual Support Attachment Style in Qatar

The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families
2020, Vol. 28(3) 329-336
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DOI: 10.1177/1066480720934377
journals.sagepub.com/home/tfj



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Abstract

This study assessed, for the first time, the relationship between security attachment and marital satisfaction in an Arab country, Qatar. Accordingly, we used the marital satisfaction assessment, the Experiences in Close Relationships Revised attachment style questionnaire, and the Goldsmith Support Measure. Using a path analysis model, the results showed that secured attachment style positively influenced marital satisfaction but did not positively influence mutual support in a relationship. Insecure attachment styles negatively influenced the level of mutual support and marital satisfaction. Importantly, the findings revealed a gender effect, with females receiving less mutual support from their male partners, than vice versa. We discuss the importance of these results in the context of Arab culture and gender differences.

Keywords

attachment style, marital satisfaction, mutual support, Arab culture, gender differences

This study focused on the importance of relationship attachment styles and how they impact marital satisfaction and mutual support. While there are several studies on the relationship between attachment and marital satisfaction, most of these investigations were conducted in Western countries (Monin et al., 2019; Novak et al., 2017; Sandberg et al., 2017), with only a few done in Eastern cultures (Kamel Abbasi et al., 2016; Karimi et al., 2019; Mohammadi et al., 2016). Attachment styles are important to investigate as they are related to well-being, depression, and anxiety of individuals and couples alike (Counted & Moustafa, 2017; Valikahni et al., 2018). Similarly, while the impact of mutual support on marital satisfaction and well-being has been studied in Western countries (Bradley & Hojjat, 2017; Waldinger et al., 2015), there are no similar studies in the Arab world. Accordingly, this self-report study investigated how attachment styles play a role in marriage quality in couples residing in Qatar. Specifically, this study focused on studying the following:

- the importance of attachment styles in relationships to marriage quality,
- the significance of attachment styles and marital satisfaction,
- how attachment styles may impact an individual's satisfaction in a long-term relationship,
- the effects of mutual support between spouses as a mediator between attachment styles (secure and avoidance) and marital satisfaction, and
- what type of support are couples seeking from each other in order to maintain marriage satisfaction in Qatar.

In the Arab world, including Qatar, family is the pillar of society and can be the basis of human psychological stability. When individuals feel appreciated and respected, increased feelings of optimism and commitment toward social relations such as marriages may occur (Rusbult & Buunk, 1993). Consequently, separation in the family can lead to negative implications for physical health, psychological well-being, economic stability, academic achievement, and social relationships with one's spouse and children (Amato, 2000; D'Onofrio & Emery, 2019). For example, a recent study found adult daughters of divorced parents tend to experience attachment avoidance and anxiety as well as other kinds of mental disorders (Schaan et al., 2019).

Family separation or divorce can lead to negative effects, such as mental disorders and poor psychological health, in the children (Auersperg et al., 2019; Lindstrom & Rosvall, 2016; O'Hara et al., 2019; Zineldin, 2019). Along these lines, Al-Fayez et al. (2012) found the prevalence of psychological, sexual, and physical abuse in Kuwait was higher among high school students ($n = 4,467$) whose parents were divorced than those whose parents were not divorced. Such abuse in turn affected the

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children's academic performance and social relationships and led to an increase in feelings of anxiety and depression and low level of self-esteem. These results are further supported by a recent study conducted in the United Arab Emirates. Al Gharaibeh (2015) investigated social and psychological effects of divorce on children. Using a structured questionnaire with divorced mothers, it was found that divorce negatively impacted children; specifically, the mothers reported their children show a lack of concentration at school, sleep disorders, and an increased stubbornness. This finding supports the notion that divorce adversely affects children's overall well-being, motivation, and school performance. However, it is important to note that this study only investigated the mother's perspective and did not provide explanations as to the cause of the divorce, and if the divorce could have been prevented.

Divorce was reported to adversely affect women more than men, especially in low- and middle-income countries (Hailemariam et al., 2019; Lu et al., 2019). Negative connotations associated with divorce in the Arab world, affecting women more than men, were found in a study conducted in Qatar (Shehzad, 2015). This study of 74,724 Qatari women showed that educated women were less likely to marry and were disadvantaged with regard to living and economic conditions. Importantly, divorced women were more likely to have psychological and physical problems compared to married women (Shehzad, 2015). Even though both men and women can suffer due to divorce, Leopold (2018) found the suffering of men is often transient, while the suffering of women is usually chronic.

Importantly, even though Qatari women often prefer to stay in marriages in order to avoid physical, economical, and social stigma, the divorce rates in the Arab world, including Qatar, are increasing (Mendoza et al., 2019). Recent data released by the Qatari Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics showed that the average age of marriage in Qatar for males is 23.8 and for females is 21.6 per 1,000 citizens. Divorce rates are 8.3 for males and 6.8 for females per 1,000.

The Importance of Marital Quality

Researchers have found that there is a clear association between marital quality and mental health (Jalili et al., 2017; Whisman & Beach, 2012) as well as physical well-being (Proulx & Snyder-Rivas, 2013). Therefore, an important public health concern is to improve and maintain high marital quality (Sandberg et al., 2009). Studies have reported several factors that can lead to marital dissatisfaction, conflict, problems, and distress: substance abuse (Kishor et al., 2013), depression (Khan & Aftab, 2013), anxiety (Aleem & Danish, 2008), and hypertension (Caldwell et al., 2007; Whisman et al., 2010).

Marital Attachment Style and Marital Satisfaction

The means by which adults interact in the context of a romantic relationship can vary depending on individual attachment styles. According to Hazan and Shaver (1987), relationship attachment

styles reflect fundamental dissimilarities or similarities in adults, specifically with regard to their perceptions of romantic commitments. In a survey-based study (Paley et al., 2005), it was found that securely attached married, dating, divorced, or widowed adults rated their relationships as trusting, happy, supporting, and accepting. However, insecurely attached individuals defined themselves as being fearful of intimacy. Finally, ambivalently attached adults characterized their relationships as obsessive, which included feelings of sexual attraction and jealousy. However, it is important to mention that this study focuses more on the perceptions of romantic relationships and not directly marital satisfaction. Previous research has primarily focused on the links between the family of origin and interaction with nuclear family to predict romantic attachment (Paley et al., 2005). Studies have shown that securely attached spouses, but not avoidant partners, have reported higher levels of family adaptability and cohesion (Finzi-Dottan et al., 2003). Individuals with anxious attachment style were associated with low adaptability and high family cohesion.

Several studies have shown that there is an association between marital attachment security and marital satisfaction, for example, a study by Molero et al. (2016). Most studies of this type have been conducted in the West. Thus, future research should attempt to replicate their findings in the Arab world. In addition, there is support for the theory that positive attachment can predict the recognition of partner support (Feeney, 1996) and the correlation between satisfaction and support (Davila & Kashy, 2009), which in turn reduces the risk of marital failure during the first 5 years (Dehle et al., 2001).

The Current Study

This study sought to understand issues leading to high divorce rates across the Gulf Cooperation Council, particularly in Qatar. To understand factors underlying marital problems and family disintegration in Qatar, the current study tested the hypothesis that an increased divorce rate is related to a loss of mutual understanding and a lack of consideration for each other's needs (Atwood, 2012). Furthermore, the present study assessed the relationship between secured attachment and marital satisfaction by investigating the couple's understanding of mutual support. To investigate these variables, the study used the marital satisfaction assessment, the Attachment Security Questionnaire, and Mutual Support Scale to estimate the degree of attachment (anxiety or avoidance) and to recognize mutual support and marital satisfaction as well as to measure demographic confounding effects.

Method

Participants

Our inclusion criteria were as follows: spouses were (a) in a heterosexual relationship, (b) previously married, (c) living in Qatar, and (d) fluent in Arabic. Table 1 shows the demographics of our participants. There were 110 males (49.5%) and 112 females (50.5), with the majority being non-Qataris

Table 1. Descriptive Information of All Participants.

Variables	Groups	N	%
Sex (female vs. male)	Male	110	49.5
	Female	112	50.5
Nationality	Qatari	88	39.6
	Non-Qatari	134	60.4
Occupation	Governmental	118	53.2
	Nongovernmental	104	46.8
Education	High school	51	23
	BA	146	65.8
	Graduate studies	25	11.2
Number of children	0	21	9.5
	1	26	11.7
	2	44	19.8
	3	33	14.9
	4	48	21.6
	≥5	50	22.3

(60.4%, $n = 134$) and Qataris representing 39.6% ($n = 88$). In terms of level of education, 22.8% of participants attended high school ($n = 53$), 65.5% held a bachelor's degree ($n = 152$), and 11.6% had completed a graduate degree/diploma ($n = 27$). Occupationally, 52.6% of jobs held by participants were governmental ($n = 122$) and 46.6% were nongovernmental ($n = 108$). With regard to the number of children in families, 9.5% ($n = 21$) had no children, 11.7% ($n = 26$) had one child, 19.8% ($n = 44$) had two children, 14.9% ($n = 33$) had three children, 21.6% ($n = 48$) had four children, and 22.3% ($n = 50$) had five or more children.

Procedure

Qatar University Research Ethics Board approved all study procedures. Couples were recruited via social media, ads posted at Qatar University Campus, Education City, and Hamad Hospital (Women's Clinics). Furthermore, snowballing sampling (i.e., word of mouth) was also used to recruit additional participants. Families completed the assessment at home. Participants received three questionnaires, assessing marital satisfaction, mutual support, and attachment security for both husbands and wives.

Measures

Attachment security. The original Experiences in Close Relationships–Revised (ECR-R; Fraley et al., 2000) Questionnaire is a 36-item self-report measure of adult attachment style. Participants rated the extent to which they believed each statement corresponded with how they typically think, feel, and behave in romantic relationships. The ECR-R yielded scores on two subscales: Secured and Unsecured attachment. Each item is rated on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), and scores are derived by averaging the relevant items for each subscale. The scale was translated into Arabic and validated before use. After validation, we employed an updated version of the scale including 20 items to assess unsecured attachment and secured attachment. The Unsecured

Attachment Scale includes some questions such as “I often wish that my partner's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him or her” and “When my partner is out of sight, I worry that he or she might become interested in someone else.” The Unsecured Attachment Scale includes questions such as “I worry a lot about my relationships” and “When I show my feelings for romantic partners, I'm afraid they will not feel the same about me.” Cronbach's α s were .710 for unsecured attachment items and .730 for secured attachment items.

Support perceptions. The Goldsmith Support Measure (GS; Goldsmith et al., 2000) reflected participants' feelings regarding support received from their partner over the previous 6 months. The scale was translated into Arabic and validated before use. The scale includes 12 semantic differential items rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored by antonyms (e.g., *helpful* vs. *harmful*, *supportive* vs. *unsupportive*, *sensitive* vs. *insensitive*). Cronbach's α was .89.

Marital satisfaction. The Quality of Marriage Index (Abo Hamza & Bedair, 2017) is a 6-item measure of global marital satisfaction with strong psychometric properties (e.g., Heyman et al., 1994). Participants indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*very strong disagreement*) to 7 (*very strong agreement*) for 5 items describing their relationship and a 6th item where participants rate their overall relationship happiness “all things considered” on a 10-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*very unhappy*) to 10 (*perfectly happy*). The scale has been translated into Arabic and validated before use and Cronbach's α was .859. We initially examined the validity of all items in Qatar. We found that some items were not suitable for the Qatari culture, such as sexual themes; therefore, these items were deleted from the scale. After review, the initial form of the assessment consists of 60 items; five phrases for each of the 12 dimensions. Factor validity was verified by factor analysis using Hurling's principal components, and axes were rotated with maximum varimax variation. Factor analysis found 11 factors that make up the subcomponents of the assessment.

Hypotheses Development

The study hypotheses are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Secured attachment will positively influence mutual support.

Hypothesis 2: Unsecured attachment will negatively influence mutual support.

Hypothesis 3: Sex will negatively influence mutual support. Females may receive less mutual support than males.

Hypothesis 4: Secured attachment will positively influence marital satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5: Mutual support will positively influence marital satisfaction.

Table 2. Descriptive Information of the Participants by Sex, Including Attachment Style Data.

Sex		Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Reliability Coefficient
Male	Age	23	67	40.71	11.251	
	Duration of marriage (years)	1	4	2.40	1.181	
Female	Age	19	57	35.21	9.897	
	Duration of marriage (years)	1	15	2.52	1.659	
	Unsecured attachment	—	—	2.450	0.840	0.710
	Secured attachment	—	—	4.830	0.943	0.730
	Marital satisfaction	—	—	4.748	0.878	0.859
	Mutual support	—	—	5.449	1.280	0.891
		Unsecured attachment	Secured attachment	Marital satisfaction		Mutual support
	Unsecured attachment	1.000				
	Secured attachment	−0.25*	1.000			
	Marital satisfaction	−0.476**	0.204**	1.000		
	Mutual support	−0.444**	0.160 _{ns}	0.598**		1.000

Note. *ns* = correlation is insignificant. The off-diagonals represent the bivariate correlations among the constructs. * and ** are significant at the .05 and .01 levels, respectively.

Table 3. The Bivariate Correlations Among Attachment Styles, Marital Satisfaction, and Mutual Support.

Factor	Unsecured Attachment	Secured Attachment	Marital Satisfaction	Mutual Support
Unsecured attachment	1.000			
Secured attachment	−0.25*	1.000		
Marital satisfaction	−0.476**	0.204**	1.000	
Mutual support	−0.444**	0.160 _{ns}	0.598**	1.000

Note. *ns* = correlation is insignificant. The off-diagonals represent the bivariate correlations among the constructs. * and ** are significant at the .05 and .01 levels, respectively.

Hypothesis 6: Unsecured attachment will negatively influence marital satisfaction.

Hypothesis 7: Mutual support mediates the positive influence of the secured attachment on marital satisfaction (secured attachment has a positive indirect effect on the perceived marital satisfaction through mutual support).

Hypothesis 8: Mutual support mediates the negative association between unsecured attachment and marital satisfaction (unsecured attachment has a negative indirect effect on the perceived marital satisfaction through mutual support).

Hypothesis 9: Mutual support is mediating the negative relation between sex and marital satisfaction (sex has an indirect effect on the perceived marital satisfaction through mutual support).

duration ranged from 1 to 15 years, with a mean of 2.5 (*SD* = 1.7). The average unsecured attachment was 2.450 (*SD* = 0.840). The average secured attachment was 4.830 (*SD* = 0.943). The marital satisfaction was 4.748 (*SD* = 0.878) on average. In terms of support, the average of mutual support was 5.449 (*SD* = 1.280).

The bivariate correlation coefficients shown in Table 3 indicate that there was a significant negative association between unsecured attachment and each of marital satisfaction (correlation coefficient $r_{13} = -.476, p < .001$) and mutual support ($r_{14} = -.444, p < .001$). Further, there was a significantly positive dependence between secured attachment and marital satisfaction ($r_{23} = .204, p < .001$) and no significant association with mutual support ($r_{24} = .160, p > .05$). There is a strong positive correlation between marital satisfaction and mutual support ($r_{34} = .598, p < .001$).

Results

As shown in Table 2, the age range for males was between 23 and 67 years, with a mean age of 40.7 (*SD* = 11.25). Marriage duration ranged from 1 to 4 years, with a mean of 2.4 (*SD* = 1.18). The ages of our female participants ranged from 19 to 57 years, with a mean age of 35.2 (*SD* = 9.9). Marriage

Path Analysis Model

We used the path analysis model in Figure 1 to examine Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 9. The assumed model consists of three exogenous factors (secured attachment, unsecured attachment, and sex), a mediator (mutual support), and an endogenous construct (marital satisfaction).

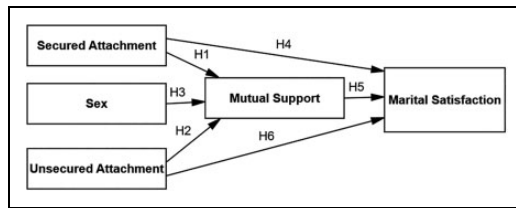


Figure 1. Proposed path analysis model.

Table 4. Model Goodness-of-Fit Criteria.

Statistics	Suggested	Obtained
χ^2 significance	>.05	.164
Goodness-of-fit index	>.90	.95
Adjusted goodness-of-fit index	>.80	.87
Comparative fit index	>.90	.94
Normal fit index	>.90	.95
Root mean square error of approximation	<.08	.064

Goodness-of-Fit Criteria

Amos (Arbuckle, 2014a, 2014b) was employed to estimate the model parameters and investigate its goodness of fit. The results in Table 4 revealed adequate goodness of fit for the developed model, yielding a goodness-of-fit index of 0.95, an adjusted goodness-of-fit index of 0.87, a comparative fit index of 0.94, a normal fit index of 0.96, and a root mean square error of approximation of 0.064. The χ^2 of .164 was not significant ($p > .05$). Consequently, the model fit indices meet the suggested threshold and the values suggest sufficient goodness of fit for the proposed path analysis model.

Testing Hypotheses (Hypotheses 1–6)

As shown in Table 4, Hypothesis 1 was not supported. The estimated path coefficient from the secured attachment level to mutual support was not statistically significant ($b_1 = .076, p > .05$). However, Hypotheses 2–7 were supported. There were significant path coefficients ($b_2 = -.675, p < .05$) from unsecured attachment to mutual support ($b_3 = -.394, p < .05$), from sex (female) to mutual support ($b_4 = .157, p < .05$), from secured attachment to marital satisfaction ($b_5 = .323, p > .05$), from mutual support to marital satisfaction ($b_6 = -.275, p < .05$), and from unsecured attachment to marital satisfaction.

The value of coefficients of determination (R^2) in Table 5 indicates that the contribution of secured attachment, unsecured attachment, and sex is .223 in predicting mutual support. It also revealed that secured attachment, mutual support, unsecured attachment explains 44.1% of the variance of marital satisfaction. In other words, it is estimated that the predictors of perceived mutual support and marital satisfaction explain 22.3% and 44.1% of the variances, respectively.

Test of Mediation (Indirect Effects; Hypotheses 7–8)

As shown in Table 6, Hypothesis 7 was not supported. The estimated indirect effect (IE_1) from marital satisfaction to secured attachment mediated by mutual support secured was not statistically significant ($IE_1 = 0.025, p > .05$). However, Hypotheses 8 and 9 were supported. There is a significant negative indirect effect ($IE_2 = -0.218, p < .05$) from unsecured attachment to marital satisfaction mediated by mutual support. The negative indirect effect ($IE_3 = -0.127, p < .05$) from sex to marital satisfaction through mutual support was significant, which indicated that females lack marital satisfaction more than males through their perceived mutual support.

Total Effects Estimation

The estimated total effects (TEs) were calculated in Table 7 by the summation of the estimated direct effects (path coefficients) and the total indirect effects. We found that sex had significant negative total influences on the perceived mutual support ($TE_1 = -0.394, p < .05$) and marital satisfaction ($TE_2 = -0.127, p = .05$), respectively, indicating that females experienced less mutual support and marital satisfaction than males. The unsecured attachment had significant negative TEs on mutual support ($TE_3 = -0.675, p < .05$) and marital satisfaction ($TE_4 = -0.493, p = .05$) explaining the negative bivariate correlation coefficients between the unsecured attachment and each of mutual support and marital satisfaction. However, secured attachment provided a significant positive TE on marital satisfaction ($TE_5 = 0.182, p = .05$). Further, secured attachment had an insignificant positive TE on mutual support ($TE_6 = -0.493, p = .05$). Finally, the positive TE of the mutual support on marital satisfaction was statistically significant ($TE_7 = 0.323, p = .01$).

Discussion

Our results showed that in this population, wives perceived less mutual support and marital satisfaction than husbands. Unsecured attachment is a negative predictor for perceived mutual support and marital satisfaction. Secured attachment is a positive predictor for mutual marital satisfaction but not for mutual support. Mutual support is a significant predictor for marital satisfaction and significantly mediating its relationship with sex and unsecured attachment. However, mutual support is not a significant mediator for the relationship between the secured attachment and marital satisfaction.

The main aims of the current study were to examine the direct impact of attachment styles as well as to evaluate their indirect influences through mutual support on marital satisfaction. The findings showed that secured attachment style positively influenced marital satisfaction; however, they did not positively influence mutual support in a relationship. With regard to unsecure attachment styles, it was found that individuals who had this form of attachment in their relationships negatively influenced the level of mutual support. Furthermore,

Table 5. Results of Path Analysis Modeling.

Hypo thesis	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Estimate	SE	<i>p</i>	Determination Coefficient <i>R</i> ²	Decision
H1	Secured attachment	Mutual support	.076	.079	.335	.223	ns
H2	Unsecured attachment	Mutual support	-.675	.088	.0001**		Supported
H3	Sex (female)	Mutual support	-.394	.148	.008*		Supported
H4	Secured attachment	Marital satisfaction	.157	.046	.0001**	.441	Supported
H5	Mutual support	Marital satisfaction	.323	.038	.0001**		Supported
H6	Unsecured attachment	Marital satisfaction	-.275	.057	.0001**		Supported

Note. NS = not significant.

*Significant at the .05 level. **Significant at the .01 level.

Table 6. Estimated Indirect Effects.

Hypothesis	Exogenous	Mediator	Endogenous	Estimate	Lower	Upper	<i>p</i>	Decision
H7	Secured attachment	Mutual support	Marital satisfaction	.025	-.020	.081	.367	ns
H8	Unsecured attachment	Mutual support	Marital satisfaction	-.218	-.296	-.152	.001	Supported
H9	Sex	Mutual support	Marital satisfaction	-.127	-.234	-.044	.010	Supported

Note. ns = not significant.

Table 7. Estimated Total Effects.

Factor	Mutual Support		Marital Satisfaction	
	Estimate	<i>p</i>	Estimate	<i>p</i>
Sex (female vs. male)	-.394	.01	-.127	.010
Unsecured attachment	-.675	.001	-.493	.001
Secured attachment	.076	.367	.182	.001
Mutual support	—	—	.323	.001

the data revealed that unsecured attachment style also negatively impacted marital satisfaction.

Importantly, our findings revealed a gender effect, with females receiving less mutual support from their male partners than vice versa. These findings showed that sex can influence mutual support found in a relationship. Furthermore, mutual support positively influenced marital satisfaction. In addition, mutual support was not found to mediate between secured attachment styles and marital satisfaction. However, a significant finding of this study was that mutual support mediated the relationship between unsecured attached individuals and marital satisfaction. Finally, the relationship between sex and marital satisfaction was significantly mediated by mutual support.

Our findings are similar to those of prior studies. For instance, Hazan and Shaver (1987) stated that relationship attachment determined a couples' perceptions of romantic commitments. Subsequently, in our experiment, individuals with unsecured attachment styles had more negative implications for marital satisfaction, while the opposite was true among securely attached individuals. These findings are in line with studies that suggest that positive attachments improve the recognition of better partner support as mutual support is associated with marital satisfaction (Davila & Kashy, 2009; Feeney, 1996).

Clinical Implications

Our findings provide important information regarding marital difficulties and family disintegration in Qatar. It is clear that the attachment style of an individual is important in determining the level of mutual understanding and consideration for each partner's needs. Our investigation highlights the importance of attachment styles as key determining factors in how relationships can begin to deteriorate. Therefore, family counselors should consider factors such as these when providing advice to couples and provide tailored means of counseling based on the individual partners' level of attachment. Counseling studies in the Arab world, including Qatar, should investigate whether counseling can change attachment styles (Burgess Moser et al., 2016). Further, this investigation also highlighted key differences in attachment styles that should be further explored. The data showed that the level of mutual support and marital satisfaction is influenced by the attachment style one holds in a relationship. However, further research is required in order to determine whether our findings apply to other Gulf Arab countries. In addition, our results showed that women suffer more from divorce than men. Thus, clinical treatments should be provided to women to be able to cope with divorce transition (Sakraida, 2008).

Limitations and Future Research

A weakness of this investigation is that the sample was not large due to the difficulties to recruit couples in Qatar because of the sensitivity of the topic. Qatari people, in general, avoid discussing family matters. Furthermore, the GS is based on Western interpretations of relationships and may not capture the complexity of relationships in Qatari society. Accordingly, future research should focus on providing a culture-sensitive questionnaire to suit the Arab culture. Finally, the scales were

take-home measures and it is unclear how this may have impacted participants' responses. The mode of questionnaire administration is important to control as subjects may be distracted in environments that the researchers have no control over. However, we have done so, as Qatari individuals will not openly discuss family matters in person. Furthermore, the current study is based on retrospective accounts of single individuals, which can affect reliability, as reports may be exaggerated (McKinney et al., 2009).

Further, future work should also investigate the role of emotional intelligence in increasing marital satisfaction (Kamel Abbasi et al., 2016), as this issue has not been investigated before in the Arab world. Future work should also differentiate between attachment styles and attachment behaviors in relation to marital satisfaction.

Conclusions

The current study demonstrated that attachment style is an important factor in determining two key fundamental constructs in a marriage: mutual support and marital satisfaction. There was a well-established correlation between satisfaction and support in a relationship, which in turn reduced the risks of marital breakdown and divorce. However, the long-term effects of marital satisfaction and mutual support were not compared in this investigation, considering the number of years of marriage in these key determining factors. With regard to the cultural relevance of the findings, our Qatari sample showed similarities to studies conducted in Western countries and therefore indicates a universal link between attachment styles in promoting marital quality. Counselors in Qatar may benefit from taking into account an individual's attachment style in couple or family interventions (Sandberg et al., 2017).


Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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