

## The Influence of Forgiveness and Religiousness on Marital Satisfaction among Married Couples in Purwokerto

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### Abstract:

Marriage is the aspiration of almost everyone; it is not merely about finding happiness but is also viewed as worship and adherence to religious principles. In marriage, challenges inevitably arise, and if not managed well, they may lead to divorce. Therefore, readiness and maturity are essential for achieving marital satisfaction. Marital satisfaction represents the subjective evaluation of a couples or an individual's mental state and shared experiences with their partner. This study aims to examine the influence of forgiveness and religiousness on marital satisfaction among married couples in Purwokerto. The research utilizes a quantitative method with multiple regression analysis. Instruments employed include the marital satisfaction scale, forgiveness scale, and religiousness scale. The sample consists of 54 married couples in Purwokerto. Reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha yielded a result of 0.70. The findings of this study reveal a significant influence of forgiveness and religiousness on marital satisfaction among married couples in Purwokerto, as indicated by the calculated F-value of 33.521 and a probability value (p) of 0.000 (p<0.05).

**Keywords:** Forgiveness, Marital Satisfaction, Religiousness

### Introduction:

Marriage is the dream of many people, marriage is one way to achieve happiness. Marriage can provide many benefits such as increasing faith, having offspring, getting social support and gaining welfare and peace (Iqbal, 2018). Marriage is defined as an emotional commitment as well as a norm for two people in terms of emotional intimacy, physicality, various occupations and finances. Marriage has many advantages over living alone, as married couples can lead healthy lives, have long lives, satisfied sexual relationships, have many assets in the economy, and most have partners to raise children with (Habibi, 2015). Marriage is not just about getting happy but as an

act of worship and obeying religious rules (Iqbal, 2018). Therefore, marriage requires sufficient knowledge and skills to achieve well-being and happiness. In a marriage, there must be problems that must be faced because marriage combines individuals who are physically and psychologically different. It takes readiness and planning maturity to build a good household so that it can achieve marital satisfaction.

Building a marriage is certainly not an easy thing, in living a household sometimes there are challenges and problems faced. The foundation of a marriage must be strong because the spouse determines where the family will go. Of course,

every family wants a happy, peaceful and harmonious relationship, they expect every partner to be present and accompany them in every daily life (Samsudin & Anjarwati, 2021).

Marriage satisfaction, in the dictionary of psychology, is defined as a condition of happiness and well-being, this is because someone has achieved a goal or achievement (Chaplin, 2006). Marital satisfaction is the furthest point at which couples feel satisfaction in the marriage relationship. Marriage satisfaction must be considered to be an evaluation for a person on the quality of his or her marriage with a comprehensive. Sadarjoen (2005) argues that marital satisfaction can be fulfilled if the couple can fulfill their partner's needs and liberate each partner made and achieve the expectations that were dreamed of before marriage.

Satisfaction in marriage for every couple can be felt when a happy and harmonious marriage is realized. However, to achieve feelings of happiness and harmony in a marriage is not easy to achieve, sometimes during the course of family life it often happens that the hopes and achievements that are dreamed of in a couple are not achieved and do not run properly (Triningtyas & Muhayati, 2017).

Problems in married life in the community have developed in such a way that there are various tests. If a husband and wife cannot overcome household problems properly and wisely, misunderstandings will arise which ultimately result in quarrels that sometimes end in divorce (Rozalinda & Nurhasanah, 2014). Divorce is one of the adverse effects of a dissatisfied marriage. The tendency of husband and wife to be unhappy in their marriage is what leads to divorce. Rozalinda and Nurhasanah (2014) reveal that not all married couples can form a happy, peaceful and lasting relationship. In fact, many married couples choose to divorce because they are not satisfied with their marriage (Harahap & Lestari, 2018).

Based on Statistics Indonesia 2023, there were 447,743 divorce cases in 2021, and an increase of 15.31% to 516,334 in 2022. One of the areas with many divorce cases is Banyumas Regency. In the

results of researchers' search at the Purwokerto 1A Religious Court in 2021, there were 1,081 divorce cases recorded, while in 2022 there were 3,225 divorced couples. This means that there was an increase in divorce of 2144 cases. Based on the results of preliminary studies that have been conducted by researchers by distributing questionnaires aimed at a sample of 60 people who are married couples in Purwokerto.

Based on the results of the preliminary study in the form of filling out a questionnaire, it shows that problems that often arise in marriage include financial/economic problems, sexual problems, lack of communication and lack of time together. This is one of the many problems that cause dissatisfaction in marriage. Then, it was also found that things that hinder marital satisfaction include religious differences, not being serious when solving problems, not being open to each other and differences of opinion. In addition, the results of the preliminary study in the form of interviews show that there are still couples who have not been able to apply forgiveness properly, which can affect the level of satisfaction in marriage. Unwillingness to forgive is proven to cause various problems in life.

One way to resolve the many problems of marital dissatisfaction is to apologize to one's partner. Forgiveness is defined as a motivational change, which involves decreasing the drive for avoidance and revenge, while simultaneously increasing the positive drive (McCullough et al., 2006). According to research by Herawati and Widiatoro (2019), it was found that the aspect that affects the level of satisfaction in marriage is forgiveness. With forgiveness, problems between husband and wife can be resolved effectively, having a positive impact on the level of satisfaction in marriage. Forgiveness is considered an important aspect that must be emphasized in an individual's life to achieve happiness in marriage. It is important for married couples to apply forgiveness in life as an effort to maintain the sustainability and integrity of the relationship, avoiding divorce as a solution to challenges that arise.

Raj et al., (2016) explains that forgiveness that is done will have a good impact on oneself who forgive because it will live more prosperous, more able to accept the reality of himself. forgiveness needs to be done by someone because it is a way to release the hurt, emotions and resentment experienced due to bad events that have happened to him. Enright (2003) mentions that a person may engage in various unhelpful means of self-defense and so a variety of negative emotions, cognitive distortions, declining health conditions, and non-adaptive behaviors arise. Conversely, the willingness to forgive opens up opportunities for everyone to honestly acknowledge painful feelings experienced, having a better outlook.

Forgiveness can lead to general mental health by improving social support, relationship quality and religion (McCullough, 2000). Therefore, the higher the level of forgiveness, the higher the satisfaction in the marriage. Apart from forgiveness, according to Istiqomah and Mukhlis (2015) religiousness has a relationship with marital satisfaction. In a study conducted by Istiqomah and Mukhlis (2015), it was found that the level of religiousness has a relationship with marital satisfaction in couples in Tampan District. It can be said that high religiousness will also be high marriage satisfaction, on the contrary, low religiousness will also lower the marriage satisfaction experienced by couples.

The religiousness factor in marriage in Indonesia is interesting to study because Indonesia is a country where 99.5% of the population has a religion, with the majority being Muslim. In the search results, in 2021 there were 86.93% of the population in Indonesia who were Muslim. Sadarjoen (2005), religious factors in the family are important and decisive in marital satisfaction. There are many married couples who demand that their spouses follow their beliefs and religious observances.

In accordance with the research of Srisusanti and Zulkaida (2013) it is concluded that if husband and wife couples who have similar principles when believing in religion, it will be easier to carry out religious activities together and make religion a

foundation for solving the problems they are going through. Someone who believes and carries out religious law will be able to solve problems with a partner and will not choose divorce, because divorce is prohibited in every religion (Srisusanti & Zulkaida, 2013). Researchers are very interested and enthusiastic to further examine whether the influence of forgiveness and religiousness on marital satisfaction in married couples in Purwokerto.

### Methods:

The method used in this research is quantitative. The sample in this study amounted to 54 husband and wife couples or 108 people located in Purwokerto, Central Java, Indonesia. Demographic data on the distribution of the age range of participants as follows: 4 people aged 30-40 years (4%), 36 people aged 41-50 years (33%), 64 people aged 51-60 years (59%) and 4 people aged 61-64 years (4%). The regional distribution of participants is as follows: 18 people come from Purwokerto Timur Sub-district (17%), 54 people come from Purwokerto Barat (50%) and 36 people come from Purwokerto Utara (33%).

The scale used in this study is an adaptation scale of the marriage satisfaction scale compiled by Fowers & Olson (1993). The modified scale of the forgiveness scale compiled by McCullough et al., (2006) and the religiousness scale compiled by (Huber & Huber (2012). The scale model in this study is a Likert scale which has several answer categories, namely favorable and unfavorable, namely : Very Unsuitable (STS) = 4, Unsuitable (TS) = 3, Suitable (S) = 2, and Very Suitable (SS) = 1.

The marriage satisfaction scale was adapted from Fowers & Olson (1993) ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMSS) which consists of 15 items. This scale is formed based on aspects consisting of, communication, religious orientation, intimacy, congruence, joint activities, problem solving, financial management, sexual orientation, family and friends, children and parenting, personality problems and role similarity. This scale has a reliability value of 0.86.

The forgiveness scale was modified from the theory of McCullough et al., (2006) Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM)-18 which amounted to 18 items based on aspects consisting of, avoidance motivations, revenge motivations, benevolent motivations. This scale has a reliability value of 0.85.

The religiousness scale was modified from the theory (Huber & Huber (2012) Centrality religiousness Scale (CSR) which amounted to 15 items. The scale is formed based on dimensions consisting of, intellectual dimension, ideological dimension, public practice dimension, personal practice dimension, religious experience dimension. This scale has a reliability value of 0.80.

Data analysis techniques in this study used statistical techniques to analyze the data. Statistical techniques can prove the existence of conclusions

in research, namely by calculating factors on validity. Azwar (2019) states that a statistical technique called multiple linear regression analysis is used to test hypotheses related to the influence on two independent variables, namely forgiveness and religiousness on the dependent variable, namely marriage satisfaction.

**Results and Discussion:**

**Results**

This study uses hypothesis testing to test the truth of the statements submitted by researchers. Hypothesis testing was carried out using multiple linear analysis with the help of the SPSS version 26 application. In this study there are three hypotheses which are explained as follows :

1. The Effect of Forgiveness on Marriage Satisfaction

**Table 1. Hypothesis Test of Forgiveness on Marriage Satisfaction**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	T	F	Sig.	R square
Constant	9,253	8,180	66,915	0,000	0,387
Pemaafan	0,644				

Based on the results of hypothesis testing, it can be concluded that the calculated F value is 66.915 while the calculated T is 8.180, then has a probability value of sig. (p) = 0.000 (p <0.05), it can be concluded that forgiveness has an influence on marital satisfaction. Based on the results of the

analysis, the coefficient of determination R square is 0.387. This means that in this study, forgiveness made an effective contribution of 38.7%.

2. The Effect of religiousness on Marriage Satisfaction

**Table 2. Hypothesis Test of Religiousness on Marriage Satisfaction**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	T	F	Sig.	R square
Constant	41,178	2,232	4,982	0,000	0,45
Religiusitas	0,293				

Based on the results of hypothesis testing, it can be concluded that the calculated F value is 4.982 while the calculated T is 2.232, then has a probability value of sig. (p) = 0.000 (p <0.05), it can be

concluded that religiousness has an influence on marital satisfaction. Based on the results of the analysis, the coefficient of determination R square

is 0.45. This means that in this study, religiousness makes an effective contribution of 45%.

3. The Effect of Forgiveness and Religiousness on Marriage Satisfaction

**Table 3. Hypothesis Testing of Forgiveness and Religiousness on Marriage Satisfaction**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	T	F	Sig.	R square
Constant	5,465	0,649	33,521	0,000	0,390
Pemaafan	0,630	7,702			
Religiusitas	0,074	0,682			

Based on the results of hypothesis testing, it can be concluded that the calculated F value is 33.521 while the T count of the forgiveness variable is 7.702, and the T count of the religiousness variable is 0.682 then has a probability value sig. (p) of 0.000 ( $p > 0.05$ ), it can be concluded that the hypothesis is accepted because there is a significant influence on the forgiveness and religiousness variables on marital satisfaction. Based on the results of the analysis, the coefficient of determination R square is 0.390. This means that in this study, forgiveness and religiousness make an effective contribution of 39% to marital satisfaction.

**Discussion:**

Marital satisfaction is a subjective assessment of a husband or wife in their marriage based on a sense of satisfaction, happiness, and feeling happy when meeting their partner (Fowers & Olson, 1993). Every husband and wife certainly have problems that cause poor relationships between people that need to be resolved. One of the steps that can be taken in solving it is to forgive mistakes. Forgiveness is very valuable in human life because forgiveness can absolve and even eliminate resentment. Someone who studies religious knowledge well has a greater chance of forgiving other people's mistakes (Khasan, 2017).

From the results of this study, it can be interpreted that forgiveness and religiousness can affect marriage satisfaction. Raj et al., (2016) explain that forgiveness that is done will have a good impact on

oneself who forgive because it will live more prosperous, more able to accept the reality of himself. Forgiveness needs to be done by someone because it is a way to release the hurt, emotions and resentment experienced due to bad events that have happened to him. The way to forgive can be based on religious values because having good religiousness will motivate a person in doing actions and activities. This is because there is a belief and obedience to religion (Amrilah & Widodo, 2015).

Forgiveness is considered an important aspect that should be emphasized in an individual's life to achieve marital happiness. The tendency to forgive is necessary in married life to achieve marital satisfaction and avoid problems with the family (Fetrus & Soetjningsih, 2020). Forgiveness can lead to general mental health by improving social support, relationship quality and religion (McCullough, 2000). Therefore, the higher the level of forgiveness, the higher the satisfaction in the marriage.

It is important for married couples to apply forgiveness in their daily lives as an effort to maintain the sustainability and integrity of the relationship, avoiding divorce as a solution to challenges that arise (Herawati & Widianoro, 2019). Well-resolved misunderstandings will increase marital satisfaction in a married life (Wibiren, 2020). Forgiveness is one of the alternative solutions that can help couples in solving and preventing problems in the marriage relationship. Forgiveness is an important element to

build and strengthen trust and love between couples. Therefore, forgiveness plays a major role in increasing marital satisfaction (Akhnaf et al., 2024).

The tendency to forgive is necessary in married life to achieve marital satisfaction and avoid problems with the family. This study shows that there is a relevant correlation between forgiveness and marital satisfaction. Forgiveness is important in marriage to prevent long-lasting problems between husband and wife. In order to achieve a high level of marital satisfaction, especially in relationships where one partner has a dual role in the family, a high level of forgiveness is required between partners (Fetrus & Soetjningsih, 2020).

In every husband and wife couple, of course, there are problems that cause a relationship between people to be bad so that it must be resolved. One of the steps that can be taken in solving it is to forgive mistakes. Forgiveness is very valuable in human life because forgiveness can absolve and even eliminate resentment (Khasan, 2017). However, in reality applying forgiveness is not an easy thing, in accordance with the results of research conducted by Khairani and Sari (2019) proving that forgiveness is not an easy thing but in fact it is difficult to do because in their research there are still respondents who have low forgiveness. However, the difficulty to forgive can actually be overcome by improving the quality of the relationship, appreciating the partner's apology, and being a more open person.

Therefore, a religious attitude is needed in each partner in order to forgive easily. Religiousness has an important role in the forgiveness process. Huber dan Huber (2012) define religiousness as how often a person carries out religious orders, individual characteristics in carrying out religious orders, the importance of religion for individuals and individual appreciation of their religion. Rhoades et al., (2017) suggests that religiousness can prevent someone from not forgiving, even avoiding violent treatment. It is important for every couple to have religiousness because it helps maintain household

harmony and avoid the risk of separation due to domestic problems (Niswati, 2014).

The results of research conducted by Ramadhani dan Hermaleni (2022) revealed a positive relationship between religiousness and marital satisfaction in Minang married couples. This proves that the level of religiousness has a relationship with the level of marital satisfaction among Minang couples in Padang city. High religiousness and forgiveness tend to have a positive effect on individuals. Religiousness is believed to provide inner peace, a positive perspective, and a strong motivation for life for anyone who experiences problems. Marriage problems that can be resolved properly will lead to high marital satisfaction. Religiousness can get rid of misunderstandings by referring to the spiritual concepts and values of religiousness that both adhere to (Wibiren, 2020).

Religiousness has an influence on marital satisfaction because having good religiousness will motivate a person in carrying out actions and activities. This is because there is a belief and obeying religion (Amrilah & Widodo, 2015). Amelia et al., (2018) when religiousness is realized in various sides of life, then when problems arise in the household, they will think more positively about the commitment (promise) of marriage, because the promise is witnessed by God, so that the couple can maintain their marriage.

It can be concluded that forgiveness and religiousness are very important for the marital satisfaction of married couples. Forgiveness can help couples to accept their partner's mistakes and shortcomings while religiousness reminds couples to be more careful in all actions. By having both, couples can more easily achieve satisfaction in marriage and more easily when solving problems in their marriage.

Based on the results of the evaluation carried out, there is an influence between forgiveness and religiousness on marital satisfaction. These results are supported by several studies that have been conducted and have been described previously. In this study, the F count value was 33.752 with an analytical probability with an effective contribution

of 39% forgiveness and religiousness to marital satisfaction in married couples in Purwokerto while 61% was influenced by other variables outside this study.

### Conclusion:

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion related to the influence of forgiveness and religiousness on marital satisfaction, it can be concluded that there is an influence of forgiveness and religiousness on marital satisfaction in married couples in Purwokerto. The limitations in this study are the very small number of participants and lack of diversity. In addition, in this study there was only 39% influence of forgiveness and religiousness on marital satisfaction. Based on the results of data analysis and discussion, there are suggestions from this study, suggestions for future researchers to be able to find more and diverse subjects so that the data obtained is more varied. In addition, it is expected to conduct research in different locations. It is expected to choose different subjects with high religiousness. For future researchers it is recommended to use the latest variables and it is recommended to pay more attention to the variables that affect marital satisfaction, it is expected to hold seminars with material on forgiveness and studies that contain things that affect satisfaction in marriage to couples in Purwokerto.

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