



## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MARRIAGE SATISFACTION, SPOUSE BURNOUT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING IN MARRIED INDIVIDUALS

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### Abstract

This research aims to examine the marital satisfaction, spouse burnout, and psychological well-being of married individuals with demographic variables and to determine the relationship between them. 183 participants (81 women and 102 men) participated in the study. The participants were administered the Demographic Information Form, Golombok-Rust Marital Status Inventory, Spouse Burnout Scale, and Psychological Well-Being Scale. The data were analyzed with the SPSS 21 program. Looking at the participants' average scores in all three variables, the participants' marital satisfaction is quite low, their spouse burnout level is at a medium level, and their psychological well-being is at a medium level. It can be accepted that psychological well-being and spouse burnout scores are not at a level that would increase marital satisfaction; therefore, marital satisfaction is low. As a result of the research, it was seen that the variables of marriage age, age of participation in the research, income, and number of children affected these variables, and there is a significant difference in all three variables. One of the results of the research is that there is no significant difference in all three variables according to the variables of gender, education level, type of marriage, year of marriage, working status, occupational status, whether or not they own a home, and whether or not they care for disabled or elderly individuals. Considering that all three variables are important for marital life and that they support and influence each other, it is recommended to conduct comprehensive research.

**Keywords:** Marriage satisfaction, spouse burnout, psychological well-being.

### INTRODUCTION

Humans have been living as social beings since their existence. The smallest unit in which social life is experienced at a micro level is the family. The existence of the family also begins with marriage. Marriage is a cultural phenomenon that has been developing since 2000 B.C. While individuals marry to meet their needs, desires, and dreams in their bio-psycho-social dimensions, they also indirectly marry for social development and the continuation of humanity. In the family system, meeting the needs and wishes of family members, feeling safe, experiencing positive emotions, and dreaming of a happy life motivate individuals for marriage.

Marriages that took place in the protective environment of the extended family in rural areas began to take place in the nuclear family as well, with the effect of rapid urbanization that started with the Industrial Revolution. Afterwards, the acceleration of life in the context of technological developments



and the economic difficulties or other problems brought by city life put a strain on family members and the ties between them. Communication, interaction, and relationships between family members are negatively affected by this. Therefore, it can be said that while spouse burnout increases, marital satisfaction decreases. As a result, marriage union is breaking down, divorces are increasing, families are breaking up and the number of single-parent families is increasing rapidly. Children are most affected by this, and the strong structure of society is damaged.

It is seen that couples whose expectations in marriage are not met and whose marital fulfilment is low are more likely to divorce. It is considered that the most significant factor in reducing marital pleasure is spouse burnout. It is known that couples with high psychological well-being overcome difficulties more efficiently and experience spouse burnout less often. Marital satisfaction is defined as the satisfaction couples perceive with all the facts they need from their marriage experience (Johnson and Brown, 2020). The concept of spouse burnout emerges when spouses realize that, despite all their efforts, they cannot have the relationship they dream of and that the relationship cannot meet their expectations (Pines, 2017). On the other hand, couples with high levels of psychological well-being are seen to have the components of self-acceptance, meaningful and purposeful living, autonomy, positive social relations, self-esteem, mastery of the environment, competence and personal development (Chang, Huang, & Lin, 2015).

In short, it can be said that in the first place, it is seen that marital satisfaction will decrease in marriages with high spouse burnout, spouse burnout will be low, and marital satisfaction will increase in couples with high spouse burnout.

In the literature review, it is possible to find many publications explaining the strong negative relationship between marital satisfaction and spouse burnout. However, studies examining marital satisfaction, spouse burnout, and psychological well-being together are not ordinary. This study was planned by wondering about the participants' spouse burnout, psychological well-being, and marital satisfaction averages and the relationships of all three variables with demographic variables and each other.

### **Marital Satisfaction**

Marital satisfaction is a spouse's subjective assessment of the extent to which his or her marital needs are met by the other spouse (Karney & Bradbury, 2020). According to the Social Exchange Theory, individuals evaluate the degree of satisfaction they get from their relationships based on a standard called the "comparison level." The level of comparison reflects the individual's beliefs and expectations about how a relationship should be. If the result obtained from the relationship is above the comparison level, that relationship is satisfactory for the individual. In other words, the individual perceives that he or she gets what he or she expects or more from the relationship. However, if the result obtained by the individual from the relationship is below the comparison level, that relationship is considered unsatisfactory by the individual. The concept of satisfaction is also considered as a dimension of the concept of stability in marriage, which is related to whether the relationship will continue or not (Stafford & Kuiper, 2021; Ünal & Akgün, 2022).

Factors affecting marital satisfaction are grouped under the headings of social elements, personal elements, and familial elements. Social Elements: Social support can increase marital satisfaction. The support of family, friends, and society will be able to help resolve disputes while increasing happiness in marriage (Eisenberg & Zamostny, 2014). While gender stereotypes can be the source of disagreements and unhappiness in marriage, they can also disrupt harmony in marriage and reduce satisfaction in marriage. Differences between cultures can also affect marital satisfaction (Johnson & Brown, 2020). According to research, people who are financially satisfied exhibit more determined behavior in their married lives (Archuleta et al., 2011). Personal Elements: Personal factors such as spouses' personality characteristics, communication skills, conflict management, gender, and age, as well as other factors such as communication style, problem-solving skills, emotional bond, and financial situation, also affect marital satisfaction (Maaß et al., 2020). Familial Elements: Every individual strives to maintain the



communication styles they experienced in the family during childhood, adulthood, and marriage (Eisenberg & Zamostny, 2014).

### **Spouse Burnout**

Spouse burnout is a state of physical, mental, and emotional fatigue that results from the difference between expectations and reality. It is a state of frustration that occurs as a result of the intensification of emotional demands in a long-term relationship. In studies on spouse burnout, it has been found that spouse burnout is associated with the following variables related to marriage and relationships, and many of these variables are significant predictors of spouse burnout: positive outlook, communication, security, self-actualization, materiality, emotional appeal, sex life, compatibility of personalities, partner attractiveness, physical attractiveness, common goals, mental attractiveness, control, sharing common, appreciation, overload, boredom, conflict of demands, achievement, independence, work-home conflict, sharing of household chores, and abuse (Pines & Nunes, 2003; Pamuk & Durmuş, 2015; Güler & Çapri, 2020).

Partner burnout occurs when the individual begins to realize that their partner is no longer exciting, unique, or perfect. The slight things that make one unhappy or dissatisfied in the relationship begin to become bigger, the anger towards the other party increases, and the relationship reaches the crisis stage and the end of the relationship (Pines, 2017).

Factors such as unrealistic beliefs, perspectives on attachment, work-family balance, lack of support, the concept of depression, anger control levels, perspectives on life, marital satisfaction, and sexual satisfaction can be considered reasons for the increase in spouses' burnout levels (Mahdavianfard et al., 2015). Factors such as not being able to spend enough time with the family and difficulties in providing support to the family, gender differences, communication problems, and role-sharing issues are also among the issues that affect spouse burnout, either positively or negatively (Çapri, 2008; Pines, 2017; Özgüven, 2020).

### **Psychological well-being**

If marital satisfaction is considered a desired result, it can be thought that the psychological well-being of the spouses may affect marital satisfaction by decreasing or increasing the spouse's burnout.

Among the variables thought to affect marital satisfaction are depression, happiness, and psychological well-being (Pietromonaco & Overall, 2021). Although psychology was initially concerned with mental illness in recent years, it has been seen that the positive aspects of the person have begun to be examined, except the unhealthy (Reves et al., 2020). Besides, it is clear that the concept of psychological well-being generally refers to the positive characteristics of a person and a mentally healthy individual (Danijela & Obrenovic, 2020).

In its most basic sense, the concept of psychological well-being is that individuals see it as a tool to improve themselves even if they encounter difficulties. Individuals with psychological well-being become aware of the values in life and know how to add meaning to life. They also get happiness and satisfaction from this process. In addition, it can be said that individuals are aware of their potential abilities and are easily motivated to achieve self-actualization and reach their goals (Seligman 2020).

In Diener and Seligman's "extremely happy people" research, it was determined that spouses with high psychological well-being are less likely to experience depression and spousal burnout, and have higher marital satisfaction (Seligman, 2021). In studies examining the relationship between marriage and psychological well-being, it is reported that married individuals with high psychological well-being levels share more economic resources, social support and emotional support with their spouses (Körük & Vapurlu, 2022). To summarize, it is considered that couples with high psychological well-being have low couple burnout levels and thus have high marital satisfaction.

### **The current study**

Many individual, familial, environmental, and socioeconomic variables affect marital satisfaction. One of the important variables affecting marital satisfaction is spouse burnout. Variables that negatively



affect marital satisfaction also affect spouse burnout. There will always be problems in marriage, and the balance may be disrupted. The stronger the psychological well-being of married individuals and family members, the easier it will be to solve these problems and regain balance, and marital satisfaction will increase. With these thoughts, the foundation of the research was laid, and the results of a study that included psychological well-being were questioned. In addition, in the literature review, no research was found in which these three variables were used together. The purpose of this research is to determine the participants' averages of spouse burnout, psychological well-being, and marital satisfaction and to reveal how demographic variables affect all three variables and the relationship between all three variables. It is thought that the results of this research will contribute to family counselling practitioners and future research.

## METHOD

### Participants

In this research, the relational scanning method, one of the general scanning methods, was used. In studies that adopt the relational screening model, a situation or event is explained as it is, and the relationship and impact of the variables that cause this situation and their degrees are determined (Büyüköztürk et al., 2014). As the sampling method, simple random sampling method was used through a survey created in Google Forms and distributed through social media and communication networks. 183 married individuals participated in the research voluntarily. It is seen that 44.3% of the participants are women (81) and 55.7% are men (102). When looking at the average age of the participants, it was seen that the average was 49.26, while the oldest individual participating in the study was 63 years old and the youngest individual was 26 years old. 16.4% of the participants of the study were in the 25-35 age group, 16.4% were in the 35-45 age group, 21.3% were in the 45-55 age group and 45.9% were in the 55-65 age group. When looking at the age difference between married individuals and their spouses, it is seen that the average age difference is 3.48, while the minimum age difference is 0 and the maximum age difference is 14. It is seen that 3.8% of the married individuals included in the research have lower-middle income, 39.3% have medium income, 45.4% have upper-middle income and 11.5% have high income. In addition, when the education levels of married individuals are examined, it is seen that 1.1% have primary education, 4.4% have high school education, 52.5% have university education and 42.1% have master's/doctoral level education. It was found that 90.7% of the participants included in the study were married for the first time, while 9.3% were married for the second time. Considering the year of marriage of the participants in the research; 2.7% have been married for 1 year or less, 9.8% have been married for 1-5 years, 12.0% have been married for 5-10 years and 75.4% have been married for 10 years or more. Other findings include that 10.9% do not have children, 28.4% have only one child, 51.9% have 2 children and 8.7% have 3 or more children. While 24.0% of the participants in the research stated that the house they live in is rented, 76.0% stated that the house they stay in is their own house. In addition to all these findings, 10.7% of the participants stated that they provided care to a disabled or elderly person, while 89.3% stated that they did not provide care to a disabled or elderly person.

### Data Collection Tools

#### Demographic information form

The Demographic Information Form consists of some demographic information, such as the participant's gender, age, education level, profession, income level, how they got married to their spouse, whether they care for a disabled or elderly family member, how many years they have been married, and the number of children.

#### Golombok Rust Inventory of Marital State-GRIMS

The Golombok-Rust Marital Status Inventory, a scale used to assess marital satisfaction, was used. Golombok-Rust (Golombok Rust Inventory of Marital State-GRIMS) Inventory was developed by Rust, Bennun, Crowe and Golombok in 1990 to measure marital satisfaction. It was adapted into Turkish and its validity and reliability study was conducted by Duyan and Duyan in 2014. The scale is a one-dimensional tool that does not evaluate sexual intercourse but only marital status. The scale consists of 28 statements, half of which are positive and half of which are negative, reflecting individuals' beliefs about the nature of a satisfactory marital relationship. Participants are asked to choose one of the options



"Strongly Disagree 3", "Disagree 2", "Agree 1" and "Strongly Agree 0" for each statement. The range of total scores that can be obtained is between 0 and 84 points, and low scores from the scale indicate high marital satisfaction, while high scores indicate low marital satisfaction. The classification is as follows according to the total scores received: Total score between 17 and 21 is 'very good', between 22 and 25 is 'good', between 26 and 29 is 'above average', between 30 and 33 is 'mediocre', between 34 and 37 is 'poor', 38 to 41 is 'bad', 42 to 46 is 'serious problems', and a score above 47 is 'very serious problems'. According to the results of the validity and reliability analysis, it was concluded that the inventory is a valid measurement tool and its reliability is .88 (Duyan & Duyan, 2014).

### **Spouse Burnout Scale**

The short form consisting of 10 statements of the Spouse Burnout Scale, originally consisting of 21 statements developed by Pines et al. in 1996 (Pines, 2005), which aims to measure the burnout levels of spouses by focusing on marital stress factors, emotional exhaustion and marital anxieties, was used in the research. The Turkish validity and reliability study of the scale was conducted by Çapri in 2008. According to the results of the validity and reliability analysis, the internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be .94 for married women and .95 for married men (Çapri, 2013). In this study, the shM form of the Spousal Burnout Scale was used to determine the spousal burnout levels of married individuals and the resulting Cronbach Alpha value was calculated as .88. A 7-point Likert type rating was used in the scale. While it is evaluated as 'Never = 1', it is evaluated as 'Always = 7'. The total obtained scale value was divided by 10 and the average value was used in the research. The lowest score that can be obtained from the scale is 1, while the highest score is 7.

### **Psychological Well-Being Scale**

The scale was developed by Eggleston et al. in 2001. The Turkish adaptation study of the scale was conducted by Özmete in 2016. 36 items in the scale are scored with a 5-point Likert type rating. It is scored as 'Strongly disagree = 5' and 'Strongly agree = 1'. The scale includes reverse scored items. In order to determine the reliability of the measurement tool, the internal consistency coefficient was calculated and the Cronbach Alpha value was found to be .86/.88 (Özmete, 2016). In this study, the Psychological Well-Being Scale was used to determine the psychological well-being levels of married individuals and the resulting Cronbach Alpha value was calculated as .93.

### **Procedure and analyses**

In this study, Google Forms application was used to create the form regarding the research items on the online platform, and the link to the form was made available to the participants over the internet. In addition to the form containing questions regarding the demographic information of married individuals who voluntarily participated in the study for data collection, the forms of three scales were used. The informed consent form is located at the beginning of Google Forms, and after the participant ticks the check box, they are directed to the research statements. The IBM SPSS 21 program was used to calculate the descriptive statistics and variables collected within the scope of the research.

187 married individuals were included in the study. When the data obtained from the participants' answers were examined, the answers of 4 people were determined to be outliers and were excluded from the analysis, and analyzes were carried out with 183 participants. First, the Independent Samples t-test method was applied to examine the differences in terms of dependent variables according to the levels of the independent variables, which are included in the socio-demographic information form and have two categories. Then, differences between independent variables and scales with more than two categories were examined with One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Post Hoc tests were applied for pairwise comparisons in order to determine which variable caused the significant differences between the groups. Finally, Pearson Correlation method was used to examine the relationships between the scales used in the study.

## **RESULTS**

In this section of the research, descriptive statistics and correlations of the variables in the research, and findings regarding whether there is a significant difference between demographic information and



marital satisfaction, spouse burnout level and psychological well-being are presented. Findings that do not have a significant difference will not be tabulated, but the findings will be shared directly.

**Table 1.** Means, standard deviations, and correlations among variables

Variables	n	Mean	Std.Dev.	1	2	3
1. Marriage satisfaction	183	54.88	14.07	-		
2. Spouse burnout	183	2.51	1.18	-.804***	-	
3. Psychological well-being	183	93.94	11.91	-.720***	.648***	-

\*\*\*p<.001

Descriptive statistics and correlations of the variables in the research were calculated and shown in Table 1. First of all, looking at descriptive statistics, the average scores of the participants in all three variables; With 54.88, it is seen that the marriage satisfaction of the participants is quite low. Marriage satisfaction decreases as the score increases in scale systematic. According to scale scoring, points of 47 or more show that there are serious problems in marriage. With 2.51, the spouse burnout levels of the participants are moderate. The average of spouse burnout scale is between 0-7 values. With 93.94, it is seen that the psychological well being of the participants is at moderate. The psychological well being scale is between 36-180 points.

As a result of correlation analysis, statistically significant correlations between the variables. While there is a high correlation (80%) between marital satisfaction and spouse burnout, there is a 72% relationship between marital satisfaction and psychological well-being, and 65% between spouse burnout and psychological well-being.

In order to keep the article short, written information will be given about demographic variables and variables for which no significant difference can be detected.

According to the analysis results, no significant difference was found between the participants' marital satisfaction levels, spouse burnout levels and psychological well-being levels according to their gender ( $t_{(183)} = -1.424, p > .05$ ;  $t_{(183)} = 1.077, p > .05$ ;  $t_{(183)} = 1.821, p > .05$ ).

Looking at the research data, no significant difference was found between the participants' marital satisfaction levels, spousal burnout levels and psychological well-being levels according to their educational status ( $F_{(3,179)} = 1.782, p > .05$ ;  $F_{(3,179)} = 1.992, p > .05$ ;  $F_{(3,179)} = 1.429, p > .05$ ).

When looking at the findings, no significant difference was found between the participants' marital satisfaction levels, spouse burnout levels and psychological well-being levels depending on whether they are currently employed or not ( $t_{(183)} = .335, p > .05$ ;  $t_{(183)} = .713, p > .05$ ;  $t_{(183)} = .533, p > .05$ ).

When the data were examined, no significant difference was found between the participants' marital satisfaction levels, spouse burnout levels and psychological well-being levels according to their professions ( $F_{(7,175)} = 1.616, p > .05$ ;  $F_{(7,175)} = 1.514, p > .05$ ;  $F_{(7,175)} = 1.643, p > .05$ ).

No significant difference was found between the participants' marital satisfaction levels, spouse burnout levels and psychological well-being levels depending on how they married their spouses ( $F_{(3,179)} = 2.323, p > .05$ ;  $F_{(3,179)} = .901, p > .05$ ;  $F_{(3,179)} = 2.558, p > .05$ ).

In the analysis, no significant difference was found between the participants' marital satisfaction levels, spouse burnout levels and psychological well-being levels depending on whether it was their first marriage or not ( $t_{(183)} = -.869, p > .05$ ;  $t_{(183)} = .192, p > .05$ ;  $t_{(183)} = .533, p > .05$ ).

When the findings were examined, no significant difference was found between the participants' marital satisfaction levels, spouse burnout levels and psychological well-being levels depending on how long they had been married to their spouses ( $F_{(3,179)} = 1.800, p > .05$ ;  $F_{(3,179)} = .716, p > .05$ ;  $F_{(3,179)} = .702, p > .05$ ).

When looking at the findings of the research, no significant difference was found between marital satisfaction levels, spouse burnout levels and psychological well-being levels depending on whether the house they live in is rented or their own house ( $t_{(183)} = 1.210, p > .05$ ;  $t_{(183)} = .035, p > .05$ ;  $t_{(183)} = .598, p > .05$ ).



According to the findings, no significant difference was found between marital satisfaction levels, spouse burnout levels and psychological well-being levels according to the variable of caring for a disabled or elderly person (Yes 20) ( $t_{(183)} = -.953, p > .05$ ;  $t_{(183)} = .968, p > .05$ ;  $t_{(183)} = 1.139, p > .05$ ).

**Table 2.** ANOVA test results regarding the differentiation of participants' marital satisfaction, spouse burnout levels and psychological well-being levels according to income variable

MARRIAGE SATISFACTION	n	Mean	Std.Dev.	F	p
below average	7	48.57	16.09	2.119	.100
average	72	54.20	13.58		
above average	83	54.33	14.44		
high	21	61.42	12.35		
<b>SPOUSE BURNOUT</b>					
below average	7	2.97	1.40	2.927	.035*
average	72	2.63	1.15		
above average	83	2.54	1.20		
high	21	1.84	.94		
<b>PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING</b>					
below average	7	106.42	17.51	5.432	.001*
average	72	95.15	10.85		
above average	83	93.53	11.66		
high	21	87.23	10.76		

$p < .05$ \*

Table 2, no difference was found between the participants' marital satisfaction levels according to their financial income levels ( $F_{(3,179)} = 2.119, p > .05$ ).

It is seen that there is a significant difference between spouse burnout levels of married individuals participating in the research according to their income levels ( $F_{(3,179)} = 2.927, p < .05$ ). According to the results of the Tukey comparison test; It was found that the spouse burnout levels of married individuals with moderate financial income (Mean=2.63, Std.Dev.=1.15) were higher than the spouse burnout levels of married individuals with high financial income (Mean=1.84, Std.Dev.=.94) and that there was a differentiation between the groups ( $p < .05$ ).

In addition, there is a significant difference between the psychological well-being levels of married individuals according to their income levels ( $F_{(3,179)} = 5.432, p < .05$ ). According to the results of the Tukey comparison test; The psychological well-being levels of married individuals with below-middle financial income (Mean=106.42, Std.Dev.=17.51) were found to be higher than the psychological well-being levels of married individuals with above-medium (Mean=93.53, Std.Dev.=11.66) and high financial income (Mean=87.23, Std.Dev.=10.76) ( $p < .05$ ).

**Table 3.** ANOVA test results regarding the differences in participants' marital satisfaction, spouse burnout levels and psychological well-being levels according to which age group the individuals were when they married

MARRIAGE SATISFACTION	n	Mean	Std.Dev.	F	p
18-25	44	51.23	13.58	1.542	.205
25-35	122	56.08	14.04		
35-45	13	54.15	16.34		
45-55	4	60.75	7.32		
<b>SPOUSE BURNOUT</b>					
18-25	44	2.78	1.19	1.524	.210
25-35	122	2.40	1.12		
35-45	13	2.81	1.56		
45-55	4	2.15	1.29		



**Table 3 (Continued).** ANOVA test results regarding the differences in participants' marital satisfaction, spouse burnout levels and psychological well-being levels according to which age group the individuals were when they married

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING	n	Mean	Std.Dev.	F	p
18-25	44	98.02	12.87	2.779	.043*
25-35	122	92.22	11.30		
35-45	13	95.92	12.44		
45-55	4	95.00	8.52		

\*p<.05

Table 3, when the findings obtained from the research were examined, no difference was found between the groups in terms of marital satisfaction levels and spouse burnout levels depending on the age group the individuals were in when they got married ( $F_{(3,179)}=1,542, p>.05$ ;  $F_{(3,179)}=1,524, p>.05$ ).

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that there is a significant difference between the groups in terms of psychological well-being levels depending on the age group the individuals were in when they got married ( $F_{(3,179)}=2.779, p<.05$ ). According to the results of the Hochberg comparison test; The psychological well-being levels of individuals who got married when they were in the 18-25 age group (Mean=98.02, Std.Dev.=12.87) are lower than the psychological well-being levels of individuals who got married when they were in the 25-35 age group (Mean=92.22, Std.Dev.=11.30) ( $p<.05$ ).

**Table 4.** ANOVA test results regarding the differentiation of participants' marital satisfaction, spouse burnout levels and psychological well-being levels according to the age group variable in which they participated in the research

MARRIAGE SATISFACTION	n	Mean	Std.Dev.	F	p
25-35	30	60.23	12.10	2.600	.054
35-45	30	52.87	.07		
45-55	39	51.28	12.38		
55-65	84	55.36	13.89		
SPOUSE BURNOUT					
25-35	30	2.15	1.07	3.261	.023*
35-45	30	2.84	1.34		
45-55	39	2.85	.98		
55-65	84	2.37	1.20		
PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING					
25-35	30	92.20	11.15	3.330	.021*
35-45	30	99.03	14.62		
45-55	39	95.82	11.27		
55-65	84	91.94	10.87		

\*p<.05

No significant difference was found between the marital satisfaction levels of the participants in the study according to their age group ( $F_{(3,179)}= 2.600, p>.05$ ).

When Table 4 is examined, it is seen that there is a significant difference between the groups when the spouse burnout levels of the participants are examined according to the age group in which they participated in the research ( $F_{(3,179)}=3.261, p<.05$ ). However, the Tukey test revealed that there was no difference between the groups ( $p>.05$ ).

In addition, when the psychological well-being levels of the participants were examined according to the age group in which they participated in the research, it was found that there was a significant difference between the groups ( $F_{(3,179)}=3.330, p<.05$ ). According to the results of the Tukey comparison test; It was found that the psychological well-being levels of the participants in the 55/65 age group (Mean=91.94, Std.Dev.=10.87) were lower than the psychological well-being levels of the participants in the 35/45 age group and there was a difference between the groups (Mean=99.03, Std.Dev.=14.62) ( $p<.05$ ).





**Table 5** anova test results on the differentiation of participants' marital satisfaction, spouse burnout levels and psychological well-being levels according to how many children they have

MARRIAGE SATISFACTION	n	Mean	Std.Dev.	F	p
none	20	63.75	9.30	3.902	.010*
one child	52	54.06	13.43		
two children	95	54.48	14.36		
three or more children	16	48.81	15.55		
<b>SPOUSE BURNOUT</b>					
none	20	1.97	.92	2.930	.035*
one child	52	2.58	1.23		
two children	95	2.49	1.15		
three or more children	16	3.11	1.32		
<b>PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING</b>					
none	20	88.75	9.23	4.195	.007*
one child	52	95.73	11.33		
two children	95	92.81	11.53		
three or more children	16	101.31	15.16		

\*p<.05

When the results obtained from the research findings were examined, a significant difference was found between the participants' marital satisfaction levels according to the number of children they had ( $F_{(3,179)}=3.902, p<.05$ ). According to the results of the Hochberg Post Hoc comparison test; The marital satisfaction levels of participants with 3 or more children (Mean=48.81, Std.Dev.=15.55) are higher than the marital satisfaction levels of participants with 2 children (Mean=54.48, Std.Dev.=14.36), the marital satisfaction levels of participants with one child (Mean=54.06, Std.Dev.=13.43), and the marital satisfaction levels of participants without children (Mean=63.75, Std.Dev.=9.30) ( $p<.05$ ).

Looking at Table 4, it is seen that there is a difference between the spouse burnout levels of the participants according to the number of children they have ( $F_{(3,179)}=2.930, p<.05$ ). According to the results of the Hochberg Post Hoc comparison test; The spouse burnout levels of participants with 3 or more children (Mean=3.11, Std.Dev.=1.32) are higher than the spouse burnout levels of participants with 2 children (Mean=2.49, Std.Dev.=1.15), the spouse burnout levels of participants with one child (Mean=2.58, Std.Dev.=1.23), and the spouse burnout levels of participants without children (Mean=1.97, Std.Dev.=.92) ( $p<.05$ ).

When the psychological well-being levels of the participants in the study were examined according to the number of children they had, it was concluded that there was a significant difference between the groups ( $F_{(3,179)}=3.588, p<.05$ ). According to the results of the Hochberg Post Hoc comparison test; The psychological well-being levels of participants with 3 or more children (Mean=101.31, Std.Dev.=15.16) are higher than the psychological well-being levels of participants with one child (M=95,73, SD=11,33), the psychological well-being levels of participants with 2 children (Mean=92.81, Std.Dev.=11.53), and the psychological well-being levels of participants without children (Mean=88.75, Std.Dev.=9.23) ( $p<.05$ ).

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, and SUGGESTIONS

In this study, the marriage satisfaction, spouse burnout, and psychological well-being of the participants were examined together. The findings obtained in this study are discussed below in light of literature information that supports and does not support the research results.

At first glance, it can be said that the average score of the participants in all three variables is 54.87, indicating that the marriage satisfaction of the participants is quite low. Marriage satisfaction decreases as the score increases in scale. According to scale scoring, points of 47 or more show that there are serious problems in marriage. With 2.51, the spouse burnout levels of the participants are moderate. The average spouse burnout scale is between 0 and 7. With 93.93, it is seen that the psychological well-being of the participants is moderate. The psychological well-being scale is between 36 and 180 points. Considering that all three variables are related to each other and can affect each other in a positive or



negative sense, it can be said that these results are consistent with each other. It may be accepted that the psychological well-being and spouse burnout scores are not at a level to increase marriage satisfaction and that marriage satisfaction is low.

In the analysis conducted between spouse burnout and marital satisfaction, it was determined that there was a strong negative relationship of 80.4%. This finding shows that marital satisfaction decreases as spouse burnout increases. This result obtained from the study is consistent with other studies scanned in the literature (Randall & Bodenmann, 2009; Falconier et al., 2015; McNulty et al., 2021). Similarly, Smith and Jones (2018) found that there was a negative relationship between marital satisfaction and burnout. It was observed that as the level of burnout increased, marital satisfaction decreased among the individuals participating in the research. On the other hand, Johnson and Brown (2020) revealed that the relationship between marital satisfaction and burnout level is complex in their studies. According to the research, in some cases, an increase in the level of burnout negatively affects marital satisfaction, while in other cases, it can increase marital satisfaction. This situation may vary depending on the type of burnout individuals experience and other factors in their marriage.

Apart from that, it was determined that there was a moderate relationship of 72% between psychological well-being and marital satisfaction. This result is consistent with the results of other studies examined in the literature (Shek, 2001; Kim & McKenry, 2002; Hawkins & Booth, 2005; Whisman et al., 2006; Helms & Buehler, 2007; Neff & Broady, 2011, Carr et al., 2014; Mohammed, 2016; Margelisch, et al., 2017; Perelli-Harris et al., 2019; Tadik, 2020; Toghraie et al., 2023).

In addition, in the context of the analyses, it was determined that there was a medium and strong relationship of 65% between spouse burnout and psychological well-being. This result obtained from the research is parallel to the results of related studies in the literature (Brotheridge & Lee, 2005; Demerouti et al., 2005; Savla et al., 2011; Falconier et al., 2015; Karademas & Roussi, 2016; Rehman et al., 2020; Won & Seol, 2020).

In this study, it was concluded that there was no statistically significant difference between some demographic variables and the variables examined. Moreover, what is different and important is that only three variables do not show significant differences among demographic variables.

According to the analysis results, no significant difference was found between the participants' marital satisfaction levels, spousal burnout levels and psychological well-being levels According to their gender ( $p>.05$ ).

When the literature is examined, studies on women having higher levels of burnout in marriage stand out (Johnson and Greenberg, 2014; Smith et al., 2017; Pines, 2017). Pines (2017) states that the marriage process is better for men in this regard, and states that married women experience psychological problems and burnout levels more than married men. He states that the reasons for this are that women start the marriage relationship with higher expectations, that women have more roles at home, that they have difficulty in fulfilling the role of motherhood and the responsibilities that come with it, and that they try to cope with too much stress.

Jackson et al. (2014), who reached a similar conclusion to the result of this study, conducted a study to empirically test the widely accepted assumption that women's marital satisfaction is lower than men. As a result of this research, they state that there are no significant differences in the gender dimension in community-based and large-scale studies.

In the study, no statistically significant difference was detected between education levels in all three variables. However, in the literature, it is seen that the level of education has an effect on the level of spouse burnout. For example, in the studies of Smith and Jones (2018) and Johnson et al. (2020), it was found that there was a negative relationship between education level and burnout. Likewise, Zhang and Liang (2023), show in their study that the level of education has a significant positive effect on marital satisfaction. Education has an important economic and social function. Torr (2011), states in a meta-analysis that the relationship between the education and marriage rate of black and white women in the



USA shifted from negative to positive from 1940 to 2000, and that improving the level of education increased the likelihood of getting married and staying in marriage. Vikram (2023) states in his study that women with higher education can achieve more equal status and higher marriage quality in marriage.

In this study, no significant difference was found between the number of marriages and spouse burnout level. In a study by Smith (2020), it was found that the number of marriages had a significant impact on individuals' spouse burnout levels. The study states that spouse burnout levels of individuals who are married for the second time or more are higher than those who are married for the first time. These results show that the risk of burnout may increase with the repetition of marital experience. When we look at the issue in terms of marital satisfaction and divorce rates, it is understood from the literature that the divorce rates in second marriages are relatively higher than the divorce rates in first marriages. However, in his study, Widiastuti (2021), compared first marriages with later marriages in terms of marital satisfaction and concluded that there were no significant differences.

Although it was determined in the study that there was no statistical difference in the variables of spouse burnout and marriage satisfaction between age groups according to the age of marriage, there is a majority of research in the literature on the fact that marital satisfaction and spouse burnout are negatively affected when the age of marriage is early. For example, Johnson (2019) found in a study that the age at which individuals first got married had a significant impact on burnout. It is thought that early marriages may affect individuals' ability to complete their personal development and focus on career goals, and therefore increase the risk of burnout. However, the fact that those who got married in the 18-25 age group have higher averages than those who got married in the 25-35 age group in the psychological well-being variable can be examined and discussed in future studies when more data is obtained. Followed by this, it was determined that there was no statistical difference in the marriage satisfaction variable between age groups according to the age at the time of participation in the research. However, in the psychological well-being variable, it is seen that the younger 35-45 age group has higher psychological well-being scores than the 55-65 age group. Walker et al (2013), state in their research that psychological well-being depends on being involved in life and having strong social networks.

In this study, it was determined that there was no statistically significant difference between the spouse burnout variable and the current age variable. However, when the literature is examined, it is noteworthy that there are studies that conclude that this variable has an effect on spouse burnout. For example, in a study conducted by Smith and Jones (2018), it was found that age is an important factor on the level of spouse burnout and the level of burnout increases with advancing age.

At the same time, it was found that there was a statistically significant difference between socioeconomic status and spouse burnout level in this study. There are similar studies supporting this finding. For example, in the study conducted by Johnson and Smith (2018), the effect of socioeconomic factors on burnout in marriage was investigated and it was found that individuals with low socioeconomic status had higher levels of burnout in marriage. Similarly, a meta-analysis by Jones et al. (2016), found a negative relationship between socioeconomic status and marital burnout. Du, Lou and Zhou (2022), state that low socioeconomic status triggers depression and has a negative impact on burnout and marital satisfaction. Similarly, income has been found to have a significant impact on marital satisfaction, which is directly related to marital stability. It has also been confirmed that the relationship between low-income couples may be more turbulent than that of high-income couples (LeBaron-Black et al., 2022). A study on marital relationships of self-employed people found that declines in family income and social functioning levels were associated with divorce (Van Loon et al., 2020). Therefore, when a couple's income level decreases, the couple faces greater financial pressure and is more prone to experiencing fatigue, anxiety, burnout, and other negative emotions that do not help sustain the marriage.

In this study, a statistically significant difference was found between the variables of having or not having children and the number of children in all three variables. Post hoc tests showed results in favour of those with three or more children in terms of marital satisfaction and psychological well-being. However, in the spousal burnout variable, the burnout scores of those with three or more children are higher, thus contradicting these two variables. In the literature review, it is seen that the majority of



studies support the results of the research within the scope of spouse burnout. For example, in a study by Brown (2018), it was found that having children had a significant impact on individuals' burnout levels. The study revealed that the burnout levels of individuals with children are higher than those without children. It is thought that having children may increase the risk of burnout due to increased responsibility and stress factors. Similarly, the number of children had a substantial impact on the degree of burnout, according to research by Smith and Jones (2019). It was determined that among the individuals participating in the research, those who had more children had higher levels of burnout. It is thought that as the number of children increases, parents need to share their time, energy, and resources more, and this may increase the feeling of burnout. Kaya and Buğa (2021) state in their research that conflicts arising from the responsibility of raising children, as well as the effects of the presence of children on the couple's relationship, can also have an impact on the couple's satisfaction level.

Literature information that could explain the results of the study in favour of those with more children in terms of marital satisfaction and psychological well-being variables was also searched, and a meta-analysis study by Dillon and Beechler (2010) was found. According to these authors, it was determined that the studies that found results in this direction were mostly conducted in individualistic cultures. When looking at studies conducted in collectivist cultures, it is stated that, unlike studies conducted in individualistic cultures, there is a small, negative relationship between children and marital satisfaction ( $d = -.11$ ,  $r = -.05$ ).

After it was seen in the literature review that there was no other study examining married individuals' marital satisfaction, spouse burnout, and psychological well-being together, it is evaluated that this planned study will contribute to the literature.

Looking at the participants' average scores in all three variables, the participants' marital satisfaction is quite low, their spouse burnout level is at a medium level, and their psychological well-being is at a medium level. Considering that all three variables are interrelated and can affect each other positively or negatively, it can be said that these results are consistent with each other. It can be accepted that psychological well-being and spouse burnout scores are not at a level that would increase marital satisfaction; therefore, marital satisfaction is low. In addition, it was determined that all three variables had relationships with each other varying between high and medium levels.

Additionally, it has been determined that there is a negative and high relationship between spouse burnout and marriage satisfaction. It has been observed that there is a moderate relationship between marriage satisfaction and psychological well-being, and between spouse burnout and psychological well-being.

According to the research results, it was noticed that the variables of marriage age, age of participation in the research, income, and number of children affected these variables. These results are consistent with other studies found in the literature. One of the research results showed that there is no significant difference in all three variables of gender, education level, whether or not they care for disabled or elderly individuals, type of marriage, year of marriage, having their own home, working status, and occupational status. Finally, based on the above analyses, it can be said that this research both supported and did not support the research's results in the literature. In contrast, especially considering that all three variables are important for marital life and that they support and influence each other, it is recommended to conduct a comprehensive analysis for future research.

### **Ethics and Conflict of Interest**

The authors have acted in accordance with ethical rules at all stages of the research, and there is no conflict of interest among the authors.

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