

Newlyweds' Marital Adjustment: Scale Development and Model Testing

Szu-Chia Chang¹, Yuh-Huey Jou², and Tsung-Chain Huang³

¹ Department of Social Psychology, Shih-Hsin University

² Institute of Ethnology/Research Center for Humanities and Social Sciences, Academia Sinica

³ Department of Guidance and Counseling, National Changhua University of Education

This study tests a theoretical model of newlyweds' marital adjustment proposed by the author based on qualitative data collected in Taiwan. Three measures which included dimensions of marital adjustment, attitude toward marriage, and strategies for dealing with adjustment problem were developed. Two hundred and eighty eight newly married couples ($n = 576$) filled out a questionnaire which contained the measures mentioned above and questions to gather demographic and background information. Results of factor analysis verified the proposed measurement models and high reliabilities were reported for most of the measures. Overall, wives perceived more adjustment difficulties than husbands. Adjustment problems for wives were found to mostly be concerned with their relationships with in-laws and with their spouse. On the other hand, husbands perceived more need balancing their work and family. Both husbands' and wives' level of adjustment difficulties were predicted by their own attitude and the discrepancy between their attitudes toward marriage. Particularly, wives' adjustment difficulties were predicted by their attitude toward patriarchal family system and sex role.

There were also differences in terms of the strategies that husbands and wives used in dealing with adjustment problems. Husbands adopted more intrapersonal-positive (accommodation) and intrapersonal-negative (avoidance) coping strategies while wives used more extrapersonal-negative (aggressive) strategies when faced with adjustment problems. Finally, results of *SEM* show that although positive coping strategies were found to relate to high marital quality, newlywed husbands and wives tend to use more negative coping strategies when they had more adjustment difficulties. As a consequence, such adjustment pattern would lead to low marital quality. The findings of the present study are expected to lead to the revision of the proposed model and to shed some light on the cultural characteristics that shape marital adjustment processes in Taiwan.

Keywords: *adjustment problem scale, adjustment strategy scale, marital adjustment, marital attitude scale, newlyweds*

