

# A Phenomenological Analysis of Marital Satisfaction Dimensions Among SPN Salman ITB Alumni

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## **ABSTRACT**

Marriage satisfaction is subjective feelings, attitudes, and behaviors that are judged by couples who surround feelings of happiness, comfort, peace, and harmony in married life. Marriage satisfaction can be achieved by attending a premarital school in order to gain marriage knowledge. SPN Salman ITB is an educational institution that focuses on discussing the science of marriage. The purpose of this research is to see the satisfaction of marriage felt by the premarital school alumni of SPN Salman ITB. This research uses qualitative research methods with a phenomenological approach. The subjects of this study are five married SPN Salman ITB alumni with a minimum marriage age of three years. Data analysis using IPA (Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis) techniques. The results of the study were that the five subjects reported satisfaction with marriage, which was seen from several supporting aspects such as personality problems, communication, conflict management, financial management, role equality, parenting, family and friends, leisure activities, religious orientation, and sexual orientation.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Marriage is essentially the union of two different individuals to achieve a common goal. Married couples certainly hope that their marriage will run harmoniously. However, in reality, not all marriages run harmoniously. Disharmony in marriage occurs when

one or both spouses feel dissatisfied due to obstacles in fulfilling the needs, expectations, and desires of their partner, thus causing dissatisfaction [1]. This disharmony can lead to conflict, which, if not managed properly, can exacerbate problems that will lead to divorce. Couples who receive education in the form of premarital counseling, when faced with domestic conflict, will be very vulnerable to causing a rift in the integrity of the household.

Based on data from Badan Pusat Statistik [2] The number of divorce cases in Indonesia in 2024 reached 394,608 cases. The highest number of divorce cases in Indonesia was in West Java, with a total of 88,985 cases in 2024, the main cause of divorce being disputes and arguments. Problems such as these will affect the level of satisfaction of the couple. In line with what Hurlock [3] stated, divorce is the peak of the highest level of marital dissatisfaction and occurs when couples are no longer able to carry out their respective roles to satisfy each other, serve each other, and find ways to resolve conflicts that can satisfy both parties. One way to overcome conflicts in the household so that conflicts do not drag on is to obtain premarital education.

Fitria [4] states that couples who do not receive education in the form of premarital counseling are very vulnerable to marital breakdown when faced with domestic conflicts. According to Sholeh [5], attending marriage counseling at Kantor Urusan Agama (KUA) will broaden the horizons of prospective brides and grooms regarding the rights and obligations of each partner. Therefore, prospective brides and grooms need to receive premarital education in order to achieve satisfaction in marriage. To live a married life, it is necessary to acquire knowledge that can be learned in order to create a *sakinah mawaddah warahmah* family, which can be obtained by attending a premarital school. Pre-marital school is a community institution that focuses on teaching and learning activities related to pre-marital education to improve skills, abilities, and knowledge about marriage for men and women, which is conducted regularly and continuously [6]. According to Afrizal [7], pre-marital school aims to provide understanding and raise awareness about all marital issues, household issues, and family issues for prospective spouses. Fitria [4] states that prospective brides and grooms who attend premarital counseling are better able to control and manage their emotions, are more aware of their responsibilities when facing problems, and tend to deal with these

problems with understanding, as evidenced by their ability to be patient.

According to Olson et al. [8] Marital satisfaction is a subjective feeling between husband and wife regarding pleasure, happiness, comfort, security, and the overall quality of their marriage, which makes the couple feel satisfied in their married life. According to Fowers and Olson [9] Marital satisfaction is a subjective assessment by a husband or wife of their married life based on feelings of satisfaction, happiness, and pleasant experiences shared with their partner during their married life, as well as aspects related to that partner. There are several aspects that can determine marital satisfaction in a couple, namely personality issues, communication, conflict management, financial management, role similarity, parenting patterns, leisure activities, family and friends, religious orientation, and sexual orientation [9].

Pre-marital school is a teaching and learning activity to improve knowledge, abilities, and skills, which includes aspects of faith education, moral education, child rearing, conflict management, financial management, preparation for marriage, psychological education, sex education, divorce law, fiqh jima' law, and so on, aimed at unmarried men and women, which is carried out regularly and continuously for a certain period of time [6]. Pre-marital school aims to provide preparation in the form of knowledge about the world of marriage for prospective husbands and wives so that they can navigate their future household. The Salman ITB Pre-marital School (SPN) is an educational institution that focuses on preparing prospective brides and grooms through various training and guidance programs. This institution operates under the auspices of Salman ITB, an organization also known for its community-based social and educational activities around the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB). SPN Salman ITB is designed to provide prospective brides and grooms with the knowledge and skills necessary to start and maintain a better marriage. The aim of this education is to provide married couples with the tools and skills necessary to build a healthy and harmonious relationship.

According to Almanfaluthi [10], alumni are people who have attended or graduated from a school or university. In the context of the SPN Salman ITB, people who are declared alumni are those who have attended 6 classes and graduated from SPN Salman ITB. There are various reasons why people want to attend SPN Salman ITB

classes, namely because they purely want to gain premarital knowledge, prepare themselves for marriage, prepare themselves because they hope that educated women can also find educated husbands, and look for a soul mate at the school.

The purpose of this study is to examine the satisfaction levels of SPN Salman ITB alumni in their marriages from various aspects. Therefore, the researcher conducted an initial interview with one of the subjects, GEW, who said that after attending SPN Salman ITB, his intention to marry had changed. Previously, he intended to marry only to have a life partner and children, but after attending SPN Salman ITB, his intention to marry was solely for worship.

In previous studies, there has been no research discussing marital satisfaction in the context of premarital schools using qualitative methods. Many of them use another psychological variable, such as leaders' working alliance in premarital education by Owen et al. [11]. Another research by Yilmaz and Kalkan [12] that does not specifically examine marital satisfaction, but rather relationship satisfaction in relationship enrichment programs that use experimental methods. Furthermore, research by Baucom et al. [13] Discuss marital quality instead of marital satisfaction in the relationship education program.

Several previous studies discussing marital satisfaction also differ from the research that the researcher will conduct, in which this study uses subjects who are alumni of premarital schools. These subjects have not been used in previous studies. By using qualitative methods, we can see the deep meaning of the lived experience of these alumni that has not been captured by numbers. This issue is important to raise public awareness of the importance of receiving marriage education to provide knowledge and insight into the world of marriage and how to solve problems that may arise in marriage. Hopefully, the government will be able to plan, provide, and develop better premarital guidance services at each KUA by helping to understand the needs, expectations, and capabilities of prospective brides and grooms. This led the researcher to conduct a study entitled "Marital Satisfaction among Alumni of Premarital School (SPN Salman ITB)". So the question in this research is how marital satisfaction is felt by premarital school alumni when viewed from the aspects of marital satisfaction.

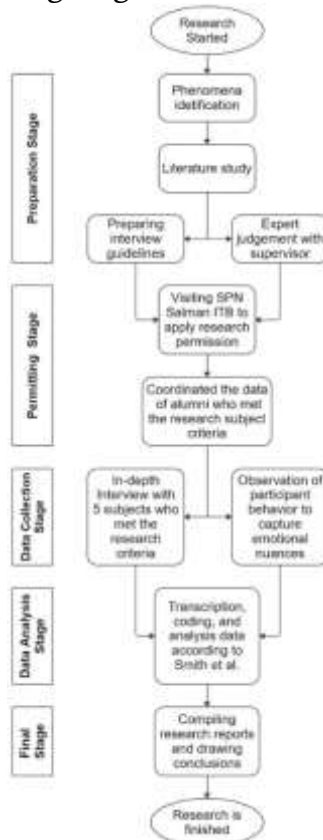
## **2. METHOD**

This research uses a qualitative research method with a phenomenological approach, using a non-probability technique known as purposive sampling. There were 5 subjects in this study who met the required characteristics, such as alumni of SPN Salman ITB and married for at least three years.

The data collection in this study used a semi-structured interview method using the Indonesian Language. Interview guidelines based on aspects of marital satisfaction would be used to gather information. The researcher arranged the schedule and location for meetings with the research subjects in a place away from noise so that the subjects would feel comfortable during the interview process. The research proposal and interview guidelines were then reviewed in an expert judgment process by lecturers of the Qualitative Research Methods course to obtain ethical approval. After the interview guidelines and informed consent were approved, the researchers could continue with the research. At the first meeting, the researcher explained the contents of the informed consent to the respondents. Then, the researcher asked several semi-structured questions using references based on the interview guidelines. The researcher tried to understand the subjects' answers while writing and observing the behavior that emerged when the subjects were answering the interview questions. The researcher performed the same action on all five subjects, with each subject undergoing a semi-structured interview.

The research process was carried out systematically, starting from the preparation stage to drawing conclusions. The research procedure was divided into several main stages. First, during the preparation stage, the researcher begins by identifying the phenomena occurring in the field. Then, after the phenomena are identified, the researcher conducts a literature study to enrich knowledge related to the phenomena occurring. After that, the researcher developed a semi-structured interview guide based on the ten aspects of marital satisfaction according to Fowers and Olson's theory [14]. This instrument then underwent expert judgment by the research supervisor to ensure content validity, relevance, appropriateness, and ethical feasibility before being used during the interview process. Second, during the permitting stage, the researcher visited the research site, SPN Salman ITB, to apply for research permission. Furthermore, the researcher coordinated the

data collection of alumni who met the research subject criteria to ensure the accuracy of the data for the population sampled. Third, during the data collection stage, the researcher selected five subjects using a purposive sampling technique with the following inclusion criteria: SPN Salman ITB alumni and those who had been married for at least three years. The data collection process involved in-depth interviews, which were audio-recorded, and observation of participant behavior to capture emotional nuances throughout the process. Fourth, during the data analysis stage, the researcher applied the six steps of natural science analysis according to Smith et al. [15]. This procedure was carried out to ensure that the researcher's interpretations remained rooted in the original data (the participants' lived experiences) while providing rich analytical depth. Fifth, the final stage, compiling a research report on the marital satisfaction of premarital school alumni and drawing conclusions. Reflected in the following diagram:



**Figure 1.** Research Flow Diagram

The data analysis technique used in this study is Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) by Smith et al. [15]. This technique consists of six steps: 1) Writing down all forms of data obtained in written form, as reading all forms of data from the transcripts will help researchers analyze them more thoroughly. At this step, the researcher changes all of the transcripts from each subject, which were originally voice recordings, into text. 2) Noting down anything interesting based on the transcripts that have been made. This analysis aims to produce detailed notes and comments on the data. After writing down all the transcripts into text, the researcher underlined the interesting topics from the data, also known as coding. 3) Finding themes based on the transcripts that have been made, where the transcripts are read repeatedly, and notes are made on interesting words. After all the coding was found, the researcher classified those codings into subcategories of several themes, so that similar codings are in the same theme group. 4) Finding relationships between the themes that emerge after the researcher has determined the subcategories of themes in the transcripts, and then developing the relationships between these themes in the form of a table. The researcher found the correlation between all the themes that emerged and put them into a table to make it easier to analyze further. 5) Then, repeat steps one to four for each piece of data generated from other subjects. The researcher does the same steps for all of the subjects. 6) Looking for patterns that emerge between issues. Are there relationships between the subject issues, and how do the themes found in other issues prompt the researcher to redraw and relabel the themes? The researcher looks at the relationship between themes that appear in each subject, whether there are the same themes that appear in several subjects, or whether there are themes that do not appear in any of the subjects. The characteristics of the research respondents are presented in the following table:

**Table 1.** Respondent Characteristics

Name (initials)	Gender	Age	SPN Salman ITB Alumni Batch	Job	Number of Children	Marriage Age
NA	Female	29	30 (2017)	Private sector employee	1	4 years
GEW	Male	32	36 (2019)	Engineer	1	5 years
HNH	Male	26	39	Private sector employee	1	3 years
AGS	Male	30	SPN Ramadhann 1441 H	Researcher	2	4 years
ACD	Female	32	39	Housewife	2	4 years

**Table 2.** Time and Interview Description

Name (Initials)	Interview Date	Interview session	Duration
NA	Thursday, 28 October 2024	1	53:51
GEW	Monday, 11 November 2024	1	46:05
HNH	Tuesday, 29 July 2025	1	1:27:42
AGS	Saturday, 2 August 2025	1	1:35:35
ACD	Saturday, 2 August 2025	1	1:35:35

### 3. RESULTS

The results of this study found main themes that have several superordinate themes. The main theme is based on aspects of marital satisfaction: 1) personality issues, 2) communication, 3) conflict management, 4) financial management, 5) role equality, 6) parenting patterns, 7) leisure activities, 8) family and friends, 9) religious orientation, and 10) sexual orientation.

**Table 3.** Main Theme Focus

<b>Main Theme Focus</b>	<b>Superordinate Theme</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>
Aspects of Marital Satisfaction	Personality issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding and accepting partner's characteristics</li> <li>- Character differences</li> <li>- Strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>- Beliefs about choosing a partner</li> </ul>
	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Openness and expression of feelings</li> <li>- Trust</li> <li>- Hiding something</li> </ul>
	Conflict management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How to resolve problems</li> <li>- Partner involvement in finding solutions</li> <li>- Mediation and initiative to apologize</li> </ul>
	Financial management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Allocation of financial posts (budgeting)</li> <li>- Household finance manager</li> <li>- Transparency of income and expense</li> </ul>
	Role equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Division of household tasks</li> <li>- Role as parents</li> </ul>
	Parenting patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agreements and ways of raising children</li> <li>- Interactions and feelings after having children</li> </ul>
	Leisure activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shared activities</li> <li>- Spending time with family, and its impact</li> </ul>
	Family and friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relationship with the partner's family</li> <li>- How to adapt and be accepted by the partner's family</li> <li>- Getting to know the partner's family members and friends</li> </ul>

Main Theme Focus	Superordinate Theme	Sub-theme
	Religion orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Intention to marry</li> <li>- How to practice religious values criteria for a soulmate</li> </ul>
	Sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sexual satisfaction</li> </ul>

The research results attempt to describe how SPN Salman ITB alumni perceive their marital satisfaction in their married life when viewed from the aspects that support the realization of marital satisfaction. The explanations of the five subjects are as follows:

**Theme 1: Personality Issues**

The personality issues referred to here are individual perceptions of understanding a partner's characteristics and personality, and accepting their differences. At the beginning of marriage, couples will try to better understand their partner's characteristics so that in the future they can understand each other. Not only do we need to understand each other, but we also need to be tolerant of our partner's shortcomings. The following are statements from subjects about understanding their partners:

*"...Alhamdulillah, I understand my wife's character better, so we know how we should behave, like that. We are trying harder." (AGS (M), Int. 1: 96).*

By accepting all of our partners' shortcomings, we come to understand the differences in character between ourselves and our partners, because humans are created differently. These differences can be physical, behavioral, temperamental, or personality-related. This is especially true for married couples, where there are bound to be differences in character between men and women. However, in marriage, these differences complement each other's shortcomings. Every human being has strengths and weaknesses. When entering into marriage, it is important for us to accept all the strengths and weaknesses in our partner. The following is a statement from the subject regarding the differences in character between himself and his partner:

*"...Her weakness first, for example, I am a meticulous and tidy person. Well, she is the opposite, her weakness is that she is not very meticulous or tidy..." (HNN (M), Int. 1:60).*

*"In terms of strengths, especially in communication, I see that she is a firm and straightforward person. Her weakness is perhaps that she is impatient, perhaps it's a woman's instinct; she often nags, but that's normal." (GEW (M), Int. 1: 52-56)*

By knowing each other's strengths and weaknesses, it will be easier for couples to improve themselves so that their marriage will last until the end of their lives and they will achieve marital satisfaction. This is also reinforced by the view that a spouse's weaknesses will always exist:

*"As Ustad Salim Afilah said, let our patience exceed our wife's weakness. Because weakness will never disappear, it will always exist" (HNN (M), Int. 1:66).*

The strengths we possess will cover the weaknesses of our partner. Because, in essence, two individuals who unite have the task of complementing each other's strengths and weaknesses.

## **Theme 2: Communication**

This aspect focuses on how individuals feel and behave in establishing open communication without hiding anything. Because the key to a marriage relationship is open communication, once a marriage bond has been established, all issues related to the household must be communicated together. Both parties must be aware of each other's problems so that nothing is hidden. As expressed by the subject below regarding their openness with their partner:

*"Everything must be discussed and must be open. Nothing is hidden, even sensitive matters." (HNN (M), Int. 1:108).*

Talking openly with your partner about everything, without hiding anything, from personal problems, family problems, work problems, and financial problems, is the key to a lasting marriage. Especially for couples who are married through ta'aruf, a special approach is needed so that the couple is willing to be open and trust each other to talk about all their problems. This is because openness is difficult to achieve if we do not trust our partner. Here is a subject's statement regarding the extent to which they trust their partner:

*"For me, insha'Allah, I trust him 100% because one of the reasons is that my husband rarely talks about anything to others. So, it's safe to tell him anything..." (ACD (F), Int. 1:178).*

However, in a household, there are bound to be things that are kept from one's partner in order to maintain the integrity of the household. This is not meant to be deceitful, but maintaining the

foundation of the household so that it remains strong is a must for every couple. Determining the right time to communicate is also important so that the message is well-received:

*"Being open about it, but sometimes there are still barriers in communication. ... like having to put it into words first. If not, maybe wait for the right time." (AGS (M), Int. 1: 150).*

Overall, communication in marriage is not merely about expressing thoughts freely but also about understanding *how* and *when* to communicate effectively. When both partners commit to openness grounded in trust and empathy, it nurtures emotional intimacy and strengthens the foundation of the marital bond.

### **Theme 3: Conflict Management**

The main focus is on how couples perceive ways to overcome and find solutions to domestic conflicts in their relationships. Every household experiences conflict, and the way each household deals with and resolves these conflicts also varies. This is done so that problems do not escalate and become prolonged. Likewise, when a problem arises, both partners need to be involved in finding the best solution. The following are the subjects' statements about how couples provide solutions to problems that arise:

*"We discuss it and look for a middle ground. For example, A thinks it should be A, while B thinks it should be C. So, we look for a middle ground that can balance both..." (AGS (M), Int. 1: 194)*

An effective way to resolve problems is to remain calm, wait for the situation to subside, and then try to resolve it amicably. One way to defuse the situation is to balance your partner's emotions:

*"When he's emotionally charged, we calm them down. Try talking, cooling things down. So it's like balancing each other out." (AGS (M), Int. 1: 122).*

Small things like apologizing may seem trivial, but they are difficult to do if you have a big ego. In a marriage, there are times when one partner has to give in first:

*"But thank God, in the first year, 80% of the time, I made it a habit to apologize first. But in the second and third years, it became automatic. If it was purely the wife's fault, she would take the initiative first" (HMH (M), Int. 1: 122).*

The awareness or initiative to apologize first to one's partner, even if the problem was not caused by us, is the best way to maintain the integrity of the household.

#### **Theme 4: Financial Management**

In this aspect, what is observed is how the couple manages the household finances, paying attention to where the money is used or spent. So the family's economy remains stable and doesn't experience economic difficulties. It is also important to have a mutual agreement on how to manage money in the family. The following are the subjects' statements on how they manage finances in their households:

*"In terms of the distribution of financial management, I actually tell my wife how to manage the money for household use... But major matters, such as household needs, are managed directly by me." (AGS (M), Int. 1: 210).*

Every household has its own way of managing finances; the most important thing is that both parties agree and approve of the financial management. Good financial management must also be regulated in detail:

*"Well, when giving monthly allowances, don't just give it all at once. There must be a context, and the details must be explained, such as this amount is for shopping, education, charity, and personal use." (HMH (M), Int. 1: 76).*

Transparency in finances is also important, as it involves always discussing income and expenses, and dividing the family's finances into several parts:

*"We determine our current financial priorities, whether they are short-term or long-term. Then we divide them and have financial categories, such as how much for the children, how much for monthly shopping, and so on. So we discuss it together at the beginning of each month..." (GEW (M), Int. 1: 150).*

Dividing family finances into several financial categories will make financial management more structured and planned, and can help determine short-term and long-term financial priorities. This will minimize economic difficulties that could potentially trigger family conflicts.

#### **Theme 5: Role Equality**

This aspect focuses on the division of work, housework, and parental roles. Doing housework is not the responsibility of just one side, but both husband and wife have the same responsibility to help each other with housework. Everything will feel lighter and easier if done together. The following are the subjects' statements regarding the division of housework:

*"So it's not rigid, you do this, I do that, but it's more flexible. For example, one person does A, the other does B." (AGS (M), Int. 1: 242).*

Furthermore, the division of tasks in household matters not only creates efficiency but also fosters a sense of responsibility and care between spouses. This principle also shows a rejection of gender-based division of tasks, where both husbands and wives have equal opportunities to contribute to the household. As stated by the following subject:

*"So there is no such thing as gender roles. There are some men who think that it is the wife's job, that only women should do the work, but I don't want that" (GEW (M), Int. 1: 176).*

In addition, although household responsibilities are a shared task, some participants showed initiative to take on a larger share of the work to ease their partner's burden. This shows a strong awareness and empathy in carrying out their respective roles within the family. As explained by the following subject:

*"I take care of all the daily household routines. So in my free time or when I'm not working, like on Saturdays or Sundays, it's definitely my turn... because my principle is that if I can lighten my wife's household workload, it will be more helpful to her." (HMH (M), Int. 1:142).*

### **Theme 6: Parenting Patterns**

In this aspect, what is observed is the agreement between husband and wife in raising and educating children. The following are the subjects' statements regarding the parenting patterns that have been learned and applied, especially in terms of breaking the chain of poor parenting patterns:

*"There are also cases where, for example, my parents often scolded their children so that they did not dare to tell them anything. Well, that may be eliminated for children today, as it is not practiced. But there are also positive things that are practiced." (ACD (F), Int. 1:254)*

In addition to improving parenting styles from previous generations, the subject also emphasized the importance of mutual agreement between husband and wife in determining the direction of their children's education. This agreement includes major decisions such as the type of school or education system to be chosen, as expressed by the following subject:

*"For junior high and high school, we want to go to a boarding school or just a regular public school. Well, we've just made a decision for high school. For high school, I don't think we should go to a boarding school or one that focuses only on religion but neglects other academic subjects. We want to get everything, so I think MAN IC Serpong is the most suitable." (HNNH (M), Int. 1:158).*

Furthermore, the discussion on parenting also led to efforts to instill basic religious values from an early age. Several participants considered that spiritual aspects should not only be taught as an obligation but also understood in terms of their underlying meaning and rationale. This was explained by the following subject:

*"Well, what I want to emphasize is that as early as possible, I instill the reasons why we are Muslim. The reasons why we must worship Allah, who Allah is, and why we must pray... So, I want to instill the reasons first, the 'why', so that it fosters a sense of love." (HNNH (M), Int. 1:228).*

### **Theme 7: Leisure Activities**

This aspect focuses on how couples spend their free time together and create quality time, so the relationship between family members becomes closer and more harmonious. Based on the interview results, the participants indicated that simple activities done together can strengthen emotional bonds within the family. As expressed by one of the subjects:

*"We ride our motorbike almost every week. For example, if I'm feeling stressed or something, he'll say, 'Let's go see the rice fields,' right? Yes, we just pass by the rice fields, but it's a good way to interact with our children" (NA (F), Int. 1: 236).*

Furthermore, several participants emphasized that spending time together during leisure time has a significant positive impact on the quality of emotional relationships between family members. Through shared activities, married couples can understand each other's emotional state and strengthen their bond. This was explained by the following subject:

*"It has a significant impact, in my opinion, because emotional closeness needs to be built and nurtured continuously so that we understand the emotions and emotional conditions of our spouse and children. If there is a slight change... we will immediately know if we have emotional closeness." (AGS (M), Int. 1: 236)*

In addition to strengthening the relationship between couples, spending time with children is also seen as a form of emotional investment that is very valuable. For some participants, moments of togetherness with children cannot be measured in material terms, but rather become meaningful memories that remain etched in the children's memories. As expressed by the following subject:

*"In fact, the two hours spent with the child, feeding the child, cannot be measured in money. So, in my opinion, the value of time with the child exceeds any amount of money. Because it will stick in their memory, it will leave an impression and become a special bond between my child and their father."*  
(HNN (M), Int. 1:192)

### **Theme 8: Family and Friends**

In this case, what is observed is how the couple relates to each other's families, friends, and siblings, as well as how the couple can show comfort and adapt to a new social environment. Based on the interview results, most participants considered the process of adapting to their partner's family to be one of the most important things in maintaining harmony in the household. Efforts to adapt were made by establishing good communication and creating a warm atmosphere when interacting. This was expressed by one of the subjects as follows:

*"For me, it's like being accompanied by my husband. So, I accompany him. When we go to our parents' house, we also bring gifts. But to get closer to his family, maybe my husband can accompany me to chat, so I don't feel awkward."* (ACD (F), Int. 1:316)

After going through this adaptation process, some participants said that their relationship with their spouse's family felt closer and warmer. Feeling accepted by their spouse's family made them feel comfortable and no longer awkward when interacting. This was described by the following subject:

*"Yes, I feel very comfortable, it's like living in my own home."*  
(HNN (M), Int. 1:214)

However, some participants also realized that there were certain boundaries that needed to be maintained when interacting with their partner's family. This awareness arose as a form of respect for the values and culture of their partner's family, which may be different from their own family. As expressed by the following subject:

*“Alhamdulillah, I am happy. But sometimes, with my husband's family, we are not as free as we are with our own family, for example, when talking or joking around.” (NA (F), Int. 1: 282-284)*

### **Theme 9: Religious Orientation**

This aspect focuses on the perceptions and attitudes of couples in practicing religious values in their household life. Based on the interview results, the participants indicated that the application of Islamic values is an important foundation in building a harmonious household. Practicing religious teachings together with a spouse, such as praying in a congregation, is one of the tangible ways of maintaining spiritual closeness among family members. This was conveyed by one of the subjects as follows:

*“Of course, praying in congregation is a must, it's standard, I mean, it's our obligation as Muslims.” (GEW (M), Int. 1: 254)*

Furthermore, the experience of participating in SPN Salman ITB strengthened the participants' understanding of the essence of marriage as a form of worship. The materials presented at SPN helped them see the meaning of marriage not only as a social relationship but also as a means to get closer to Allah SWT. As explained by the following subject:

*“With the materials from the Salman SPN, I feel like it's how worship should be. So it's like detailing what I had previously imagined. So it's like worshipping for a long time. What kind of worship is it? Like that, when learning at the SPN.” (AGS (M), Int. 1: 132)*

In addition, the religiosity of a couple is also considered important in maintaining household harmony. Having a partner with a good level of spirituality helps to foster a sense of mutual reminders and guidance in goodness. As expressed by the following subject:

*“Yes, what I ask for is mutual reminders.” (AGS (M), Int. 1: 326)*

Overall, religious orientation is the main foundation in the household life of SPN Salman ITB alumni. The Islamic values that are lived together not only shape worship routines but also foster spiritual awareness that strengthens the couple's relationship in facing the dynamics of married life.

### **Theme 10: Sexual Orientation**

This aspect observed how couples feel and behave in adjusting to their partner's sexual desires. Based on the interview

results, participants view sexual relations in marriage not only as the fulfillment of biological needs, but also as a form of emotional closeness and non-verbal communication between husband and wife. Through SPN Salman ITB, the participants admitted that they gained a new understanding of the importance of this aspect in maintaining household harmony. One of them was technical knowledge that they did not understand before, as stated by the following subject:

*"Technical knowledge. Because we already know the wisdom behind sexual relations. But we didn't know the technical knowledge." (HNH (M), Int. 1:246)*

In addition to theoretical understanding, participants also gained various practical insights that were considered relevant to apply in married life. Some reported they had gained new tips and tricks that they had never obtained from other sources. This was expressed by the following subject:

*"It's like all the tips and tricks I've never found anywhere else except at SPN" (HNH (M), Int. 1:76)*

Fulfilling a partner's sexual needs is seen as a form of expressing affection that requires open communication and mutual understanding. Participants realized that the quality of sexual relations does not only depend on physical aspects, but also on the ability of partners to discuss each other's needs and comfort levels honestly. As explained by the following subject:

*"Yes, that's also the advantage of our communication, we want to talk about what we want, what makes us comfortable, so we discuss it" (GEW (M), Int. 1: 294)*

Overall, this aspect reflects how couples build a balance between biological, emotional, and spiritual needs in their marriage. The understanding gained from SPN Salman ITB helps participants see sexual relations as a form of worship as well as a means of strengthening intimacy and harmony in the household. The following table shows the visualization of the findings and discussion data.

**Table 4.** Visualization of Findings and Discussion

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Subject Quote</b>	<b>Research (Discussion)</b>
Personality Issues	Problems related to differences in nature, individual character, or personal habits that trigger friction in relationships.	5	<p>NA (No. 68): "The biggest drawback is that I'm forgetful. I'm a bit forgetful."</p> <p>AGS (No. 112): "Sometimes you could say that your emotions are not yet stable, especially when you first have children."</p> <p>ACD (No. 94): "From the start, when he was angry, he was explosive. His ego was very, very high."</p> <p>GEW (No. 56): "The drawbacks may not be patience ... often grumbles, 'It's natural.'"</p> <p>HNH (No. 60): "His weakness is that he is not careful, not neat."</p>	In line with Brehm et al. [16], personality and mood influence interaction and satisfaction .
Communication	The process of exchanging information, feelings, and thoughts between	5	<p>NA (No. 88): "Let your partner know that I don't like things like this. like that ."</p> <p>AGS (No. 146): "If he behaves badly, I'll immediately say it's not good."</p> <p>ACD (No. 166): "Yes, for</p>	Supports Duvall and Miller's [17] theory, which states that effective communication is the main supporting factor for

Theme	Definition	Frequency	Subject Quote	Research (Discussion)
	in partnerships, including openness and ways of expressing discomfort.		me, but that's it... There are effects if it's not right."  GEW (No. 38): "I mainly have a communication problem... try to solve it and solve it. " That, hurry up ."  HNH (No. 42): "I am increasingly aware that every conflict that exists must and must be discussed ."	satisfaction .
Conflict Management	How couples manage, deal with, and resolve disputes or differences of opinion.	5	NA (No. 56): "Most quietly for now... let it be stress relief like that ."  AGS (No. 194): "Yes, we discussed it, we looked for a middle ground solution for each of us."  ACD (No. 292): "We also have to have a husband and wife chat (after we've finished with the children's affairs)."  talk face-to-face about what the problem is and what the solution is ."  HNH (No. 118): "One of us is bound to give in. First, give in between apologizing."	According to Shoba et al. [18], regarding the role of emotional management and words in conflict resolution.

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Subject Quote</b>	<b>Research (Discussion)</b>
Financial Management	Arrangement of income, expenses, and division of roles in managing the household budget.	5	<p>NA (No. 86): "If anything happens, noted ... there is financial management material."</p> <p>budgeting items ...needs, savings, entertainment."</p> <p>ACD (No. 212): "Children's needs, for example, diapers ... from the mother too."</p> <p>Then we have financial posts, how much for the children, how much for shopping."</p> <p>HNH (No. 76): "There should be boxes for your assets, they should be separated like that, don't let them all be mixed up ."</p>	In line with Larasati [19], good economic management by the husband increases the wife's satisfaction .
Role Equality	The division of tasks and responsibilities in the household is fair and flexible without being	5	<p>NA (No. 192): "It's okay with my husband, so we just share it with each other. like that ."</p> <p>AGS (No. 241): "Not rigid... flexible. For example, one person does A, the other does B."</p> <p>ACD (No. 238): "I prioritize the house... but my husband often helps out. "</p>	Supporting the findings of Forste and Fox [20] that husbands' involvement in domestic affairs has a positive impact on satisfaction .

Theme	Definition	Frequency	Subject Quote	Research (Discussion)
	fixated on traditional gender roles.		GEW (No. 176): "Yes... so there's no such thing as gender roles ... helping wash the dishes, bathing (the children)."	
Parenting Patterns	The style or methods used by couples in raising, educating, and instilling values in children.	5	<p>HNH (No. 142): "As long as I can help, if I have the energy and time, I will definitely help... change diapers, bathe ."</p> <p>NA (No. 210): " After Isha, you can't men hp ... trying to make a mini library cake."</p> <p>AGS (No. 253): "Children should be comfortable telling stories... say no, you can't use the word no."</p> <p>ACD (No. 250): "Regarding educating children, it's like being directed by your husband ."</p> <p>GEW (No. 188): "Gadgets or screen time are allowed, just let's limit it can't be too long."</p> <p>HNH (No. 228): "As early as possible I instilled the reasons why we are Muslim ( tawhidan )."</p>	In line with Goode [21]; children with good character (the result of parental agreement) reflect marital satisfaction .

Theme	Definition	Frequency	Subject Quote	Research (Discussion)
Leisure Activities	Activities carried out with a partner or family in free time to strengthen relationships (bonding).	5	<p>NA (No. 236): "Motorcycles ... don't even walk around like we have to go to the mall ... just go around the rice fields ."</p> <p>AGS (No. 302): "Emotional closeness needs to be built... playing intensely, inviting others to play."</p> <p>ACD (No. 304): "The daily activities of a housewife... boring, confusing. So, it's fresher ."</p> <p>GEW (No. 222): "Go and play at the mall, at the playground like that (Saturday and Sunday)."</p> <p>HNH (No. 180): "Saturday and Sunday are mandatory snacks, as simple as whatever ... is included ( quality time )."</p>	Confirming Christy and Setiawan's [22] research that free time with family contributes greatly to satisfaction.
Family and Friends	Relationships and interactions with extended family (in-	5	<p>NA (No. 268): "Eating together, cooking together... I like getting together with my husband's family."</p> <p>AGS (No. 312): "If you call together ... it still involves your partner."</p>	According to the 8th aspect of Fowers and Olson [14], healthy relations with the extended family

Theme	Definition	Frequency	Subject Quote	Research (Discussion)
	laws/signs) and circle of friends.		ACD (No. 314): "Communication is smooth with the in-laws... but sometimes it's not very intense because of the language."  GEW (No. 230): "It's good, my wife's family is also good... trying to introduce himself. "  HNH (No. 196): " Close, you can joke around with him. He doesn't speak too formally."	support marital stability.
Religious Orientation	Understanding, application of religious values, and spiritual commitment in married life.	5	NA (No. 326): "In the past, the slogan was lillahi kalimatillah ... solely for worship."  AGS (No. 132): "The intention of marriage is to worship... a partner in seeking Allah's pleasure and mercy."  ACD (No. 134): "Achieving Allah's pleasure by worshipping with your husband."  GEW (No. 276): "Your soulmate is a reflection of yourself... I want to	In line with Hurlock [3]; satisfaction is higher in individuals who practice religious values.

Theme	Definition	Frequency	Subject Quote	Research (Discussion)
			improve myself; it's up to Allah what will happen ."	
Sexual Orientation	Understanding of reproductive function, ethics ( fiqh), and sexual satisfaction within the framework of marriage.	5	<p>HNH (No. 232): "From the start, the intention was just for the sake of Allah ."</p> <p>NA (No. 356): "From the perspective of such intentions ... from the perspective of if this is worship. "</p> <p>AGS (No. 350): "Fikih jima 'I remember I didn't exist, but rather an introduction to the reproductive organs."</p> <p>ACD (No. 340): "I once studied the book (on fiqh jima ')... around the house."</p> <p>GEW (No. 290): "Pray before having sex... what are the procedures for having sex in Islam ?"</p> <p>HNH (No. 244): "Do and don'ts "nya ... what are the sunnahs in carrying out husband and wife relations?"</p>	Supporting Ziaei et al. [23], the quality of communicative sexual relationships is associated with the stability of married life.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

This study discusses how married satisfaction is perceived by people who have attended SPN Salman ITB. According to Olson et al. [8], marital satisfaction is a subjective feeling between husband

and wife regarding pleasure, happiness, comfort, and security in their marriage as a whole, which makes the couple feel satisfied with their married life. It could be seen through several aspects that support marital satisfaction, such as personality issues, communication, conflict management, role similarity, financial management, leisure activities, parenting patterns, religious orientation, sexual orientation, family, and friends [14].

Brehm et al. [16] revealed that personality can influence a person's relationship with their partner, because each personality type will show and influence the mood and emotions displayed to their partner. Individuals with a good mood can certainly interact well with their partner and will have an effect on their marital satisfaction. Conversely, individuals with negative moods will also cause negative interactions with their partners, which will also affect marital satisfaction. [16]. This is related to the experiences reported by one of the subjects, who often experienced conflicts with their partner in the early stages of marriage due to not yet understanding their partner's mood. Having a partner whose mood often changes can trigger domestic disputes if not resolved properly, namely by communicating openly with your partner so that you both know what things make your partner feel good or bad.

Handayani et al. [24] revealed that one of the characteristics of a happy married couple is openness and honesty towards their spouse in their marriage, being able to objectively evaluate their own weaknesses, strengths, advantages, or disadvantages, and not blaming others for problems that arise in the household. This is similar to the experience of one of the subjects, who often experienced conflicts with their partner in the early days of their marriage due to being too harsh in conveying messages, which hurt the other party's feelings. Communicating with your partner in a polite manner will make the household feel comfortable and peaceful. Duval and Miller [17] also stated that the ability to communicate well with a partner is a supporting factor in creating marital satisfaction. With open communication, it will be easier for couples to resolve family conflicts because there are no secrets. So that all problems can be openly expressed to partner. Premarital education programs are effective tools for fostering open communication between couples by teaching essential skills like active listening, emotional regulation, and conflict resolution. These

programs help couples build stronger foundations for their relationships [25].

According to Olson et al. [8], problem-solving plays a role in marital satisfaction because every conflict that arises requires good conflict management so that the conflict does not escalate, and marital satisfaction can be achieved. Shoba et al. [18] Add that conflict management is useful for couples to manage their emotions, actions, and words when facing domestic conflicts, so that problems can be resolved quickly. In line with what Susan McDaniel (in Shoba et al. [18]) stated, the extent to which couples are able to resolve conflicts can build the longevity of their marriage, which in turn affects marital satisfaction.

Common issues in marriage often stem from economic problems. Many divorces occur due to economic problems, such as poverty, unmet household needs, or a lack of understanding of how to manage household finances. In view of this, husbands or wives need to be skilled at managing the family's income and expenditure. This is so that the family's economy remains stable and avoids economic problems that can trigger arguments. Duvall and Miller (in Setyorini [26]) add that the fulfillment of economic needs, a permanent place of residence, the role of child rearing, and sexual relations are factors that can lead to marital satisfaction. Duvall and Miller [17] argue that an adequate family economy supports the achievement of marital satisfaction. According to Larasati [19] Husbands who are able to meet economic needs and actively take on roles in the household will increase marital satisfaction in their wives. This is also applied in the family of one of the subjects, where all household finances are managed by the husband. All household needs, kitchen needs, and children's needs are regulated and managed by the husband. Every family has its own way of managing finances. If the family finances are managed by the husband, the wife will be able to focus more on caring for and educating the children, as she does not need to worry about household needs. This is a form of cooperation between the two partners in carrying out household duties, where the wife will be able to focus more on caring for and educating the children if all the family's needs are met by the husband.

When entering into marriage, all family matters must be done together with one's partner so that difficult tasks can be made easier when done together. Doing household chores is not the

responsibility of just one party; both the husband and wife have the same responsibility to help each other with household chores. Research conducted by Forste and Fox [20] states that the involvement of husbands in household chores and childcare can have a positive effect on marital satisfaction. This is supported by Khawaja and Habib (in Forste and Fox [20]), who state that wives feel satisfied when they are able to fulfill their role in doing household chores, with their husbands also participating in doing household chores. Husbands' participation in doing household chores by lightening their wives' load will make wives feel happier. The support and cooperation of husbands in performing household tasks is important for increasing marital satisfaction [27]. Performing household chores together as a family also builds closeness and attachment because work feels more enjoyable when done together.

Building closeness and attachment among family members is important in order to strengthen relationships by making the most of the available free time. Olson et al. [28] define shared leisure time as the quantity and quality of leisure time enjoyed with a partner. Spending free time can be done by doing activities that are enjoyed together, such as quality time, chatting, etc. The five subjects also did similar things, each with their own way of spending free time with their families by doing activities such as exercising, walking, watching, playing, swimming, participating in religious activities, and so on, according to Olson et al. [28] A happy marriage is when couples can balance their leisure time together and their leisure time enjoyed alone. Research conducted by Christy and Setiawan [22] found that spending free time with family contributes greatly to increasing marital satisfaction. Another impact of spending free time with family is increasing bonding or attachment between family members. The more often families fill their free time with enjoyable activities, the closer and more attached they become, both between children and parents, as well as between husbands and wives. Free time with family can also be filled with worship activities, such as praying together, taking children to the mosque, reciting the Quran together, and so on. This way, free time can be filled with positive activities that bring blessings and goodness to the family.

Having a spouse who is religious is everyone's dream. The closer a person is to their Creator, the better they will treat their family. Marital satisfaction can be achieved if the husband and wife are religious people. This is in line with what Hurlock (in Istiqomah

[29]) said, that in general, marital satisfaction will be higher among people who practice religious values than among people who do not practice religious values. In the interview results, the subject also revealed that his intention to marry was solely for the purpose of worship. As stated by the Prophet Muhammad SAW in HR. Baihaqi, when a servant marries, half of his religion is complete. This is related to what Hawari [30] stated, that marriage based on worship can maintain the safety of marriage. A deep knowledge of Islamic teachings possessed by the couple will have a positive effect on their marital satisfaction. Al-iraqy [31] agrees that couples will be more successful in marriage if they understand Islamic teachings with a true understanding. Al-barraq [32] also has a similar opinion, namely that couples who are rich in faith and knowledge will be calmer in facing problems in the household.

Having pious children is the dream of every parent. This is because having children who are good in terms of religion is expected to provide intercession in the form of help for their parents on the Day of Judgment. Having pious children can also bring marital satisfaction, because pious children bring calm and peace to the family. This is relevant to what Goode [21] stated that a satisfying marriage is one that produces children with good character, because it is assumed that these children receive affection and pleasant experiences from their parents' married life. According to Baruch et al. (in Duvall and Miller [17]) Couples who say they are satisfied and happy with their married life are generally those who have children, while couples who feel unhappy mostly do not have children. This is supported by Srisusanti and Zulkaida [33], who state that the presence of children in the household can bring individuals closer to their partners. Closeness and intimacy between partners can bring happiness to the household, making the relationship stronger and more harmonious. Intimacy between partners must be maintained until old age to avoid boredom and monotony in the relationship. This can be achieved by fulfilling sexual satisfaction in the relationship.

Sexual satisfaction is one of the important factors in achieving marital satisfaction, and couples who have good sexual satisfaction will also experience a much better quality of life. On the other hand, sexual relations are an important part of how couples perceive each other, which can maintain the longevity of a marriage. According to Putu (in Rosandi et al. [34]), sexual satisfaction includes emotional

closeness, open communication during sex, complete satisfaction in marriage, and the quality of the marital relationship. This is also practiced by one of the subjects who is open with their partner about which areas can stimulate and arouse their partner during sexual intercourse. Knowing this will foster sexual satisfaction, which will lead to marital satisfaction. A high level of sexual satisfaction leads to a higher quality of marriage and stability in married life [23]. Of course, as Muslims, we must do everything in accordance with Islamic law, including sexual relations, which have rules and sunnah that must be obeyed and carried out by a husband and wife so that what they do is considered worship and avoids the interference of Satan. This is the case with the five subjects in this study, who gained new insights and knowledge about the procedures and rules of sexual relations in accordance with Islamic law.

However, we recognize that this study is far from perfect and has several limitations, including the limited sample size and self-selected participants, which could introduce bias, with satisfied subjects being more likely to participate. Furthermore, due to time constraints, the interview session was conducted only once. This study did not use a comparison group and focused solely on individual perspectives, not couples as a whole.

Practically, these results recommend that Kantor Urusan Agama (KUA) throughout Indonesia develop and evaluate premarital guidance courses for prospective brides and grooms who wish to register their marriages at the KUA. Premarital guidance should be made a mandatory policy and requirement for registering a marriage at the KUA. This will ensure that prospective brides and grooms are equipped with marital knowledge before entering the world of marriage. This research is expected to enable the KUA to better plan, provide, and develop premarital guidance services by helping them understand the needs, expectations, and couple capabilities. Theoretically, the study contributes to the family psychology literature by explaining that marital satisfaction is strongly influenced by the preparation of values from the premarital period.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the research, it was found that there was marital satisfaction among the subjects who were alumni of SPN Salman ITB, covering aspects of personality, communication,

conflict management, financial management, role equality, parenting, leisure activities, family and friends, religious orientation, and sexual orientation. The subjects reported that they were helped to live their married life and feel marital satisfaction because they had gained knowledge in the form of premarital education obtained when attending premarital school.

It is hoped that further research will involve the perspectives of both parties (husband and wife) to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the effectiveness of premarital education programs.

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