

## **The Influential Factors of Marital Endurance: A Systematic Literature Review**

**Rufinus Sabtian Herlambang**  
**Universitas Diponegoro, Semarang, East Java, Indonesia**  
**Email: roev16013@gmail.com**

---

### **Abstract**

Not all marriages achieve long-term success, often ending in divorce. However, many couples manage to sustain their marriages and achieve happiness. This literature review aims to identify the factors that contribute to the longevity of a marriage. The study employs a systematic literature review method, utilizing three electronic databases: Wiley Online Library, Semantic Scholar, and Scopus. The scientific literature reviewed includes articles published in the last five years (2019-2023) that meet predefined inclusion criteria. Ten selected articles were analyzed to identify key factors influencing marital longevity. The review identified five internal factors that contribute to a lasting marriage: 1) commitment, 2) communication, 3) spirituality, 4) conflict resolution strategies, and 5) other minor factors such as altruism, role sharing, and perseverance. Additionally, two external factors were found to be significant: 1) family support, and 2) the experience of other couples. These findings provide insights into the elements that support enduring marriages and may inform future research and interventions aimed at promoting marital stability.

---

**Keywords: Lasting Marriage, Long-Term Marriages, Marital Longevity, Systematic literature review, Divorce prevention, Marital satisfaction.**

---

## **INTRODUCTION**

Unity between husband and wife in marriage is not something that is easy to live. In fact, there are many conflicts in marriage that often lead to divorce. Not all long-term marriages provide satisfaction for both partners, and those who persist in unhappy marriages can do so due to a variety of supporting factors. Although we often hear that conflict can cause separation in the bond of marital relationships, the prevalence is that more married couples can achieve long-term relationships and can even achieve happiness together throughout their lives. This is inseparable from how married couples learn to manage their relational conflicts and maintain the quality of their marriage. There are a number of factors that drive couples to "survive" when couples have difficulties in marriage, including shared roles in the marriage and having satisfying children, the value of marriage as an institution, the existence of a support network, and their commitment to the couple and the marriage (Aziz & Mangestuti, 2021).

Several studies have investigated various factors related to long-term marriage, namely attitudes towards marital relationships (Timothy-Springer & Johnson, 2018), religiusitas ((Mullins, 2016); (Jeffries, 2006); (Mackey & O'Brien,

2005), the role of children (Bachand & Caron, 2001), love, commitment, and intimacy (Phillips et al., 2012)gender (Umberson, 2008), communication and conflict resolution (Koraei et al., 2017)backing (Landis et al., 2013); Attachment and loyalty (Tilse, 1994); and the division of roles (Pnina, 2009).

Klagsbrun (Karney & Bradbury, 2020) Explains that there are eight characteristics of couples who have been married for a long time, which are each individual's description of the marriage they have gone through 1). The ability to change and adapt to change. In the face of social change, couples who have been married for a long time still have a positive attitude. The change is not considered to be detrimental to them but can be accommodated and seen as something that must be addressed together; 2). The ability to live with the unchangeable. Happy couples who have been married for a long time seem to be very pragmatic. They don't seem to expect a perfect marriage where any dispute must be resolved immediately and completely, although they could have allowed it to happen. However, they can see the positives in the marriage and concentrate on their strengths, channeling the positive efforts they may use to resolve disputes in order to find ways to accommodate differences and enjoy the relationship, 3). The assumption of eternity, meaning having a lasting marriage, is the hope for every couple. Whatever their mistakes, they commit and learn to compromise for the sake of better relationships, 4). The essence of marriage is trust. Whatever challenges and tribulations they experience, trust in each other remains strong and gives them a sense of security and comfort. This is a marker of a happy and lasting marriage. 5). Balance and emotional dependence on each other. At different times, one will become more dependent than the other or vice versa. Their needs for each other and their dependence on their spouse are not seen as weaknesses in marriage but as strengths, 6). Enjoy togetherness. Happy long-term marriages will enjoy each other's company in dialogue, debate, and listening. Couples don't always agree on everything and don't always have the same interests, but they try to compromise to accommodate their differences. Finding such a balance contributes to a sense of intimacy and satisfaction with marriage, 7). Rewarded by sharing past history. Long-married couples appreciate their shared experiences. Their past history gives them a perspective on the present so that they can look back at events that could potentially damage a marriage based on what they have experienced and accumulated with their positive experiences. Their shared history is an important part of supporting each other's past histories as an entity that reminds them of their ability to survive in the past and helps prevent hasty decision-making in the face of difficulties in the present. Good luck. Couples are aware that in maintaining a marriage, they involve a little luck. Luck can play a role in protecting the marriage from unexpected things because the relationship between husband and wife does not always face severe challenges, although sometimes it is very difficult. It may be luck that unites a couple or provides an opportunity to overcome a difficult background or situation in the past.

The aim of this study is to identify and describe the characteristics that contribute to the longevity and happiness of marriages. The research seeks to understand how long-married couples perceive their relationships and the factors that help them maintain a lasting and fulfilling marriage. The primary focus of the study is to explore the couples' ability to adapt to social changes with a positive attitude, accept unchangeable aspects pragmatically while focusing on the strengths of the marriage, commit to learning and compromising for a lasting relationship, maintain

strong trust as a source of security and comfort, view emotional dependence as a strength, enjoy togetherness through dialogue and compromise, value and learn from shared history, and recognize that luck can play a role in protecting and sustaining the marriage through unexpected challenges. Therefore, based on the articles collected, the researcher will analyze the extent to which married couples can maintain a close intimate relationship over time due to these factors affecting their marriage so that it can last for a long time.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study uses the systematic literature review (SLR) method, which is a step to identify, evaluate and interpret the availability of relevant research to the formulation of the problem or topic area being researched ((Calderon & Ruiz, 2015). The purpose of this study is to identify what factors affect the permanence of marriage. The researcher will collect the findings in the research article through a systematic review of what the husband and wife are trying to do so that their marriage can last a long time and whether there are factors outside the couple that help strengthen their marriage.

The literature search was carried out on three electronic databases, namely the Wiley online library, Semantic Scholar and Scopus. Search terms use the keywords: "lasting marriages," "long-term marriages," and "marital longevity". The inclusion criteria applied in this study include: 1). articles published in 2019-2023, 2). Articles written in English, 3). Articles can be accessed or downloaded, 3). Articles use quantitative or qualitative research methods. 4). The article's research results are in the form of factors that affect the permanence of marriage. The article selection process will be outlined in the PRISMA diagram. PRISMA diagrams are tools and guidelines used to assess a systematic review, which contain guidelines for what items must be done and explained in detail (Page et al., 2021).

The process of collecting articles began on October 10, 2023. It begins by entering keywords in three predetermined electronic databases. After finding articles that matched the keywords, the researcher then entered all the findings of 22,368 articles into the Mendeley program. Based on the research articles collected, researchers removed or deleted the same article as many as 14,856. and 6,192 inaccessible articles, So the remaining articles amount to 1,320. In the next step, the researcher looked at the abstract based on the inclusion criteria of this study and obtained as many as 118 articles. The researcher deleted 44 articles that did not match the research topic. The 74 articles were then examined in full text based on the findings. Of the remaining 23 articles, the researcher selected 10 articles that were relevant to the topic and purpose of this research.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The researcher analyzed the factors that play a role in the longevity of marriage based on 10 selected articles. Three articles were published in 2019, two articles were published in 2020, three articles were published in 2021, one article was published in 2022, and one article was published in 2023. There are two factors that play a role in the survival of marriage, namely internal factors that come from the quality of individuals (each) and external factors in the form of support from other parties outside the married couple (Rahmananda et al., 2022).

### **Internal Factors**

First, joint commitment. There are six articles that found that marital commitment will affect individual happiness so that they can survive the marriage. In the research conducted (Abreu-Alfonso et al., 2021) Regarding the positive correlation between the level of anxiety and the commitment of the couple, it was found that if the couple has a high fighting for marriage, it will reduce the anxiety level of the partner so that it further fosters a sense of attachment. (Samadi et al., 2021) In his research, he found that a strong foundation in living together will be maintained when a mutual commitment is held so that marriage can be protected. (Noor et al., 2022) discovering that a happy marriage will be adorned with physical and verbal expressions of love and trust. The experience of love and trust will bring couples to foster mutual commitment so that they grow couples to love each other in the long term. This affirmation of joint commitment is also a finding from research (Heim & Heim, 2023) where commitment to the relationship between husband and wife is important and binding; In fact, based on the results of interviews from respondents in his research, commitment is significantly the most important determining factor to maintain the permanence of marriage. His discussion of commitment is associated with marriage vows, when commitment is tested and how commitment is lived in relationships. Commitment is shown by unconditional love, mutual trust, mutual attention to each other's needs, mutual support and loyalty. While (Jamalnik et al., 2020) Finding mutual respect and understanding in a partner is a commitment that continues to be built so that the marriage can last for a long time. Agree with Jalmanik, (Mukashema et al., 2019) In his study, he found that mutual respect in marriage (even in difficult situations), self-sacrifice, patience and tolerance for each other are commitments that couples build to protect their children from the risk of suffering due to parental conflict.

Second, effective communication. There are four articles that mention communication as one of the factors for the permanence of marriage. (Skipper et al., 2021) found that effective communication will prevent small problems from becoming bigger problems. A partner's ability to communicate more openly can help them not just let problems drag on. In line with this, (Abreu-Alfonso et al., 2021) It also found that constructive communication will lead couples to cultivate a dimension of love and each other's functioning or in other words, constructive communication will help couples positively feel more comfortable than destructive communication patterns. (Noor et al., 2022) It also found that the level of emotion and the way of responding positively became part of effective communication so that it could help couples to avoid unhelpful conversations. In the context of marriage, communication is closely related to the exchange of information that takes place full of brotherhood, politeness and mutual respect; Starting from intonation and the type of words used, facial expressions, body gestures, physical distance or touch. Each couple sometimes has a unique, specific and personal code of communication that is understood by them. While (Heim & Heim, 2023) discovering the importance of communication styles over time that include improving listening skills, openness or honesty; Plus it is also necessary to pay attention to non-verbal communication.

Third, religiosity. There are two articles that show that religiosity is the support that strengthens the marriage relationship. (King et al., 2020) conducted a study to find out the relationship between religiosity and marriage and how religiosity affects marriage. The results of the study show that if couples are involved in doing activities together in daily life, such as sharing hobbies, housework, going on dates

together at night and socializing with mutual friends, will tend to provide encouragement to be involved in joint religious activities so as to increase the aspect of religiosity in marriage relations. Increased religiosity will protect the risk of marriage from stressful circumstances or divorce. Similar things were also found that (Noor et al., 2022) religiosity has a positive influence on marriage relations and makes married couples more tolerant, helpful, affectionate, forgiving, respectful and forgiving. In addition, religiosity will help husband and wife interact in communication, conflict resolution, decision-making, commitment, sexuality, and childcare.

Fourth, conflict resolution strategies. Although the above three points are important factors that can affect the longevity of a marriage; However, a marriage that is prone to conflict requires the right conflict resolution strategy. (Jhamb & Singh, 2020) Finding out where over time, couples will learn from each other to accept each other's changes and learn to be ready to compromise in order to continue to build a strong sense of love.

Other factors that contribute to the longevity of marriage include altruism, which is not selfish but prioritizes the partner and is willing to sacrifice (Heim & Heim, 2023). Learn to share roles or responsibilities so that no one is more dominant in the relationship between husband and wife (Skipper et al., 2021), and always persevere and never give up when going through difficult times in building relationships with your partner (Heim & Heim, 2023).

#### **External Factors**

In addition to internal factors or factors of each individual in marriage, there are also external factors that support the efforts of husband and wife to be able to go through a long-term marriage. (Mukashema et al., 2019) said that married couples have a moral role in the form of psychosocial responsibility to prevent the breakdown of family ties built between the two families of origin through their marriage. In conflict situations, married couples are required to find a solution without harming the relationship between their two families of origin. The demand to avoid the separation of the two families or the breakdown of the bonds between the two families that have been established also needs to be supported by the involvement of extended families in helping their children who are married so that they have a good married life; One of them is by giving good advice. It is necessary to distinguish between advice and intervention, where the intervention emphasizes parents as the makers of every decision to marry their children, thus making married children less independent and less free of opinion, which can actually lead to prolonged conflicts (Wardhani & Wideasavitri, 2020). Other external factors based on findings (Samadi et al., 2021) That is learning from the experiences of other couples, taking lessons from the strengths of other couples when facing problems, and learning from their tips for success in marriage.

#### **Discussion**

Research on literature review related to factors that affect the permanence of marriage shows that there are internal factors that come from the couple themselves, namely commitment, communication, religiosity, and strategies for handling conflicts, as well as external factors, namely parental support and learning from other couples. These internal and external factors will lead the couple to an adaptive process. Adaptive processes are how couples deal with conflicts, how they

communicate, how they support each other, mindsets about marriage, and acceptance of partner behavior (Karney & Bradbury, 2020).

Communication is the core of a relationship, especially for couples (Croteau et al., 2020). In fact, some studies have found that nonverbal communication feels even more important for some couples. Nonverbal communication includes reading each other's hearts without speaking, paying attention to changes in tone of voice and communicating through body language (Tili & Barker, 2015)

In many studies, commitment is the most cited factor, as it prolongs the life of a relationship (Karney & Bradbury, 2020). Rosen-Gardon stated that commitment to each other will help bridge differences (Tili & Barker, 2015). Most of the participating couples are based on the selected article, showing how commitment is done in a variety of ways, mostly through togetherness in the face of adversity, unconditional love and loyalty in maintaining the relationship, as well as by giving oneself to listen to the needs of the couple (Bergeron et al., 2019; Samadi et al., 2021)(Samadi et al., 2021), (Heim & Heim, 2023).

The conflict dimension can also go beyond the positive and negative relationships of couples. Gottman explains the theory of a good relationship model where there are two middle levels that represent the dimensions of conflict, which includes skills such as: how to manage unresolved conflicts, effectively correct negative interactions and avoid behaviors that damage relationships during times of conflict (in (Meunier & Baker, 2012). Gottman found that couples can thrive if they have a softer approach to conflict, build an atmosphere of humor, defuse tension to a low level of negativity and avoid four behaviors that make things worse: criticism, defensiveness, contempt and silence.

In addition, the existence of a causal relationship between religiosity and the survival of a marriage is associated with the sanctity of the marriage bond, where every religious belief wants a lifetime marriage. The belief that marriage is sacred can degrade the experience of fatal conflict, such as stress or divorce. By giving a sacred meaning to marriage, couples will be able to interpret marriage and bring their relationship to God (Mullins, 2016). In addition, the religiosity of marriage is close to the practice of forgiveness, commitment and sacrifice, which has the effect of increasing marital satisfaction (Noor et al., 2022). Individual participation in the life of their faith will also indirectly reduce conflicts that lead to divorce. Strong religious beliefs in interpreting marriage will be a lifelong commitment that can increase the stability and quality of marriage (Mullins, 2016). Building religious beliefs in marriage will also develop one of the small factors that also affect the formation of marriage permanence, namely the attitude of altruism (Heim & Heim, 2023). The attitude of altruism makes sacrifice a form of infinite self-giving for one's partner. That way their partner will feel appreciated and maintain the relationship even more. The attitude of altruism will also cause a feeling of "belonging" so that there is a compromise, where married couples take turns giving and receiving each other.

In addition to internal factors, there are also external factors that support the success of a relationship, Such as support from the extended family, acceptance of the past process, and life examples from other couples who have successfully gone through it.

## **CONCLUSION**

Answering the purpose of the research regarding what factors affect married couples can last so long in marriage. It can be concluded by building good communication, the need to remember the commitment again and stick to the commitment, the need to interpret the many experiences that occur in the relationship between husband and wife, including being a supporting factor. The choices of the factors mentioned above are probably the key factors for the success of married couples in establishing a relationship so that it remains sustainable and happy. Further research is expected to analyze the risk factors that prevent marriage from surviving in modern society.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Abreu-Alfonso, J., Ramos, M. M., Queiroz-Garcia, I., & Leal, I. (2021). How couple's relationship last over time? a model for marital satisfaction. *Psychological Report*, 125(3), 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00332941211000651>
- Aziz, R., & Mangestuti, R. (2021). Building a harmonious family through love and spirituality on married couples in East Java Province. *Jurnal Ilmu Keluarga & Konsumen*, 14(2), 129–139.
- Bachand, L. L., & Caron, S. L. (2001). Ties that bind: a qualitative study of happy long-term marriages. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 23(1), 105–121.
- Bergeron, S., Brassard, A., Mondor, J., & Péloquin, K. (2019). Over, or optimal commitment? attachment insecurities and commitment issues in relationally distressed couples. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 46(3), 246–259. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0092623X.2019.1683664>
- Calderon, A., & Ruiz, M. (2015). A Systematic literature review on serious games evaluation: an application to software project management. *Computers & Education*, 87, 396–422. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2015.07.011>
- Croteau, C., McMahnnon-Morin, P., Le Dorze, G., & Barills, G. (2020). Impact of aphasia on communication in couples. *International Journal of Language & Communication Disorder*, 1–11.
- Heim, C., & Heim, C. (2023). “How did you stay together so long?” relationship longevity, a cross-generational qualitative study. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jmft.12656>
- Jamalnik, M., Falsafinejad, M. R., & Khodabakhshi-Koolae, A. (2020). Long-term marital satisfaction: couples narratives of the role of mate selection. *Journal Client-Centered Nursing Care*, 6(4), 267–276. <https://doi.org/10.32598/JCCNC.6.4.337.1>
- Jeffries, V. (2006). Religiosity, benevolent love, and long-lasting marriages. *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations*, 30(1).
- Jhamb, S., & Singh, P. (2020). Long term marriages and the psychology behind them. *International Journal of Science and Research*, 9(7), 1846–1854. <https://doi.org/10.21275/SR20724201828>

- Karney, B. R., & Bradbury, T. N. (2020). Research on marital satisfaction and stability in the 2010s: challenging conventional wisdom. *Journal of Marriage Family*, 82, 100–116.
- King, V., Wickrama, K. A. S., & Beach, S. R. H. (2020). Psychology of religion and spirituality. *American Psychological Association*.
- Koraei, A., Mehr, R. K., Sodani, M., & Aslani, K. (2017). Identification of the factors contributing to satisfying stable marriages in women. *Journal of Family Counseling & Psychotherapy*, 6(2), 129–141.
- Landis, M., Peter-Wight, M., Martin, M., & Bodenmann, G. (2013). Dyadic coping and marital satisfaction of older spouses in long-term marriage. *GeroPsych: The Journal of Gerontopsychology and Geriatric Psychiatry*, 26(1), 39–48.
- Mackey, R. A., & O'Brien, B. A. (2005). The Significance of Religion in Lasting Marriages. *Journal of Religion Spirituality & Aging*, 18(1), 35–63.
- Meunier, V., & Baker, W. (2012). Positive couple relationship: the evidence for long-lasting relationship satisfaction and happiness. In S. Roffey (Ed.), *Positive Relationship* (pp. 73–89). Springer.
- Mukashema, I., Hahirwa, J., & Hakizamungu, A. (2019). Psychosocial factors of marriage stability and longevity in traditional Rwanda. *PEOPLE: International Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(2), 269–284.
- Mullins, D. F. (2016). The effect of religion on enduring marriages. *Social Sciences*, 5(2), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci5020024>
- Noor, N. M., Mahdhir, A. M., & Amat, S. (2022). A survey of lasting marriages among husbands and wives in Malaysia. *Global Journal of Sociology: Current Issues*, 12(2), 95–103.
- Page, M. J., McKenzie, Joanne E Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, Cynthia D Shamseer, L., Tetzlaff, J. M., Akl, E. A., Brennan, S. E., Chou, R., Glanville, J., Grimshaw, Jeremy M Hróbjartsson, A., Lalu, M. M., Li, T., Loder, E. W. E. M.-W., McDonald, S., McGuinness, L., Stewart, L. A., Thomas, J., Tricco, A. C., ... Moher, D. (2021). The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *Research Methods and Reporting*, 372(71). <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71>
- Phillips, T. M., Wilmoth, J. D., & Marks, L. D. (2012). Challenges and Conflicts, Strengths and Supports A Study of Enduring African American Marriages. *Journal Black Studies*, 43(8), 936–952.
- Pnina, R. (2009). The differences in role division between partners in long-term marriages and their well-being. *Journal of Family Social Work*, 12(1), 44–55.
- Rahmananda, R., Adiyanti, M. G., & Sari, E. P. (2022). Marital satisfaction among wives of the millennial generation in the early ten-year of marriage. *Jurnal Ilmu Keluarga & Konsumen*, 15(2), 102–116.
- Samadi, P., Alipour, Z., Salehi, K., Kohan, S., & Hashemi, M. (2021). The keys to a good and lasting marriage: Exploration of Iranian couple's experiences. *Journal of Education and Health Promotion*, 10(1)(474–483). [https://doi.org/10.4103/jehp.jehp\\_1438\\_20](https://doi.org/10.4103/jehp.jehp_1438_20)



- Skipper, A. D., Marks, L. D., Moore, T. J., & Dollahite, D. C. (2021). Black marriages matter: wisdom and advice from happily married black couples. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Applied Family Science*, 70(5), 1369–1383. <https://doi.org/10.1111/fare.12565>
- Tili, T. R., & Barker, G. G. (2015). Communication in intercultural marriages: managing cultural differences and conflicts. *Southern Communication Journal*, 80(3), 189–210. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1041794X.2015.1023826>
- Tilse, C. (1994). Long term marriage and long term care “we thought we’d be together till we died.” *Australian Journal on Ageing*, 13(4), 172–174.
- Timothy-Springer, R., & Johnson, E. (2018). Qualitative study on the experiences of married couples. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 28(7), 889–902.
- Umberson, D. (2008). The performance of desire: gender and sexual negotiation in long-term marriages. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70(2), 391–406.
- Wardhani, N. D. W., & Wideasavitri, P. N. (2020). Coping strategies on wives in a long distance marriage and live with inlaws. *Journal Psikodimensia*, 19(1). <https://doi.org/10.24167/psidim.v19i1.2309>

**Rufinus Sabtian Herlambang (2024)**

**First publication right:  
AJHS - Asian Journal of Healthy and Science**



**This article is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)**