

*ABSTRACT*

## Creating a Holistic Model of Heterosexual Marriage Wellbeing Mechanisms

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The links between marital relationship well-being and multiple life outcomes, including health, finances, career, living conditions, and happiness, are repetitively endorsed in academic studies. These outcomes are far-reaching and broadly representative, so it is perhaps surprising that there are limited publicly available, evidence-based models of marital wellbeing mechanisms to aid couples in trouble or to educate families, professional helpers, or policy makers in their decision-making processes. The goal of this study was to isolate the generic properties of marital health and understand their operation - investigating the precedents, antecedents and maintenance of adult romantic relationship happiness, stability and general marital well-being, including how these constructs self-organise and co-relate, how outcomes emerge, and how we might therefore potentially alter these outcomes. Over the last 40 years thousands of studies have been carried out to determine the factors that contribute to marital satisfaction and endurance. Nonetheless, to this point in history little has been done to synthesise these multiple factors into an overarching model of marital wellbeing. For this study, pre-existing theories and research findings pertinent to marriage and relationships were sought out using a scoping review, collating more than 24,000 research articles. The multi-grounding process extricated categories from the scoping review for the model development. Prominent pertinent theories were discovered, and their premises were explored, compared, and inter-relationships were considered in the model development process. Given the prevalence and primacy of marriage partnerships across most societies and given the individual importance and the societal impact that these partnerships have, this model has significance for individuals, therapists, family therapy lecturers and researchers, policy makers and even societal and business leaders.