


# The Role of Mindfulness and Assertiveness on Housewives' Marital Satisfaction

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<p><b>Submitted:</b> 2023-08-25</p> <p><b>Revised:</b> 2023-01-07</p> <p><b>Accepted:</b> 2023-02-13</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> assertiveness; housewives marital satisfaction; mindfulness</p> <p><b>Copyright holder:</b> © Zalki, R., &amp; Sampe Tondok, M. (2024)</p> <p><b>This article is under:</b> </p> <p><b>How to cite:</b> Zalki, R., &amp; Sampe Tondok, M. (2024). The Role of Mindfulness and Assertiveness on Housewives' Marital Satisfaction. <i>Bulletin of Counseling and Psychotherapy</i>, 6(1). <a href="https://doi.org/10.51214/00202406619000">https://doi.org/10.51214/00202406619000</a></p> <p><b>Published by:</b> Kuras Institute</p> <p><b>E-ISSN:</b> 2656-1050</p>	<p><b>ABSTRACT:</b> Housewives are frequently burdened with numerous roles and responsibilities, occasionally contending with domestic conflicts that impact their level of marital satisfaction. The purpose of this study was to find out the role of mindfulness and assertiveness in the marital satisfaction of housewives who do not have a job. This research was a quantitative survey research on 262 unemployed housewives. Participants were selected using purposive sampling. There were three scales used to collect data that were Marital Satisfaction Scale, the Mindfulness Scale, and the Assertiveness Scale. Data for hypothesis testing were analyzed using multiple regression. The results revealed that mindfulness and assertiveness have a positive and significant role in affecting housewives' marital satisfaction at 29.4 percent. The implication of this study is that improving mindfulness and assertiveness among housewives, particularly those who prioritize household responsibilities and do not work, can positively influence marital satisfaction.</p>
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## INTRODUCTION

Marital life is an integral component of an individual's existence, particularly when they are committed to marriage. It encompasses various dimensions of their life, including emotional, social, and familial aspects. Navigating the complexities of marital life can profoundly impact one's overall well-being and personal growth. GÜVen (2017) defines marriage as the process of unification between men and women from diverse backgrounds, committed to being together for their entire lives. Typically, the male party takes on the role of a husband to provide for the family, while the female party assumes the role of a homemaker, responsible for managing household needs (Fairuz & Satriadi, 2022). Even though do not play the role of breadwinner, the role of a wife as a housewife certainly comes with its own burdens and conflicts. Handayani (2016) explains that being a housewife is an extremely exhausting role as it is continuous and unpaid. This perspective is supported by Firoz (2021), who elucidates that housewives bear a multitude of responsibilities, leaving them with little to no time for self-care. Housewives are also expected to perform dual roles such as cooking, shopping, and maintaining the household in their daily lives, making them susceptible to psychological stressors (Durak et al., 2022).

Another issue often experienced by housewives in family life is husbands working for extended periods (Litiloly & Swastiningsih, 2014). Kurniawan (2014) explains that husbands working long hours and leaving their wives can instill fear and suspicion, leading to quarrels and disharmony in the marital relationship. This also impacts the psychological well-being of housewives, as they must manage and bear substantial household responsibilities alone. In line with the previous explanations, Amstad et

al. (2011) in their research elaborate that excessive working hours prevent individuals from spending enough time with their families, consequently diminishing their marital satisfaction. Additionally, the role of a wife as a homemaker and not working tends to result in dependence on their husband, a lack of appreciation, limited social stimulation, and feelings of dissatisfaction regarding household matters (Lewis, 1986). Renanita & Setiawan (2018) explains that housewives who don't work are one of the factors that causes dissatisfaction in marriage.

Various conditions experienced by housewives contribute to their lower levels of satisfaction. Wardhani (2015) explains that housewives tend to have lower marital satisfaction compared to working wives. This can occur because housewives often heavily rely on their partners, making them less independent. Furthermore, housewives tend to focus solely on household routines, limiting their ability to exchange ideas about work and often resulting in a narrower perspective compared to working wives. These factors contribute to the lower levels of marital satisfaction experienced by housewives.

Marital satisfaction is defined as an individual's assessment of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors towards their spouse in the context of their marital relationship (Hendrick, 1988). A similar thing was also explained by Taghani et al. (2019) who stated that marital satisfaction is a feeling of satisfaction, pleasure and joy felt by husband and wife when considering all aspects of their marriage. Marital relationship satisfaction is also very important in the stability of the couple's relationship and the foundation of the family (Bafrani et al., 2023). Individuals with high marital satisfaction tend to experience greater happiness, and better mental health, and make efforts to maintain their marriages. On the other hand, those with low marital satisfaction often experience stress and frustration in their relationships (Rhoades et al., 2011). Additionally, low marital satisfaction is associated with unhappiness and higher divorce rates. The conditions experienced by housewives in fulfilling their roles are also influenced by their mindfulness. Hadits et al. (2020) explain that mindfulness plays a role in influencing marital satisfaction.

Mindfulness is a form of self-awareness where individuals focus on the present moment without placing blame on the current circumstances (Baer & Krietemeyer, 2006; David, 2018). Goldberg (2022) adds that a state of mindfulness is characterized by focusing on current experiences with a non-judgmental attitude. Interventions involving mindfulness have been developed and tested taking into account certain clinical conditions to help individual psychological problems (Goldberg, 2022). In their research, Burpee & Langer (2005) elaborate that mindfulness plays a significant role in marital satisfaction. They also add that individuals with high levels of mindfulness are better equipped to experience positive atmospheres, openness, and acceptance of different perspectives from their partners. Regarding marital satisfaction, Yekta et al. (2022) explain that mindfulness plays a crucial role in enhancing relationship satisfaction. Mindfulness enables individuals to accept their partner's shortcomings, which in turn contributes to happiness and reduces conflicts within the marriage (Simou & Moraitou, 2018). Individuals with high mindfulness are also more adept at accepting their partner's conditions and are better equipped to regulate negative emotions within themselves (Karremans et al., 2020).

In addition to mindfulness, assertive behavior in marriage is also a significant factor in enhancing individual marital satisfaction. Desmita (2006) explains that assertiveness plays a role in influencing an individual's level of marital satisfaction. This is also supported by Moss et al. (2021) who states that assertiveness has a role in marital satisfaction. Assertiveness involves direct, positive, and steadfast self-expression in an effort to establish equality within relationships (Alberti & Emmons, 2017). The presence of assertiveness can assist in improving the quality of marital relationships by promoting honesty and openness, as both parties have the freedom to express their feelings (Villa & Del Prette, 2013).

### Rationale of Current Study

Based on the above discussion, there are several research gaps that could be further explored. First, there is still limited understanding of the influence of the homemaker's role on marital satisfaction. Although this role does not involve income generation, the burdens and conflicts faced by housewives can affect their levels of marital satisfaction. Second, within the context of marital relationships, there is a research gap regarding how husbands working long hours impact marital satisfaction and the psychological well-being of housewives. Research could also investigate how excessive working hours for husbands affect the quality of time spent with the family and its implications for marital satisfaction. Third, while the roles of mindfulness and assertiveness have been shown to influence marital satisfaction, there is still limited research explaining the complex relationship between these two factors and marital satisfaction among housewives. Further research could delve into the intricate interplay between mindfulness, assertiveness, and marital satisfaction for housewives.

Considering the complexity of the roles and challenges faced by housewives, understanding the impact of mindfulness and assertiveness on marital satisfaction becomes of paramount importance. In this regard, this research aims to explore how mindfulness and assertiveness factors interact and how they collectively influence the marital satisfaction of housewives. Consequently, further research can provide a deeper insight into the factors affecting marital satisfaction among housewives and lay the foundation for the development of more effective interventions to enhance the quality of their marital relationships.

### Study Aims and Hypotheses

In this research, the researcher aims to investigate whether mindfulness and assertiveness play a role in the level of marital satisfaction among housewives, particularly those who do not have employment and focus on household needs. The research hypothesis is formulated as follows: Mindfulness and assertiveness significantly contribute to the level of marital satisfaction among housewives.

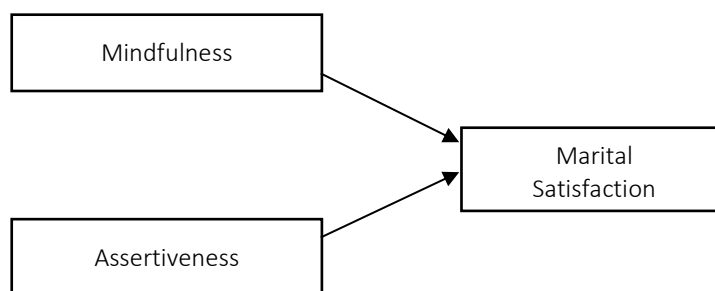


Figure 1. Research Framework

## METHODS

### Design

The research design for this study was a quantitative cross-sectional survey employing questionnaires with the objective of analyzing the roles of mindfulness and assertiveness in marital satisfaction among housewives. This research design allowed the researcher to collect data from various participants with diverse characteristics in a relatively short period, facilitating the analysis of the relationships between variables concurrently.

## Participants and Procedure

In this study, the participants consisted of 262 individuals who were housewives and do not engage in employment, focusing their efforts on household responsibilities. We employed a non-probability purposive sampling in the sample selection process. Purposive sampling is a data collection technique that is based on predetermined considerations or characteristics. In this study the samples were unemployed housewives. Data collection procedures were conducted by distributing questionnaires to the participants online using G-Form. We provided informed consent to ensure that participants willingly agreed to take part in this research. Informed consent encompassed a detailed explanation of the research's objectives, participants' rights, and data privacy before participants were asked to complete the questionnaire.

## Instruments

For data collection, we utilized three measurement instruments employing a 4-point Likert scale, with response options consisting of "strongly disagree," "disagree," "agree," and "strongly agree." These three measurement tools were developed by the researcher to assess the research variables in alignment with the grand theory associated with each utilized variable.

### *Marital Satisfaction*

In measuring the marital satisfaction variable, we constructed the measurement instrument with reference to [Hendrick \(1988\)](#) theory. According to [Hendrick \(1988\)](#) theory, marital satisfaction encompasses three aspects: love, problems, and expectations. A total of 30 items were analyzed, resulting in a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .954.

### *Mindfulness*

For the mindfulness variable, we designed the measurement instrument with reference to the five aspects of mindfulness outlined by [Baer & Krietemeyer \(2006\)](#). These aspects include observing, describing, non-judging of inner experiences, acting with awareness, and non-reactivity to inner experiences. A total of 17 items were tested, yielding a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .859.

### *Assertiveness*

For In assessing the assertiveness aspect, the researcher relied on the five dimensions proposed by [Alberti & Emmons \(2017\)](#), which encompass the ability to express honesty and comfort, act in accordance with one's will, express opinions, respect the rights of others, and assertively defend oneself. A total of 15 items were examined, resulting in a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .822.

## Data Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was employed to test the hypotheses in this research, utilizing the IBM SPSS series 26.0 for Windows. In addition to the multiple linear regression analysis, the researcher conducted supplementary tests related to the demographic data collected and its association with the variables under investigation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The categorical findings of the data examined for each variable are presented in Table 1. The data from Table 1 indicate that most research participants report a very high level of marital satisfaction (53.1%). Furthermore, most participants have a moderate category for mindfulness (42%). Meanwhile, most participants demonstrate a high level of assertiveness (40%).

Before hypothesis testing, we first conducted data assumption tests, namely normality and linearity. Result revealed that both assumption tests were met. The researchers then proceeded with hypothesis testing through multiple regression analysis to examine the role of mindfulness and assertiveness, both collectively and individually, on the marital satisfaction of housewives. The results are shown in Figure 2 and summarized in Table 2 below.

The purpose of this study is to explain the influence of mindfulness and assertiveness on marital satisfaction among housewives. Referring to the analysis results in Figure 2 and Table 2, it is found that the value of  $F(2,261) = 53.802$ ;  $p < .01$ . This indicates that mindfulness and assertiveness, collectively, play a highly significant role in enhancing the marital satisfaction of housewives. Furthermore, the t-test results reveal that mindfulness significantly contributes to increasing the marital satisfaction of housewives ( $t = 6.934$ ;  $p < .01$ ). Additionally, assertiveness has a significant impact on the marital satisfaction of housewives ( $t = 2.151$ ;  $p < .05$ ). From the analysis results, it can be observed that mindfulness plays a more dominant role compared to assertiveness in influencing the marital satisfaction of housewives. Table 2 shows that the R Square value is .294, indicating that mindfulness and assertiveness together account for 29.4% of the variance in marital satisfaction among housewives, particularly those who do not work. The remaining 70.6% can be influenced by factors other than these two variables.

**Table 1. Categorization of Research Variables**

Category	Marital Satisfaction		Mindfulness		Assertiveness	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Very low	3	1.1	4	1.5	1	.4
Low	15	5.7	59	22.5	19	7.3
Moderate	32	12.2	110	42.0	90	34.4
High	73	27.9	66	25.2	105	40.1
Very high	139	53.1	23	8.8	47	17.9
Total	262	100	262	100	262	100

**Table 2. Summary of Research Hypothesis Testing Results**

Variable	Marital Satisfaction			$\beta$	<i>t</i>	Sig.
	<i>R</i>	$R^2$	<i>F</i>			
Mindfulness, Assertiveness	.542	.294	53.802	-	-	.001
Mindfulness				.448	6.934	.001
Assertiveness				.139	2.151	.032

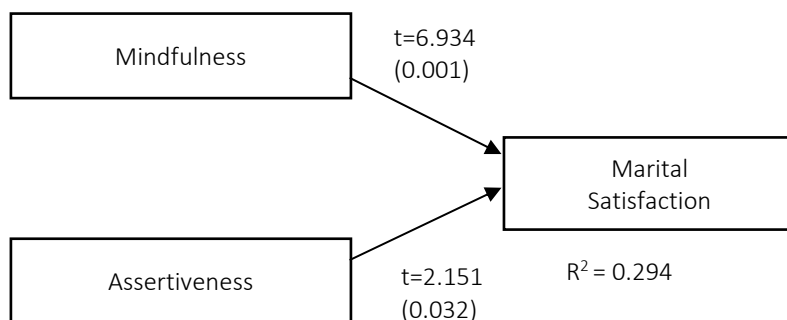


Figure 2. Diagram illustrating the role between mindfulness, assertiveness, and marital satisfaction

## Discussion

The role of a housewife carries a unique set of stressors within the context of family life, such as taking care of children, the husband, and various other household needs. The multitude of responsibilities they must undertake sometimes leaves them with hardly any time for self-care (Firoz, 2021). The abundance of roles they face makes housewives vulnerable to experiencing psychological stress, which can also affect their marital satisfaction (Durak et al., 2022).

Marital satisfaction is of utmost importance for a wife who plays the role of a homemaker to maintain a happy and harmonious marital relationship. As explained by Wijayanti & Indrawati (2016), someone who is satisfied with their marriage tends to be happier because they feel that their goals, expectations, and desires within the marriage have been fulfilled. Furthermore, someone who is satisfied with their marriage is also more likely to maintain commitment and loyalty to their partner.

Several factors can influence the level of marital satisfaction among non-working housewives. One of the factors discussed in this research is mindfulness and assertiveness. Through multiple regression analysis, it was found that mindfulness and assertiveness collectively affect the marital satisfaction of non-working housewives. Descriptive analysis also revealed that most participants exhibited moderate levels of mindfulness, high levels of assertiveness, and very high levels of marital satisfaction.

The influence of mindfulness and assertiveness on marital satisfaction can also be observed in previous research conducted by Hally (2022), which found that mindfulness and assertiveness impact the marital satisfaction of married couples. Hally (2022) further explained that mindfulness enables individuals to be more receptive to various inputs and better adapt to their partners, ultimately contributing to marital satisfaction. Odinka et al. (2019) in their research explained that the higher an individual's perceived mindfulness, the greater their perceived marital satisfaction. High levels of mindfulness have been shown to enhance partner acceptance, feelings of empathy, and a sense of security within the relationship (Barnes et al., 2007). Mindfulness has an important role in improving individual well-being, including in the context of social relations and marital satisfaction (Ratu & Tondok, 2022).

In addition to mindfulness, the results of this research analysis also indicate that assertiveness plays a role in the marital satisfaction of non-working housewives. Donowasito (cited in Putri, 2020) explained that assertiveness has an influence on marital satisfaction. Jackson et al. (2017) elucidated that assertiveness is one of the predictors contributing to marital satisfaction. It is also known that assertiveness can reduce anxiety, enhance happiness, and assist individuals in expressing their feelings effectively for optimal functioning (Sarah & Indriana, 2018). By implementing assertive communication patterns, improvements in communication with one's partner can be achieved, which in turn has a positive impact on marital satisfaction (Afdilla, 2022).

We also conducted additional analysis, which involved an ANOVA test to examine the difference between marital satisfaction among housewives and their husbands' monthly income. The results of this test yielded a significance value of .001, indicating a difference in the level of satisfaction among housewives based on their husbands' monthly income. Subsequently, the researcher conducted post hoc tests and found that housewives with husbands earning less than 3 million per month had lower levels of satisfaction compared to housewives with higher-earning husbands.

Dakin & Wampler (2008) explained in their research that money management and income from one's partner are closely linked to the level of marital satisfaction. Couples with lower incomes tend to predict lower marital satisfaction and experience more psychological pressure than couples with more financial resources. Tazkiya & Puspitawati (2022) in their study, also noted that a higher husband's income is associated with higher marital satisfaction. The consequence of low marital satisfaction among couples with low incomes is an increased vulnerability to divorce. This is

supported by Jackson et al. (2017) who pointed out that there is a consensus indicating that couples with lower incomes have a significantly higher risk of divorce.

We also conducted a difference test analysis to assess the role of marriage duration on marital satisfaction. The results of this test yielded a significance level of .142. The different test results indicate that there is no distinction in marital satisfaction among non-working housewives when examined in relation to the duration of their marriage. This finding is corroborated by Leong et al. (2020) who asserted that there is no influence of age or length of marriage on an individual's perceived marital satisfaction.

### **Implications**

The implications of this research are that the level of marital satisfaction among housewives can be positively influenced by mindfulness and assertiveness. Mindfulness can help housewives become more aware and present in their relationships, enabling them to respond wisely to conflict situations and communicate more effectively. Meanwhile, a higher level of assertiveness can provide the communication skills needed to express needs and expectations clearly, reducing misunderstandings and enhancing the quality of communication within the marital relationship. Therefore, understanding the positive role of mindfulness and assertiveness in the context of marital satisfaction among housewives has significant implications for the development of interventions and programs aimed at improving the quality of marital relationships and family well-being.

### **Limitations and Future Research Direction**

There are several limitations in this study that should be considered by future researchers. First, this study utilized a survey design with data collection at a single point in time. This precludes the evaluation of causal relationships between mindfulness, assertiveness, and the level of marital satisfaction longitudinally. Second, the relatively small sample size of 262 participants may affect the generalizability of the research findings to a broader population of housewives. Third, the potential for participant selection bias should also be considered in interpreting the results, given that participants may possess different characteristics compared to the general population of housewives. Fourth, data in this study were collected through self-report methods, which are susceptible to social response bias and subjective understanding of constructs such as marital satisfaction. Finally, although this study demonstrates a correlation between mindfulness, assertiveness, and the level of marital satisfaction, other factors such as commitment, social support, and family dynamics may also influence marital satisfaction and warrant further investigation.

### **CONCLUSION**

Overall, this research supports the findings of previous studies regarding the influence of mindfulness and assertiveness on marital satisfaction, as investigated by earlier researchers. Mindfulness and assertiveness have been shown to play a role in marital satisfaction among housewives who primarily focus on household needs and do not work. Enhancing mindfulness in housewives can contribute to increased marital satisfaction. Similarly, assertiveness, when improved through assertive communication, can also lead to higher marital satisfaction among housewives.

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### **AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT**

Both authors made equal contributions and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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