

## MARITAL RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS AND INTIMACY AMONG NEWLYWEDS IN BANGKOK

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### ABSTRACT

An exploratory study was conducted to examine the relationship between marital relationship problems and intimacy among newlyweds in Bangkok as well to examine differences in these two main variables as a function of gender, age, age difference between spouses, length of dating period, length of marriage, and number of children.

The sample group consisted of 120 newlyweds from selected areas in Bangkok including the local Family Plan Center, the Thai Family Data Center, and the Samitivej Hospital. Only those who met the inclusion criteria participated in the study. The research instrument was a self-administered survey questionnaire (Thai version) in three parts: Personal Data Questionnaire--to obtain the respondent's demographic profile, the Index of Marital Satisfaction (IMS)--to measure the degree, severity, or magnitude of a problem one spouse or partner has in the marital relationship, and the Intimacy Scale (IS)--to measure general intimacy or affection. The IMS and the IS are standardized instruments published in a psychological journal. Reliability statistics for the Thai version of the questionnaire showed a Cronbach's alpha of .922 for the IMS and .944 for the IS.

The data were analyzed through the SPSS by using descriptive statistics in the form of frequency and percentage distribution as well as inferential statistics which consisted of hypothesis testing, test of normality, *t*-test, one-way ANOVA, and non-parametric tests where appropriate.

With regard to the main research hypotheses, the major findings revealed that: (a) There are significant differences in the perceived severity of marital relationship problems across levels of age difference between spouses; however, no significant differences were found in the perceived severity of marital relationship problems as a function of gender, age, length of dating period, length of marriage, and number of children; (b) There are no significant differences in the degree of intimacy among newlyweds as a function of gender, age, age difference between spouses, length of dating period, length of marriage, and number of children; and (c) There is a significantly strong negative correlation between the marital relationship problems and intimacy among newlyweds.

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