

Social Supports in Solving Marital Problems for Buddhist Couples

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate social supports in solving marital difficulties for Buddhist couples. The present research has been done on 150 lay Buddhists in Hue. The results show that 97.3% of them put a stress on the importance of marital happiness and 2.7% of the rest did not in such a way that marital happiness was nothing to talk about. Overall, the level of difficulty in the marital life of Buddhist couples was not high (average = 1.38). Of social supports in solving marital problems for lay Buddhist, help from Buddhist temples were chosen with a higher rate.

Keywords: social supports; lay Buddhists, happy couples, marital problem.

1. Introduction

The more modern society is, the faster the pace of life is. The development of material civilization and scientific technology gives better living conditions to human beings on the one hand, but it also results in socially -unwanted problems for the quality of life, family well-being and marital happiness. According to an inquiry done from 2011 to 2015, there were 157,859 cases of domestic violence in Viet Nam, victims were women (from 16-59 years), accounting for 117,206 cases (74.24%), 17,586 cases were children (11.14%) and 14,017 elderly cases (8.91 %) (National Research on the Family Protection for Women, 2015) [1]. According to the results of the General Statistics Office, there were in the whole country 18,308 divorces in 2013, 19,960 divorces in 2014, and 24,101 divorces in 2015 (General Statistics Office 2016). The four main causes of divorce were identified to be: lifestyle conflict (27.9%), economic problem (13%),

domestic violence (6.7%) [1;9]. Of the values that people try to find, build and preserve, happiness is the aspiration of many. To lead a happy life is everyone's dream. However, the meaning of happiness depends on the level of cognition or life outlook of each individual, so it has different standards. There may be different angles of view, happiness is generally of two categories: material happiness from experience and sense pleasures, such as money, beauty, fame and comfort. and mental happiness, such as joy and peace (Thich Minh Chau, 2010) [2]. Happiness in general and family happiness in particular are the highest purpose of living standard that all of people wish to reach. Marital happiness is very important for all couples. So far, there have been in Vietnam many studies and researches done on marital life, but most of them have been done with regard to students, workers and officials only, this means that not much have related to groups of religious people like lay Buddhists. In addition, those studies have mainly focused on the different levels, expressions and causes of marital problem, and very little attention has been paid to the way of how to deal with. Consequently, the ever- proposed measures have some- how been inadequate and of course, not so helpful to the objects.

Buddhists are those who follow Buddhist Teachings, living and working in accordance with Buddhist standards, of course, not all, and at a certain level. Such a way of life is believed to help them promote their inherent capacity to adapt and cope with life problems. This positive point is nothing doubtful as having been proven in practice. Buddhists feel they happily live in the "grace" of their Buddha Besides, there are still Buddhists, especially young ones, who have little experience of Life. They cannot themselves solve their problems thoroughly in such a way balance their life. These groups of people are at risk when encountering some certain problems, especially marital problems, in life. They do need practical help from society, However, in Vietnam and even in the world, this kind of question has not yet been taken into consideration at a proper dimension. So, it is hopeful that the present research would be given more attention.

2. The Objects And Research Meth- odology

The object of study:

The objects are 150 Buddhists (78 men and 72 women) at the aged of 18 to 25 in Hue city, Thua Thien Hue province. They are students, employees and workers. Most of them are local people and a few from other provinces came to join the Buddhist families.

Research methodology

Research method is questionnaire survey. Based on discussions with experts and reference to the published researches. The questionnaire consists of 4 parts:

- Firstly: study, find out and collect some general information on the study subjects such as name, age, sex, occupation, education level... - Secondly: learn some of the difficulties that ordinary Buddhists face in their happiness. Including 19 items, mentioned several difficulties affecting the happiness. The results are calculated based on the score of 3-2-1-0 corresponding to the "very often - often - sometimes -never". - Thirdly, it consists of 14 sections, aiming to find out the social support to help solve the difficulties in the happiness of the Buddhists. If selected: 1 point, if not: 0 points. - Finally, aiming to examine the Buddhist view of the effectiveness of social support. The results are calculated accord- Table 3.1: Self-Assessment Surveying to the scores of 3-2-1-0 corresponding to the levels "very effective - quite effective - ineffective completely ineffective".

In addition, the study will also use a variety of methods such as interviews, observations, product research.

Data were analyzed using SPSS16.0 software.

3. Research results

Difficulties in the happiness of the Buddhist couples

3.1 The level of self-assessment of the Buddhist followers

3.1.1 Using the frequency analysis in SPSS 16.0, we obtained the number and percentage of Buddhists in Hue city at four levels of happiness as shown in Table 3.1

able 3.1: Self-Assessment Survey

level	General 150		
	Quantity	Percentage %	Rank
Very important	125	83,3	1
Important	21	14	2
Normal	4	2,7	3
Not important	0	0	4

Table 3.1 show that, as a whole, up to 97.3% of Buddhists believe that the happiness of the couple is very important. Only 2.7% of the Buddhists think that happiness is at a normal level. There are no Buddhists who value the happiness of the couple as unimportant. This is an encouraging fact, since most Buddhists are aware of the importance of a happy couple.

3.1.2 The difficulties in the happiness of the Buddhists.

Overall, the level of difficulty in the happiness of the Buddhist couple is not high (average 1.38). The hierarchy of difficulty levels in the happiness of a Buddhist is "hard at work" (GPA = 1.49), "For a mate" (GPA = 1, 37), "Difficulties in Relations with Parents" (GPA = 1.33), "Difficulties in Sibling Relationships" (1.32).

In each group there are certain differences. In the difficult group in the relationship with the parents, the factor "I find it is difficult to talk to my parents", the GPA is higher than other. In family life, children always said that "parents who are not the least understood", because in their minds they always think that their children are small and still not mature yet. On the other hand, adults often have a habit of always making their

notion to apply to their children. Everything is not right to make decision, all are the parent set. Mr. NVM shared "My wife and I live with our parents, so everything must follow the arrangement of them. There have been many suggestions but still cannot replace that way. We really want to confide anything but everything seems difficult, so the distance on further".

These distances impede the tradition of parents and children. In addition, with the influence of the old lifestyle of the Hue, between parents and children have specific standards, so closeness, fun, sharing have certain limits.

For the difficult group of subline relationship, "In family cannot share or confide in brothers in the family", has a higher GPA than the other. When asked about this issue, "In my heart, I think I love them so much, only that I cannot feel it right now" T.T.K.T said. Conflicts between siblings in the family is also a common problem, causing many people to suffer, even leading to the most pitiful consequences: they hate to look at each other, treating and even killing each other.

Table 3.2 : Difficulties in the happiness of the Buddhist.

Difficulties in the happiness of the Buddhist	GPA
Difficulties in relationship with parents	1,33
Parents care less about my life	1,17
Parents often impose opinions without regarding my thoughts	1,18
Parents do not approve of my job	1,46
Parents' words and actions offend me	1,31
I find it is hard to talk to my parents	1,54
Difficulties in sibling relationship	1,32
We sometimes have conflicts, disagreements	1,10
We do not get along well and sit together	1,12

We cannot share or confide each other	1,50
We always fight with each other	1,49
In the work Work	
competition makes me tired	1,69
Pressure from work is very much	1,58
Low salary	1,19
The nature of work is unstable and long-term	1,56
Overtime makes me tired	1,47
For the mate	1,37
We always have disagreement about lifestyle	1,42
Material life is not guaranteed	1,17
We sometimes doubt each other	1,30
We always blame each other	1,47
There is little time for each other	1,50
Average	1,38

The main causes leading to the conflicts and disagreements in the sibling relationship are often jealousy and inequalities of material and spiritual benefits, they sometimes are jealous because of the power, the beauty, the material ...; or it is just because of love, lack of love and concession. Because of these main causes, the sharing among family members is often difficult and trouble.

In order to reconcile the conflicts and problems in the sibling, according to the Buddhist teaching, the sibling often concern, share and help each other, to establish love and become closer, to understand and love each

other. When they truly understand, love and respect each another, envy, jealousy will not happen (Nguyet sang Giac ngo, 174).

For the hard-working group, the factor "work competition makes me tired" has a higher GPA than the others. For the difficult group with the mate, the "little time" factor has the highest GPA. One of the biggest crises of young couples is having little time together. Time together is the necessary movement to consolidate the love; to reconcile, to correct the discord, disagreement and misunderstanding. When couples are asked how much time each day, every week, do thing special with each other, the answer is usually no, or very little. But the main reason is still jobs take up too much time during the day, during the week.

Thus, these above figures and analysis show that to have a happy life needs to be set on many different bases. These above causes are also factors contributing to the happiness of the Buddhist. Therefore, Buddhists want to have their own lasting happiness, they need to understand the nature of suffering, the difficult in order to find a way to placate. Moreover, the Buddhists need a stable spiritual life based on the practice of transforming suffering by themselves. And the especially important thing is that Buddhists themselves must cherish, care, share difficulties and be happy. There is such an everlasting happy set up in this life.

4. Social support to solve the difficulties in the happiness of the Buddhist.

Support from the family

The results of Table 3.3 show that the level of family support was rated above average by Buddhists (average from 2.29 to 2.57).

One of the characteristics of Asian culture is that even though the children are grown up, the family is always a peaceful their lifetime. In many studies, place families are the most important social support to help members cope with life's problems. Sharing, confiding, listening to family advice helps the members recognize the problems optimistically, society may accept the difficulties and accept the reality.

Table 3.3 Results from the survey of family support

Family support	average	Rank
The family is always beside me	2,33	3
The family always help me	2,39	2
The family always help me make decision	2,57	1
I often confide, share with family	2,29	4

In this study, the family support was rated by Buddhists above average and lower than the support from friends and pagoda. While the family often supported Buddhists in decision making, this study is in opposition to that. This is an issue that needs to be investigated further, since Hue is a city that preserves many traditional values, standard values and modesty in each person, including the bond of the family members. Further research is necessary to clarify how attachment to family changes in today's society and if that attachment still exists, why do Buddhists not appreciate it as a social support.

Support from friends

Results in Table 3.4 show that the average of support from friends was high (average 2.65) ranked 2 in 3 factors. This shows that this is the age which often attach importance to friends in their activities, works and studies.

Table 3.4 Survey result of the support from friends

Support from friends	Average	Rank
Friends always encourage	2,77	1

can rely on friends	2,43	4
There are people I can share	2,73	2
There is a special interest	2,66	3

The results are consistent with the findings of Barba with his partner (2004). Those studies have shown that friendships and other specialists such as teachers and lovers are closely related to the use of "looking for social support" rather than family. This has helped the Buddhist who are firmly on the way to solve the challenges of life.

Firth's (1989) publication, however, has a different view than the above studies. She said that the role of friends often stop at listening, sharing difficult situations, not help solve the problem directly. To explain this, many authors argue that there are few Life experience, financial capacity is limited, so friends can hardly help Buddhist eliminate factors causing difficulties thoroughly (Firth, 1989) [7].

More importantly, Buddhists have a strong social backing they have not avoided meeting people or withdrawing themselves in the face of failure. The social support has made Buddhists more open, available to share their feelings and their emotions. This

is very important because it avoids the possibility of isolating yourself and quieted- during stress, and suffering.

Support from the temple

The survey found that the pagoda was the social support that Buddhists often rely on to find peace and this is the most important social support of the Buddhists." The temple, the monastery is the place where I can enjoy the peaceful and relaxed moments when experiencing the failure of life" is the highest choice by Buddhists (2.81%). In addition, the confidant with Buddhist brothers and sisters, being in harmony with the Buddhist family and praying is evaluated at a higher than average level.

Table 3.5 Survey results of the support from the pagoda

Support from the pagoda	Average	Rank
Confiding with Buddhist brothers and sisters	2,75	2
Talking with the monks	2,465	6
Community in the Buddhist family	2,74	3
Pagoda helped me be peace and freedom	2,81	1
Listening the dharma help you find yourself	2,59	5
Praying	2,73	4

This shows that religion is a solid support, a place to turn to take refuge after the failures and suffering in life. This is confirmed by the University of California(2004): "The Students who are involved in religious activities may have better mental and emotional health than others". In 2006, research was conducted at the University of Texas found that, the more often an individual goes to church, the monastery, the more increasing the age get. The same conclusion was repeated with a study of 2,000 people in California for five years in a public health project. According to the study, people who go to church and pagoda have a lower morbidity rate, less death rate and better coping with difficulties than non-religion people, accounting for 36% (Tran Thanh Nam, 2014)

Clark and Lelkes (2008), who concluded that religious beliefs were less stressful, religious beliefs and religious rituals taught them to recognize reality to over- come difficulties in the life (Clark and Lelkes, 2008).

There are many reasons why religion has many benefits to human mental health. Chacyoon Lim (2010) said that the time to visit churches and monastery will help people have a wider social network and more support. That will give the individual a more positive view of life as well as a sense of support when needed. There- by, each object has a different expression when experiencing the failures, grief, difficulties in life. This gives the

researcher an overview in making the appropriate impact measures: On the other hand, this result shows that the power of religion can transform suffering so that people can confidently confront their difficulties (6).

In summary, from the above results, the level of support from the pagoda was selected and used by Buddhist is most compared to other kinds of support. This is consistent with the missionary role of spiritual activity. The point of the Buddha is "to serve beings means to worship the Buddha." "Religious beliefs and religious rituals teach people to accept and also to help people overcome the hardships of life.

5. Conclusion

Happy couples are the subject of a lot of research, education, social concern. In addition to the theoretical studies on happiness, many studies have focused on the development of tools for assessing happiness. From there, support, impact to find ways to influence, support and help. In Vietnam there are quite a lot of studies on the level of happiness, love couples in different groups, students, workers and employees. However, many studies have focused on the issue of the happiness of the Buddhist, especially in adolescence. Therefore, the results of this research have a scientific and practical significance, providing the necessary basis for psychologists, educators, the public and those who are interested in the quality of the Buddhist's Life. From that point they determine the support activities, in order to minimize the difficulties, breakdown and improve the quality of life and spirit of Buddhists.

Among the factors affecting coping with happiness, the level of support from the pagoda is chosen and applied by Buddhists the most compared to other kinds of support. Religious beliefs and religious rituals teach people to accept and to help people overcome the hardships of life.

From the results of this study, we propose the following measures: (1) It is necessary to raise awareness and understanding about love, couples' happiness, sexual well-being and coping with difficulties for Buddhists through magazines, and media activities. Besides, the meetings, studying the teachings should integrate content to Buddhist for understanding and effective application. (2) The programs of exchange and

cooperation among Buddhist should be organized and developed in a positive and practical way so that people can learn to share and help each other overcome the difficulties in their life. (3) Support and teach some meditation way- therapy for Buddhists learning and practicing (4) The managers of Buddhist institutions need to grasp the character and psychological development of the Buddhists to have timely intervention and support.

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