Marital Quality in Early Years Marriage: The Role of Intimacy, Passion and Commitment

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Abstract

Problems that occur in the early years of marriage are often emotional tension, conflict and discord since the couple are in the process of adjusting to each other. If it cannot be solved in a positive way, then it can lead to the decline in the quality of marriage and will end up in divorce. Whereas studies show that marital quality in the first five years plays an important role on stability on the later years of marriage. One of the factors that affect the quality of marriage according to Duvall and Miller (1985) is love. The aim of this study was to investigate the components of love which contribute most significantly to predicting the quality of marriage in newlyweds over the first 5 years of marriage. Participants were 188 people (husbands/wives) who had completed Triangular Love Scale (TLS) and Marital Quality Index (MQI). Multiple regression indicated that intimacy, passion and commitment play significant roles in predicting marital quality during the early stages of marriage. As many as 43.2 percent of intimacy, passion and commitment affects the quality of marriage (R square = 0.432). Out of the three components of love, intimacy has the greatest contribution in predicting marital quality (β = 0.152, p = 0.000). The other component of love which are commitment and passion showed non-significant results in predicting marital quality (β = 0.072, p = 0.069) (β = 0.029, p = 0.396). These findings are expected to be used to formulate alternative solution in tackling issues that may occur in the first five years of marriage.

Keywords—Marital quality; love; early years marriage

1. Introduction

One of the initial developmental transitions for adults is marriage (Feist & Feist, 2012). Every married couple possess high expectations for their marriage, wants a happy marriage, long-term quality and also life-long marriage, though such is a real challenge (Davila, Karney & Bradbury,1999; Atwater & Duffy, 1999). It needs to be fought for ever since the beginning of marriage.

Problems that occur in couples in the first five year of marriage according to psychologists Dharmayati Utoy Lubis are related to habits differences between husbands and wives that often cause resentment, financial disclosure issues and husband’s behaviors did not change after marriage- because he is still accustomed to singlehood (Indah, 2011). In addition, during this period, couples do not only pass the idealism of the engagement period but also face a myriad of developmental tasks and changes, emotional strain, conflict and discord due to adjustment process (in Toomey, 2002; Hurlock, 2004). If the couple cannot resolve conflicts in a positive way, then it can lead to lower quality of marriage and will end up in divorce.

In Indonesia, as reported by Center for Research for Development, as well as the Religious Life of the Ministry of Religious Affair, the divorce rate over the past five years greatly increased. In 2014 the divorce rate reached 382,231, an increase of about 100,000 cases compared to as many as 251,208 cases in 2010 (www.kompas.com, 2015). Surprisingly, as reported by the National Population and Family Planning that Indonesia is considered to have the highest number of divorced couples in Asia-Pacific and it is more common
Evidence from several studies show that divorce was most prevalent in the group of marriage under five years. (Bradbury & Lavner, 2012; Meltzer, Novak, McNulty, Butler & Karney, 2013; Sullivan, Pasch, Johnson & Bradbury, 2010). Whereas, the early age of marriage plays an important role as a reference for adult life and have long term effects on the marriage relationship (Davila in Toomey, 2002). This is supported by research conducted by Huston, Caughlin, Houts, Smith and George (2001), which showed that married life in the second year for the newlyweds couple reflects their married life in the next 13 years. Those with difficulties to cope with changes in the sense of love, affection and conviction are more likely to divorce than those who were stable. This is because the newlyweds couple in a transition period. During this transition period, there will be a variety of problems that must be faced and attributed to many developmental challenges that newly married couples face (in Toomey, 2002). The way to resolve the problem and the difference between these two individuals will have an impact on the continuity of marriage. At this time, the newlyweds couple have to adjust to the role, position, expectations and different developments (in Toomey, 2002).

It is considered common for couples’ appraisals of marital quality decrease during the first five year of marriage (Leonard & Roberts, 1998; Kurdek, 1998; Bradbury, Cohen, & Karney, 1998). There have been several studies showing that the quality of marriage declined in the early period. It is caused by, the newlyweds couple have to adjust to a new environment in which they should have responsibilities and face the real life (in Hyun & Shin, 2009), had more psychological problems and distress (Zainah, Nasir, Hashim & Yusof, 2012), husbands’ decrease of sexual desire and affection and the presence of children for wives reduce their quality of marriage (Karney & Bradbur, 2014), and they feel their partner is not ideal as expected previously (Murray, Griffin, Derrick, Harris, Aloni & Leder, 2011). Those various exposures showed that in the early years of marriage couples face crisis situations which is prone to divorce due to the declining quality of marriage. Whereas, marital quality is important in marriage life, it is one of the key factors that affect the quality and stability of marriage (Sternberg, 1997) and plays important role as a reference for adult life and have lasting effects on the marriage relationship (Huston, Caughlin, Houts, Smith & George, 2001).

Literatures elucidates that the quality of a good marriage is associated with low depression, better level of individual health, lack of physical illness and other positive outcomes (in Allendorf and Ghimire 2011).

While a low level of marital quality will bring individual in psychopathology of depression and anxiety conditions (Weinstock, Whisman & Uebelacker, 2004; Whitton & Whisman, 2010) as well as weight loss in individuals (Meltzer, Novak, McNulty et al, 2013). Fitzpatrick (in Bird & Melville, 1994) defines the quality of a marriage as a husband’s or wife’s evaluation of their marriage, including a subjective image of the couples whether their marriage is good, happy and satisfying. While Hawkins (in Olson & DeFrain, 2010) stated that the quality of marriage are happy feeling, satisfaction, and happy experience that is felt by married couples subjectively on various aspects of the marriage. If a person is satisfied with the marriage that have been undertaken, husbands/wives assumed that the expectations, desires, and goals to be achieved by the time husbands/wives got married has been met, in part or in whole. Husbands/wives felt their life is more meaningful and more complete than before marriage (in Pujiastuti & Retnowati, 2004).

Norton (1983) measures the quality of marriage holistically by using a general evaluation of the marriage by married couples. The quality of a good marriage can be described as something that is stable, strong, happy, can create a feeling as a whole and satisfying. Thus, quality of marriage is obtained as a result of the subjective evaluation of husbands or wives of the situation experienced during their marriage as stable, strong, happy and fulfilling wishes and expectations before marriage.

Duvall and Miller (1985) revealed that one of the factors that affect the quality of marriage is love. Sternberg (1988) also state that love of person will obtain happiness and success in the relationship. Clearly, love plays significant role in maintaining a close interpersonal relationship in people’s lives. Married couples may find love but it is uncertain whether that love will lead to lasting relationship, and thus, quality during the relationship is as important as being in love (Sternberg, 1988). This indicates that there is a need to strengthen and maintain love along marital relationship.

The triangular theory of love explains the topic of love in an interpersonal relationship. In his Triangular Theory of Love, Sternberg (1986) presents a theory that attempts to define love from an emotional, cognitive, and motivational perspective. Intimacy refers to an emotional element which includes feelings of closeness, connectedness, and bondedness in loving relationship. It thus includes within its purview those feelings that give rise, essentially, to the experience of warmth in a loving relationship.

Passion consists of motivational involvement in the relationship and other sources of arousal, including but not limited to sexual arousal, but also needs for self-esteem, affiliation, dominance/submission and self-actualization. It may be considered as the ‘hot’ component, in that it usually includes the most intense feelings.

Decision/commitment is derived from cognitive largely from cognitive decision in and commitment to the relationship, involving deliberate choice, first in the short-term decision to love someone and then in the long-term decision to maintain that love. The three components also differ in regards to the types of relationships they are
associated with. Passion is seemingly limited to romantic love, whereas commitment and intimacy are found in sibling love, child love, parent love, or love of a friend.

Sternberg (1986) believes that mean levels of these components will predictably change over the course of a relationship. Within a short-term relationship, passion plays the leading role, with intimacy only moderately important and commitment having very little importance. In contrast, a long-term, close relationship is characterized by greater emphasis on commitment and intimacy, with passion exhibiting less importance as the relationship lengths.

One of the factors related to love and will affect one’s marital quality level are the length of a romantic relationship, dating and age difference. Sternberg (1986) stated that there are differences between development of each components of love. Each of these components is also changing with the passage of time that will affect the relationship of love which is owned by the couple. In the short-term relationship, the individual has sufficient intimacy, high passion, and commitment is still low. While, on long-standing relationships, the individual has a high intimacy, sufficient passion, and high commitment. Along with the increasing years of marriage there is a change of characteristics and functions of the three components of love.

Level of quality of marriage amongst dating couples before and after marriage were not found to be different. Francis & Mialon (2014) found that couples who dated for three years or more have more stable marriages than couples who are dating for less than six months in which there is the possibility of a higher divorce rate. This study emphasizes that the key to lasting marriage is love, support for each other and trust. This finding is dissimilar with research by Ardhianita & Andayani (2005), which indicates that quality of marriage on a group of married couples without dating is higher than a group of couples who date before marriage in social psychology literature, romantic involvement where there is greater difference than 10 years in age couples (Lehmiller & Agnew, 2011).

Research by Cowan (in Lehmiller & Agnew, 2011) demonstrated that couples who are younger than their partners tend to have less successful relationship than couples without age difference. This finding also explained that a couple of different ages have lower levels of relationship quality.

The aim of this study is to investigate the components of love which contributes most significantly to predicting the quality of marriage. With an understanding of how intimacy, passion, and commitment contributes to the stability and strength of the relationship, it is expected to be a reference and alternative solution in addressing the problems that may occur in the first five years of marriage.

### 2. Research Method

#### A. Participants

A total of 188 participants (153 wives; 35 husbands) who were married during the period of data collection for 1-5 years, residing in several areas, such as Jakarta, Bandung and Garut were involved in the research. The participants were recruited by means of incidental sampling. Participants ranged from 18 to 40 years (M = 26.38, SD= 4.31). There were 84% of participants who were dating before married and 43.6% of participants in the middle class. As many as 62.8% husbands worked as private employees and 66.01% housewives. The mean of relationship length was 2.98 years (SD = 1.371) and participants who have had children were as many as 77.1%. The latest education of participants is high school (38.3%).

#### B. Measures

1. **Love**

   Spouse’s love was assessed using a modified version of Triangular Theory of Love (TTLS). This questionnaire is in the form of self-report in which spouses were asked to provide a response that matches their condition. The answer given by the spouse will be collected for later analysis. It consists of 45-item scale designed to measure the three components of love (i.e., intimacy, passion and commitment). Thus, each component is represented by 15 items subscale intended to assess it. Each scale is rated on 9-point Likert scales (1=not at all, 3= disagree, 5=moderately, 7= agree, 9=absolutely). The scores in the 15 items for each component are to be summed up to come up with the interpretation of the scores. The higher the total score in each dimension, the higher the level of intimacy / passion/ commitment on the spouse.

2. **Marital quality**

   We assessed marital quality using Marital Quality Index (MQI, Norton, 1983), a six-item scale asking spouses to report the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with general statements about their marriage (e.g., “We have a good marriage”). Five items asked spouses to respond according to a 7-point scale, whereas one item asked spouses to respond according to a 10-point scale, yielding scores from 6 to 45. Higher scores reflected greater satisfaction.

Results of reliability testing done to 75 the husbands / wives indicated that MQI scale has a reliability coefficient of 0.931 and TLS scale has a reliability coefficient for the dimensions of intimacy at 0.948, passion amounted to 0.926 and commitment of 0.952 which means that both the measuring instrument has good reliability and can used as a research instrument (Sugiyono, 2011). While the results of validity testing of each scale TLS and MQI showed, overall items are valid with the value corrected item-total correlation was ≥ 0.3 (Azwar, 2012).

We used a multiple regression method of statistical analysis, t-test, ANOVA and post hoc with SPSS for
Windows 22.0 to test the research hypothesis and reveal other findings in this study.

3. Results And Discussion

A. The role of intimacy, passion, and commitment on marital quality in early-years marriage

We examined the hypothesis using multiple regression analysis techniques that aims to determine whether the scores of intimacy, passion, and commitment can predict the quality of marriage scores (Sugiyono, 2011). As shown in Table 1, there is significant relationship between intimacy, passion, and commitment to the quality of marriage in early-years marriage ($F = 46.586, \ p = 0.000$). The coefficient of determination ($R$ square) was 0.432 or 43.2%, which means the amount of combination of intimacy, passion and commitment to the quality of marriage was 43.2% and 56.8% influenced by other factors. Then we obtained a constant ($a$) at 6.250 which shows that if there is no intimacy, passion and commitment, then the quality of the marriage reached 6.250.

### Table 1. The Results Summary of Multiple Regression Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intimacy, Commitment, and Passion (X3)</th>
<th>$R$ Square</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>Sig. (model)</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>Sig. Regression Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intimacy, Commitment, and Passion</td>
<td>0.432</td>
<td>46.586</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>+0.152X1</td>
<td>0.069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+0.072X3</td>
<td>0.396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+0.029X2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Meanwhile, the score of 0.152X1, 0.072X3, and 0.029X2 are the regression coefficient that indicates in every additional 1 point score for intimacy, commitment and passion, then there is an increase in the quality of marriage 0.152 ($p = 0.000$), 0.072 ($p = 0.069$, ns) and 0.029 ($p = 0.396$, ns). Thus, the components of love that have contributed most significantly to the marital quality in the first five years of marriage is intimacy.

B. Demographic data analysis on intimacy

We then test whether components of love have an influence based on demographic factors using one way ANOVA and t-test.

### Table 2. Intimacy different test results based on demographic factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variabel</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>116.08</td>
<td>17.211</td>
<td>$F =$</td>
<td>$p =$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>119.97</td>
<td>17.499</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.231</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
differences, education, job, spouse income, dating before marriage, marriage length and having children. Post hoc test in Table 4 shows that participants in 31-40 years of age have the highest passion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;20 years</td>
<td>120.25</td>
<td>13.720</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-25 years</td>
<td>113.20</td>
<td>16.787</td>
<td>F = p = 0.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30 years</td>
<td>111.50</td>
<td>19.733</td>
<td>2.584</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 – 40 years</td>
<td>121.52</td>
<td>10.862</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Passion post-hoc test based on age of subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Age</th>
<th>(J) Age</th>
<th>Mean Difference (I-J)</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;20 years</td>
<td>20-25 years</td>
<td>7.047</td>
<td>0.428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30 years</td>
<td>31-40 years</td>
<td>1.703</td>
<td>0.541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40 years</td>
<td>-9.315*</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30 years</td>
<td>-10.017*</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Noted : *. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

D. Demographic data analysis on commitment

As shown in Table 5, the test indicates that there are significant differences between commitment if the terms of age (F = 3.164, p < 0.05) of participants. Whilst, there are no significant differences in terms of gender, domicile, differences in age, education, job, spouse income, dating before marriage, marriage length and having children. Post hoc test in Table 5 shows that participants in 31-40 years of age have the highest commitment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;20 years</td>
<td>119.50</td>
<td></td>
<td>F = p = 0.026</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-25 years</td>
<td>119.27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30 years</td>
<td>117.51</td>
<td>3.164</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 – 40 years</td>
<td>129.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E. The dynamics of changes in quality of marriage over the first five years of marriage

As shown in Figure 1, the differences in the quality of marriage occurred significantly among couples who have a marriage age of 1 year and 2 years.

![Figure 1. The average change in marital quality during first five years of marriage](image)

Couples who have one year of marriage have the most excellent quality of marriage compared with couples who have 2 years of marriage age. Then, there was an increase in the fifth years of marriage.

4. Discussion

This study found that intimacy, passion and commitment has a role on the quality of marriage in the early years. Obtained coefficient of determination (R square) is 0.432, or 43.2%, which means the amount of a combination of intimacy, passion and commitment to the quality of marriage is 43.2% and 56.8% influenced by other factors. It may be personality, equilibrant role, leisure activity (Olsen & Fower, 1993), mutual trust, communication (Duvall & Miller, 1985), empathy, problem solving (Duffy & Atwater, 2005), jealousy and partnership (Rebello, Junior & Brito, 2014). Intimacy has the greatest contribution and significantly predicts marital quality in the first 5 years of marriage ($\beta = 0.152$, $p = 0.000$), commitment ($\beta = 0.072$, $p =0.069$) and passion ($\beta = 0.029$, $p = 0.396$) that the changes were not significant in predicting the quality of marriage in the early years of marriage. It can be said there will be significant changes if couples intensify intimacy in the first five years of marriage. This finding consistent with study conducted by Asl and Bayat (2012), Carandang and Guda (2015) showed that love has significant role in marital quality. Nevertheless, Carandang and Guda (2015) argued that commitment has the greatest and significant contribution on marital quality. This study is more in accordance with statement revealed by figures that intimacy is the main factor.
thing that strengthens the bonds of marriage (in Sternberg, 1988).

Love based on intimacy allows couples be aware of dissatisfactory aspects in marriage and try to change it to become more satisfying (Kurniawan, 1994). This can be explained because with intimacy, couples are able to count on the loved one in times of need, there is feeling of closeness and experience of warmth in loving relationship (Sternberg, 1988). Besides, husbands and wives can communicate more intimately with loved ones (Swenson & Trahaus, 1985; Sternberg, 1988).

According to Lemieux (1996) issues related to intimacy is much more prominent during the early stages five years, couples are in the process of adjusting to the role, position, expectations and different developments with the spouse (in Toomey, 2002). Therefore, to build intimacy in the beginning of the relationship and place it as the main thing will enable couples to find sense of closeness in the future (Lemieux, 1996). Sternberg (1986) suggests that the level of intimacy in a relationship is expected to be at the highest point and then start to decline gradually. However, the results of the process of building intimacy at the beginning of the relationship has the hidden power in the subsequent stage of relationship (Lemieux, 1996). So, despite the apparent intimacy dropping, the emotional attachment that has been built will make a fixed relationship successful (Lemieux, 1996).

In building such an intimate relationship, Sternberg and Grajek (in Sternberg, 1987) through their research find things that can be done by married couples.

These things include, seeking the welfare of the couple to make the ultimate sacrifice to generate feelings of trust, caring, and acceptance. Then, the couple experienced happiness by doing activities together that will make the relationship grow better. Furthermore, it is important to value the couple with all its shortcomings and can be relied upon when needed so couples can feel its presence. In addition, foster mutual understanding of each other so that spouses know how to deal with and empathize with the emotional condition. Another thing that can be done is to give and receive emotional support from partner, share things like state of self, time and wealth. Married couples also need to establish intimate communication about feelings experienced and appreciation towards partner as your loved ones so that couples feel how important he/she was in his/her life.

Furthermore, this study showed no significant change of increase in commitment ($\beta = 0.072$, $p = 0.069$) on the quality of marriage in the first 5 years of marriage. Insignificant component of commitment in this study relates to the fact that the average age of respondents involved was 26 years old. According to the theory of Arnett (in Rauer, Pettit, Lansford, Bated & Dodge, 2013) the predictive diversity commitment in romantic relationships are sustained by age, 20-26 year period is a time of exploration and instability characterized by a focus on ourselves rather than building long-term relationship with others. With age, a person will start to commit to long-term relationships with their beloved (in Rauer, Pettit, et. all, 2013). As the findings in this study also shows that respondents aged 31-40 years have the highest level of commitment. With increasing commitment of spouses in marriage, the couple is expected to have a fewer marriage conflicts/issues so that they would be more satisfied (Swenson & Trahaus, 1985).

On average respondents in this study consisted of couples who have not had children and who has had one child. In this case, Duvall and Miller (1985) explains the developmental tasks at each stage of family. At the stage when married couple have not had children, one of the tasks of the development is to satisfy intimate relationships and build relationships with other family, friends and social groups (Duvall & Miller, 1985). Whereas, one of the tasks for the couple’s development who had their first child is maintaining satisfactory relationships with a partner, and adaptability to changing family members, roles, interactions, sexual relationships and doing activities together (Duvall & Miller, 1985).

Development tasks on a couple of early-years marriage emphasis on fostering an intimate relationship and maintain satisfying relationships. Therefore, there is no change in the quality of marriage if increasing commitment to the marriage happens in the first 5 years. Nevertheless, the existence of commitment in marriage is very important to determine a person’s decision to love his/her partner, maintain and retain the love to the end (Sternberg, 1986). This component is very important to go through tough times and be in better conditions (Saragih, 2006).

Passion has the lowest contribution compared to intimacy and commitment. this study showed no significant change of increased passion ($\beta = 0.029$, $p = 0.396$) on the quality of marriage in the first 5 years of marriage. It due to the fact that passion has interaction along with the presence of intimacy among the couple (Sternberg, 1986). To enable individuals, need their passion, at first intimacy that will make the growth of physical attraction (Sternberg, 1986). Desire for sexual activity associated with satisfying relationships (Ponzetti, Hamon, Guenther & Keg, 2003). According to Aiken (2013), if intimacy and sex is the most principal in a relationship since early marriage, this will be sustained until older adulthood.

The theory supports the findings of this study indicates that respondents who have 31-40 years of age ($F = 2.584$, $p = 0.05$) had higher passion than respondents aged 20-25 years and 26-30 years. Implied, it is different with stereotypes that had been spread that typically people will lose the desire to sexual relationship with age until later adulthood (Aiken, 2013). In fact, age does not change the needs of the desire to show the excitement of individuals (Willert & Semans, 2000). Furthermore, the existing culture in Indonesia marriage is considered not only as the fulfillment of sexual desire but involving both large family which has the goal of forming a happy and everlasting family based on God’s demands (Bushar, 2000).
However, showing intimate and passionate feelings towards partner is very principal to how the couple consider their marriage and feel completely loved (Sabey, Jensen & Rauer, 2014). Love based on passion allows couples to express desires of sex with a way to communicate and appreciate their partners overtly so that the problems that exist, particularly with regards to self-esteem, domination and sexual satisfaction can be resolved properly (Kurniawan, 1994). Couples who are happy in sexual relationships tend to be satisfied with their marriage relationship (Christopher & Sprecher, 2000). Similarly, in regards to the frequency of the couples’ sexual intercourse, more frequent sexual interactions make the couple feel the improved quality of the relationship, they will often spend time and share activities together (Call, 1995). Consequently, it is important to preserve the passion since early marriage to determine sustainability of sexual desire until older adulthood (Aiken, 2013).

Previous research has found a critical period in marriage is associated with the quality of marriage (Gottman & Levenson, 2000). The critical period occurred after three years of marriage that has the highest divorce rate (Cherlin, 1992). This happens because after three years of marriage, the couple had already shown their true-self without feeling the need to make pleasant marriage conditions as in the first year (Cherlin, 1992). The findings in this study also show the low score in the quality of marriage occurred in the fourth year, but an increase in the fifth year of marriage.

Meanwhile, the adjustment period established pattern of good interpersonal relations amongst the spouses (Huston, et al, 2001). Positive communication if maintained positively affect the sustainability of the marriage (Lindahl, 1998). It is characterized by increase of the quality of marriage in the fifth year of this research.

5. Conclusion

Based on the research that has been done, it can be concluded that intimacy, passion and commitment each have roles on the quality of marriage in the early years of marriage. Obtained coefficient of determination (R square) of 0.432, or 43.2%, which means the amount of a combination of intimacy, passion and commitment to the quality of marriage is 43.2% and 56.8% influenced by other factors. Intimacy acts as an emotional element that includes feelings and display of their closeness, boundedness and connectedness to the couple. Passion acts as a physiological element that causes a person to feel like they are close physically, or stimulates sexual relationship with partner. Whereas commitment act as cognitive elements which determine the decision for someone to love and defend their love in a long-term relationship. Out of these three components, intimacy has the greatest and most significant contribution in predicting the quality of the marriage at the early stage ($\beta = 0.152$, $p = 0.000$). It means that there will be significant changes if there is an increased of intimacy in marriage in the first 5 years. Then the commitment ($\beta = 0.072$, $p = 0.069$) and passion ($\beta = 0.029$, $p = 0.396$) that the changes were not significant to the quality of marriage in the early years of marriage.

This study has revealed a descriptive dynamics of marital quality changes that occurred in the first 5 years of marriage. Before turning to the implications of these results, it is important to note that, the limitations of this study are, in terms of sample, the number of wives and husband’s subjects were not balanced and majority of them live in rural areas. Notwithstanding these limitations, these findings have important implications to be used by marital counselor as an alternative solution in tackling issues that may occur in the first five years of marriage, as material for premarital training provided by Ministry of Religion and relevant institution in an attempt to reduce divorce case. The development of further research is needed to figure out the middle years and mature years of marriage so that the changing dynamics of love during the period of marriage can be seen, or can also be done by conducting research on the 56.8% other factors that affect the quality of marriage and balance the number of respondents in both rural and urban areas.

References


