

Cultural Orientation and Marital Quality: The Mediating Role of Gender Role Attitudes

Kamdin. Parsakia¹, Nadereh. Saadati^{1*}

¹ Department of Psychology and Counseling, KMAN Research Institute, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada

* Corresponding author email address: nsaadati@kmanresce.ca

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aimed to investigate the relationship between cultural orientation and marital quality among Canadian married individuals, with a specific focus on the mediating role of gender role attitudes.

Methods and Materials: The study employed a descriptive correlational design involving 385 married participants residing in Canada, selected using stratified random sampling based on Krejcie and Morgan's sample size guidelines. Standardized instruments were used to assess marital quality (Dyadic Adjustment Scale), cultural orientation (Cultural Orientation Scale), and gender role attitudes (Gender Role Beliefs Scale). Data were analyzed using SPSS-27 for descriptive and correlational statistics, and AMOS-21 was used to perform structural equation modeling (SEM). Model fit was evaluated using χ^2/df , GFI, AGFI, CFI, TLI, and RMSEA indices. Mediation analysis included both direct and indirect path coefficients.

Findings: Pearson correlation analysis showed that marital quality was significantly related to both cultural orientation ($r = .42, p < .001$) and gender role attitudes ($r = .48, p < .001$), with a significant correlation between cultural orientation and gender role attitudes as well ($r = .45, p < .001$). The SEM results indicated that the model had good fit ($\chi^2/df = 2.11$, GFI = 0.94, CFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.053). Cultural orientation significantly predicted marital quality directly ($\beta = 0.28, p < .001$) and indirectly through gender role attitudes ($\beta = 0.22, p < .001$), confirming a partial mediating effect. Gender role attitudes also had a strong direct effect on marital quality ($\beta = 0.49, p < .001$).

Conclusion: The findings underscore the critical role of cultural orientation and internalized gender role attitudes in shaping marital quality. Gender role attitudes serve as a psychological pathway through which cultural values influence relational satisfaction, emphasizing the need for culturally sensitive approaches in marital counseling and intervention.

Keywords: Cultural orientation; marital quality; gender role attitudes

1 Introduction

Marital quality has long stood as a critical marker of individual well-being and social cohesion, representing a multidimensional construct that encompasses satisfaction, communication, emotional intimacy, conflict resolution, and commitment between spouses. The quality of a marital relationship influences not only the couple's psychological and physical health but also affects familial and intergenerational dynamics (Jeon, 2020; McDonald et al., 2020). As societies undergo rapid cultural and social transitions, understanding the contextual variables that shape marital quality becomes imperative. Among these, cultural orientation and gender role attitudes have emerged as significant psychosocial determinants, influencing how individuals approach, interpret, and sustain their marital relationships (Lee, 2020; Sim et al., 2021).

Cultural orientation refers to the internalization of cultural norms, values, and behaviors that guide individuals in social and familial contexts. In multicultural societies like Canada, where this study is situated, individuals often experience the interplay of collectivist and individualist value systems. This cultural duality shapes expectations within intimate relationships, particularly marriage. As shown in Sim et al.'s (2021) study, spousal congruence in cultural adaptation positively correlates with perceived marital quality among immigrant couples in Western societies (Sim et al., 2021). Similarly, Lee (2020) emphasized the need for culturally robust assessment tools to capture the nuanced dynamics of culturally influenced marital experiences (Lee, 2020). For example, in collectivist contexts, marital satisfaction may derive from harmony and family role fulfillment, while in individualist cultures, personal fulfillment and egalitarianism are more central (Kazim & Rafique, 2021).

The cultural lens also reframes how individuals understand and endorse gender roles in marriage. Gender role attitudes reflect one's beliefs about appropriate roles and behaviors for men and women, and these attitudes have a profound impact on marital functioning (Afzood et al., 2024; Shahi et al., 2023). Traditional gender roles often prescribe a hierarchical structure in the marital relationship, which can either stabilize or destabilize a marriage depending on the couple's cultural background and expectations (Ymamgulyeva et al., 2023). In contrast, egalitarian gender role beliefs are typically associated with higher marital satisfaction, especially in societies experiencing modernization or increased gender parity (Nazario et al.,

2023; Nurhayati et al., 2023). Moreover, cultural narratives surrounding gender identity—such as proverbs in African contexts that emphasize marital obligations—further reinforce or challenge prevailing gender norms (Anana, 2023).

The mediating role of gender role attitudes in the relationship between cultural orientation and marital quality is of particular relevance in pluralistic societies. For instance, Rudenko et al. (2020) highlighted how modern media and global narratives have transformed traditional family values, influencing both the perception and practice of marriage (Rudenko et al., 2020). As individuals internalize these shifting cultural scripts, their beliefs about gender roles often adapt, subsequently altering how they experience marital satisfaction. Anwanane and Udoh (2023) reported that sociocultural beliefs—particularly religious affiliation and community norms—shaped perceptions of marital harmony in Nigerian communities (Anwanane & Udoh, 2023). These findings underscore the importance of examining gender role attitudes as a mechanism through which cultural orientation exerts its influence on marital outcomes.

In this context, the theoretical foundation of this study is informed by ecological and cultural-psychological perspectives. From Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, the macrosystem—comprising cultural values and social ideologies—interacts with the microsystem of marital life to shape behavioral and emotional patterns between partners (Mirghafourvand et al., 2018). The bidirectional nature of this influence becomes evident in how gender role expectations are communicated, negotiated, and enacted within the marital dyad. Studies have found that alignment in role expectations fosters greater emotional intimacy and reduces role conflict (Jeon, 2020; Petts et al., 2025).

Furthermore, demographic and life-stage variables also intersect with cultural orientation and gender role attitudes in predicting marital quality. Among older adults, for example, positive marital quality has been linked to higher psychological resilience and lower depressive symptoms (Nazario-Acevedo et al., 2024, 2025). In a study of older Hispanic couples in the United States, Nazario-Acevedo et al. (2024) identified both cultural preservation and mutual respect as key factors in sustaining marital satisfaction (Nazario-Acevedo et al., 2024). Similarly, Mitchell and Dhillon (2023) found that culturally diverse Canadian parents experienced unique marital stressors rooted in intergenerational differences in cultural adaptation and gender norms (Mitchell & Dhillon, 2023).

Emerging research from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East further supports the centrality of cultural and gender variables in marital dynamics. In an Indian context, Siddappa and Reddy (2025) demonstrated that self-esteem and cultural expectations around gender significantly predicted marital satisfaction (Siddappa & Reddy, 2025). In Iran, Khorramabadi et al. (2016) showed that culturally tailored marital training programs significantly improved marital quality among couples attending health centers (Khorramabadi et al., 2016). Meanwhile, Fahd and Hanif (2019) identified religious commitment, family involvement, and cultural pride as major predictors of marital flourishing in Asian societies (Fahd & Hanif, 2019).

Cultural orientation and gender roles also intersect with health and well-being, influencing the stability of marital relationships. Yadollahi et al. (2024), for example, examined how sleep quality among working premenopausal women related to marital satisfaction, highlighting the influence of gendered work-life expectations on relational outcomes (Yadollahi et al., 2024). Similarly, Alraddadi (2021) addressed how neglect and marginalization in eldercare settings—often driven by cultural assumptions—affected emotional bonds and perceived marital support among older adults (Alraddadi, 2021). These findings support the notion that culturally conditioned gender roles shape not only daily marital experiences but also long-term health trajectories.

The role of spirituality and emotional regulation has also been studied as culturally influenced mechanisms affecting marital quality. Afzood et al. (2024) reported that mindfulness and spiritual experiences positively predicted marital well-being, especially when aligned with cultural expectations of emotional restraint and relational harmony (Afzood et al., 2024). This aligns with Hassan-Abbas and Ronen's (2022) study on Arab married couples, where commitment and pro-relationship behaviors emerged as vital contributors to marital quality in traditional patriarchal cultures (Hassan-Abbas & Ronen, 2022).

Notably, marriage is not a static institution, but rather a dynamic process shaped by societal change and psychosocial development. Singh et al. (2018) urged for greater psycho-behavioral research on marital processes among medically vulnerable populations, stressing the importance of cultural sensitivity in marital interventions (Singh et al., 2018). Manjula et al. (2021) further demonstrated how sexual satisfaction—a culturally sensitive and gendered topic—was intrinsically linked to marital quality in Indian couples, emphasizing the role of mutual

understanding of gender expectations in intimacy (Manjula et al., 2021).

Given these findings, this study seeks to examine how cultural orientation predicts marital quality, and whether gender role attitudes mediate this relationship among married individuals in Canada.

2 Methods and Materials

2.1 Study Design and Participants

This study employed a descriptive correlational design to examine the relationship between cultural orientation and marital quality, with gender role attitudes serving as a mediating variable. The target population consisted of married individuals residing in Canada. A total of 385 participants were selected through stratified random sampling, following the sample size recommendations provided by Morgan and Krejcie (1970) for a population exceeding 10,000 individuals. Inclusion criteria required participants to be legally married, fluent in English, and over 18 years of age. The study aimed to ensure adequate representation across gender, age, and ethnic backgrounds to account for cultural and demographic variability.

2.2 Measures

2.2.1 Marital Quality

Marital quality was measured using the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) developed by Spanier (1976). This 32-item instrument assesses the quality of marital and similar dyadic relationships across four subscales: Dyadic Consensus, Dyadic Satisfaction, Dyadic Cohesion, and Affectional Expression. Items are scored using varying Likert-type scales, depending on the subscale (e.g., 0–5 or 0–6), with higher scores indicating better marital adjustment and relationship quality. The total score ranges from 0 to 151. The DAS has demonstrated high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients typically above 0.90, and it has been widely validated across diverse populations, confirming its reliability and construct validity in measuring marital quality in both clinical and non-clinical settings.

2.2.2 Cultural Orientation

Cultural orientation was assessed using the Cultural Orientation Scale (COS) developed by Triandis and Gelfand (1998), which measures individualism and collectivism as dimensions of cultural values. The scale consists of 16 items

divided into four subscales: Horizontal Individualism, Vertical Individualism, Horizontal Collectivism, and Vertical Collectivism. Each item is rated on a 9-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree). Higher scores on each subscale indicate greater endorsement of the respective cultural orientation. The COS has shown good psychometric properties in various cultural contexts, with reported Cronbach's alpha values above 0.70 for all subscales. The scale has been validated in numerous cross-cultural studies, confirming its reliability in capturing cultural orientation at the individual level.

2.2.3 Gender Role Attitudes

Gender role attitudes were measured using the Gender Role Beliefs Scale (GRBS) developed by Kerr and Holden (1996). This 20-item scale evaluates individuals' traditional or egalitarian beliefs about gender roles in society. Respondents rate each item on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), with higher scores reflecting more traditional gender role attitudes. The GRBS includes items that address workplace roles, family responsibilities, and societal expectations based on gender. The scale has demonstrated strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients typically exceeding 0.80. Its construct validity and test-retest reliability have been confirmed in various samples, making it a widely accepted instrument in gender and cultural psychology research.

2.3 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Initially, descriptive statistics were

calculated to summarize demographic variables and the mean and standard deviation of the key study constructs. Pearson correlation coefficients were computed using SPSS version 27 to explore the bivariate relationships between marital quality, cultural orientation, and gender role attitudes. To test the hypothesized mediational model, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was conducted using AMOS version 21. Model fit was evaluated using multiple indices including the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio (χ^2/df). Prior to analysis, assumptions for multivariate analysis were tested and confirmed.

3 Findings and Results

Of the 385 participants, 198 (51.43%) identified as female and 187 (48.57%) as male. The age range of participants was between 22 and 64 years, with the majority falling within the 31–40 age bracket ($n = 143$, 37.14%). Regarding educational attainment, 112 participants (29.09%) held a bachelor's degree, 98 (25.45%) had completed graduate-level education, 86 (22.34%) held a college diploma, and 89 (23.12%) had a high school diploma or equivalent. In terms of cultural background, 179 (46.49%) identified as European-Canadian, 94 (24.42%) as South Asian, 58 (15.06%) as East Asian, 31 (8.05%) as Middle Eastern, and 23 (5.97%) as other ethnic backgrounds. The average length of marriage among participants was 11.7 years ($SD = 5.83$).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Research Variables (N = 385)

Variable	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Marital Quality	106.78	14.63
Cultural Orientation	72.34	11.47
Gender Role Attitudes	83.56	10.25

The descriptive statistics revealed that the participants reported relatively high levels of marital quality ($M = 106.78$, $SD = 14.63$), moderate to high cultural orientation scores ($M = 72.34$, $SD = 11.47$), and moderately egalitarian gender role attitudes ($M = 83.56$, $SD = 10.25$). The dispersion levels across variables were appropriate, indicating sufficient variability for inferential analysis (Table 1).

Prior to conducting SEM, the data were examined for statistical assumptions. Multivariate normality was assessed through skewness and kurtosis values, all of which fell within acceptable ranges (absolute skewness < 2 , absolute kurtosis < 7). For instance, marital quality showed a skewness of -0.88 and kurtosis of 2.14 , indicating a near-normal distribution. Multicollinearity was ruled out as all variance inflation factor (VIF) values ranged between 1.04

and 1.26, well below the critical threshold of 5. Additionally, the Mahalanobis distance test revealed no significant multivariate outliers (maximum distance = 21.47, $p > .001$).

These results confirmed that the dataset met the key assumptions for Pearson correlation and SEM analysis.

Table 2

Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between Variables

Variable	1	2	3
1. Marital Quality	–		
2. Cultural Orientation	.42** ($p < .001$)	–	
3. Gender Role Attitudes	.48** ($p < .001$)	.45** ($p < .001$)	–

Pearson correlation results indicate significant positive relationships among all variables. Marital quality was significantly correlated with cultural orientation ($r = .42$, $p < .001$) and gender role attitudes ($r = .48$, $p < .001$). A

moderate and significant correlation was also observed between cultural orientation and gender role attitudes ($r = .45$, $p < .001$), supporting the assumptions required for mediation analysis via SEM (Table 2).

Table 3

Goodness-of-Fit Indices for the Structural Equation Model

Fit Index	Value	Threshold (Acceptable Fit)
Chi-Square (χ^2)	128.63	–
Degrees of Freedom (df)	61	–
χ^2/df	2.11	< 3.00
GFI	0.94	≥ 0.90
AGFI	0.91	≥ 0.90
CFI	0.96	≥ 0.95
RMSEA	0.053	≤ 0.08
TLI	0.95	≥ 0.95

The structural model demonstrated good fit to the data, as evidenced by the χ^2/df ratio of 2.11, which is within acceptable limits. Indices such as GFI = 0.94, AGFI = 0.91, CFI = 0.96, and TLI = 0.95 further confirmed excellent

model fit. The RMSEA value of 0.053 indicated a close approximation in the population, suggesting minimal error of estimation (Table 3).

Table 4

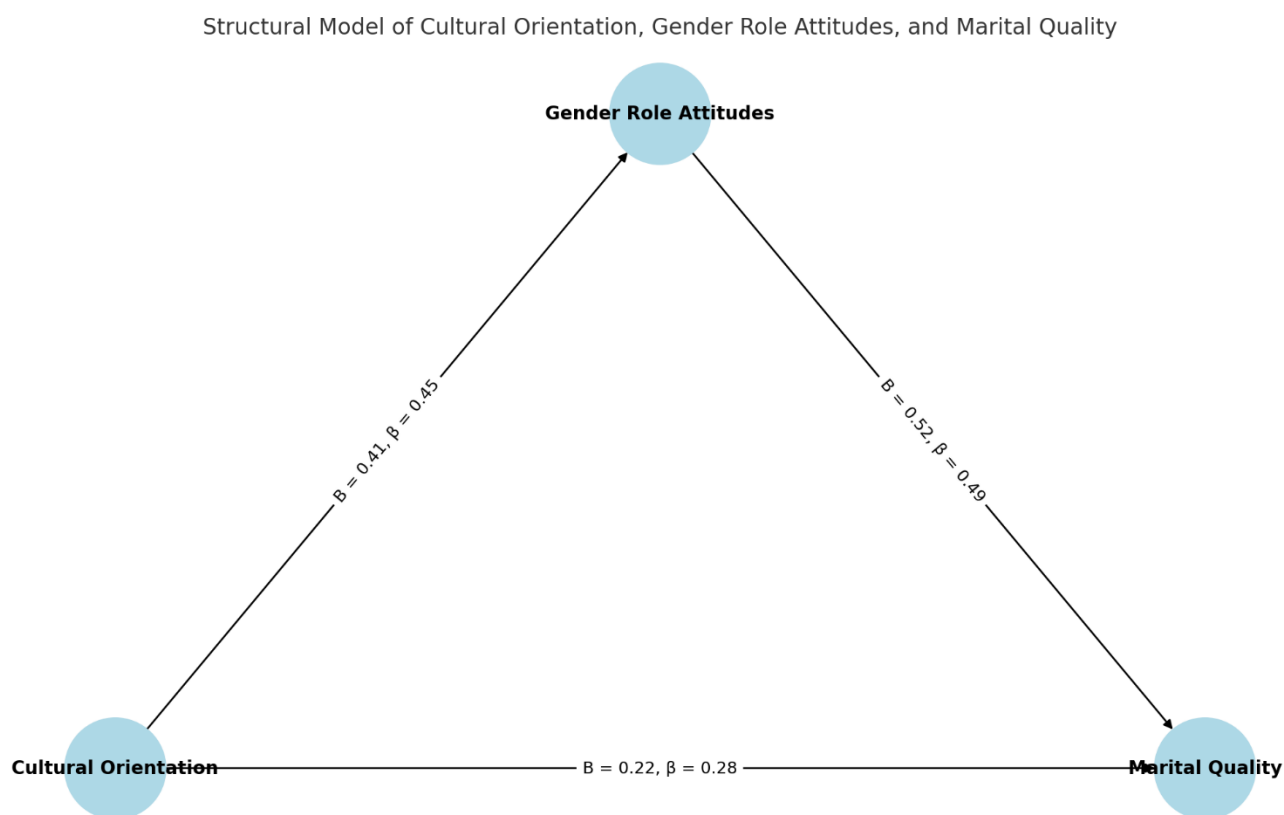
Total, Direct, and Indirect Path Coefficients Between Research Variables

Path	b	S.E.	β	p
Cultural Orientation → Gender Role Attitudes	0.41	0.06	0.45	$< .001$
Gender Role Attitudes → Marital Quality	0.52	0.07	0.49	$< .001$
Cultural Orientation → Marital Quality	0.22	0.05	0.28	$< .001$
Indirect: CO → GRA → MQ	0.21	0.04	0.22	$< .001$
Total: CO → MQ (Direct + Indirect)	0.43	0.06	0.50	$< .001$

The SEM path analysis showed that cultural orientation significantly predicted gender role attitudes ($\beta = 0.45$, $p < .001$), and gender role attitudes significantly predicted marital quality ($\beta = 0.49$, $p < .001$). The direct effect of cultural orientation on marital quality remained significant ($\beta = 0.28$, $p < .001$), but the indirect effect via gender role

attitudes ($\beta = 0.22$, $p < .001$) also contributed substantially. The total effect of cultural orientation on marital quality ($\beta = 0.50$, $p < .001$) confirms partial mediation and highlights the importance of internalized gender beliefs in marital outcomes (Table 4).

Figure 1

Model with Beta Coefficients

4 Discussion and Conclusion

The present study investigated the relationship between cultural orientation and marital quality among Canadian married individuals, with gender role attitudes as a mediating variable. The results demonstrated that cultural orientation significantly predicted marital quality and that this relationship was partially mediated by gender role attitudes. Specifically, participants with more individualistic cultural orientations reported higher marital quality when they also endorsed more egalitarian gender role attitudes. Conversely, collectivist orientations were associated with higher marital quality primarily when traditional gender roles were congruent with shared marital expectations.

These findings align with previous studies suggesting that cultural frameworks significantly shape how marital satisfaction is defined and achieved. For example, Sim et al. (2021) found that cultural adaptation congruence among immigrant couples strongly predicted marital quality, highlighting the central role of cultural alignment in relational satisfaction (Sim et al., 2021). Similarly, Lee

(2020) emphasized the need for culturally sensitive instruments in assessing marital dynamics, as cultural values such as independence versus interdependence inform the meaning and markers of marital well-being (Lee, 2020). The current results confirm that cultural orientation does not operate in isolation but interacts with internalized belief systems—particularly gender role attitudes—to determine marital outcomes.

The mediating role of gender role attitudes in this study supports a growing body of research that emphasizes the psychosocial mechanisms through which cultural values translate into marital behavior. Shahi et al. (2023) reported that attachment and personality factors predicted marital beliefs among Iranian young adults, with gender roles serving as a significant component of those beliefs (Shahi et al., 2023). Our findings also resonate with those of Nurhayati et al. (2023), who presented a typology of marital quality among Javanese couples rooted in culturally defined gender expectations (Nurhayati et al., 2023). In both cases, congruence in gender role beliefs enhanced marital adjustment. Similarly, Ymamgulyyeva et al. (2023)

confirmed that gendered power dynamics and social dominance orientations significantly shaped perceived marital quality through relationship power and sexism in dyadic interactions (Ymamgulyyeva et al., 2023).

The positive association found between egalitarian gender role attitudes and marital quality in this sample reflects trends in Western and multicultural societies where gender equality and mutual respect are increasingly valued. This is consistent with findings from McDonald et al. (2020), who reported that couples valuing compassion and egalitarianism experienced higher levels of marital satisfaction across three U.S. states (McDonald et al., 2020). In a Canadian context, Mitchell and Dhillon (2023) also observed that culturally diverse older parents maintained higher marital quality when egalitarian norms were upheld, regardless of ethnic background (Mitchell & Dhillon, 2023). This suggests a convergence toward egalitarian expectations as predictors of marital harmony in multicultural societies.

Interestingly, the study also revealed that in collectivist-oriented individuals, traditional gender role attitudes did not necessarily diminish marital quality. In some cases, they served as reinforcing mechanisms for relational stability, particularly when roles were clearly defined and mutually accepted. This finding is supported by Anwanane and Udoh (2023), who documented how adherence to culturally prescribed gender norms among Seventh-Day Adventists in Nigeria contributed to perceived marital harmony (Anwanane & Udoh, 2023). Likewise, Anana (2023) highlighted how traditional proverbs in Nigerian marital philosophy encapsulate deeply held gender expectations that support marital cohesion (Anana, 2023).

The interaction between cultural and gendered expectations may also account for the mixed effects of traditional gender roles on marital satisfaction. In patriarchal or religiously conservative societies, these roles may contribute to stability and clarity in relational duties. For instance, Hassan-Abbas and Ronen (2022) found that among Arab couples in Israel, commitment and pro-relationship behaviors were positively linked to marital quality, even when traditional gender divisions were maintained (Hassan-Abbas & Ronen, 2022). Similarly, Afzood et al. (2024) demonstrated that spiritual experiences and mindfulness significantly predicted marital satisfaction in Iranian couples, likely because such traits reinforce traditional gender roles that prioritize emotional regulation and role duty (Afzood et al., 2024).

Another critical implication of this study lies in its relevance for aging populations. Among older couples,

cultural and gender values tend to solidify over time, making role congruence even more significant. Nazario-Acevedo et al. (2025) found that both positive and negative marital quality among older Hispanic adults in the U.S. were strongly correlated with cultural attitudes and belief systems (Nazario-Acevedo et al., 2025). This supports our finding that internalized cultural orientation continues to shape marital quality well into later life. Similarly, the earlier study by Nazario-Acevedo et al. (2024) confirmed that cultural coherence and mutual respect played essential roles in preventing depressive symptoms among aging Hispanic spouses (Nazario-Acevedo et al., 2024).

Moreover, the present findings shed light on how social changes impact the institution of marriage. As Rudenko et al. (2020) illustrated, the influence of globalized media has transformed traditional family structures and created generational gaps in gender expectations (Rudenko et al., 2020). These transformations demand a flexible conceptualization of marriage that acknowledges diversity in cultural values and their psychological implications. In this study, participants who adopted culturally pluralistic views while maintaining moderate traditional values showed relatively high marital satisfaction, reflecting adaptive negotiation between legacy and modernity.

The present study also complements earlier works addressing marital quality across diverse health and life stages. Yadollahi et al. (2024) linked premenopausal women's sleep quality to their marital satisfaction, emphasizing how gendered labor and emotional expectations can affect relational dynamics (Yadollahi et al., 2024). In a related vein, Alraddadi (2021) drew attention to the neglect of elderly populations in shelters, arguing that psychological abuse and loss of marital identity stem from cultural undervaluation of aging spouses (Alraddadi, 2021). These studies underscore the idea that cultural and gendered scripts persist through different life phases, continuously affecting marital quality.

Furthermore, the mediating role of gender role attitudes in this study echoes prior research that considers emotional, sexual, and psychological domains of marriage. Manjula et al. (2021) reported that sexual dissatisfaction in Indian couples was often mediated by rigid gender expectations and poor communication, reinforcing the argument that flexible gender roles enhance relational intimacy (Manjula et al., 2021). Similarly, Jeon (2020) found that parent-in-law subsystems significantly influenced marital adjustment, especially when gender roles dictated excessive external involvement in the couple's autonomy (Jeon, 2020). This

affirms the necessity of culturally grounded interventions that also address gender dynamics.

Finally, the current results are consistent with Fahd and Hanif's (2019) identification of marital flourishing determinants in Asia, where cultural belonging and shared values acted as protectors against relational distress (Fahd & Hanif, 2019). The present study reinforces the conclusion that marital quality is best understood not in isolation, but in the context of interlocking cultural and psychosocial influences.

While the study offers meaningful insights, it is not without limitations. First, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to infer causality among variables. Longitudinal data would provide a clearer understanding of how cultural orientation and gender role attitudes evolve and impact marital quality over time. Second, the reliance on self-report measures may introduce social desirability bias, particularly regarding sensitive topics such as gender beliefs and marital satisfaction. Although anonymity was ensured, participants may still have provided culturally acceptable responses rather than candid ones. Third, the sample, though diverse in ethnic representation, consisted entirely of Canadian residents, limiting generalizability to other cultural contexts or more conservative societies. Finally, while structural equation modeling allowed for testing of mediation effects, other influential variables such as religiosity, sexual satisfaction, or economic factors were not included in the model.

Future research should employ longitudinal designs to better understand the temporal relationships among cultural orientation, gender role attitudes, and marital quality. Including dyadic data from both spouses would enhance the ecological validity of findings by capturing mutual perceptions and role negotiations. Additionally, studies could expand the model by incorporating variables such as religiosity, communication styles, or conflict resolution strategies to gain a fuller understanding of marital dynamics. Exploring how second-generation immigrants balance parental cultural values with host society norms would also be valuable, particularly in multicultural settings. Finally, qualitative or mixed-methods approaches could provide deeper insight into the personal narratives and cultural scripts that shape gender and marital expectations across contexts.

Practitioners working with couples should consider cultural orientation and gender role beliefs as integral components of marital counseling and psychoeducation. Encouraging dialogue about role expectations and values

early in relationships may prevent future misunderstandings and dissatisfaction. In multicultural societies, counselors must remain culturally sensitive while promoting flexible gender roles that align with mutual respect and equality. Marital enrichment programs should also integrate modules that help couples reflect on inherited cultural narratives and develop adaptive strategies for negotiating their roles. Educational systems and media platforms can further support marital well-being by promoting inclusive and egalitarian gender norms that honor cultural diversity without reinforcing harmful stereotypes.

Authors' Contributions

Authors contributed equally to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethics Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants.

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