

EFFECT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS ON MARITAL ADJUSTMENT AMONG WORKING & NON-WORKING HOUSEWIVES

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Abstract

This paper examines the effect of Socio-economic Status on Marital Adjustment among working class and non-working class women in Lucknow city in India. The survey research design was used for the study. The sample consisted of 30 subjects selected through random sampling procedure. Data was collected using the Marital Adjustment Questionnaire & SES scale that was constructed by the researchers. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. For the study it was hypothesized that there will be a significant difference in the marital adjustment among employed and non-employed women. The existing level of each dimension of marital adjustment among employed and non-employed women is presented in terms of level of significance difference and these parameters are tested for their difference across groups of women by applying ANOVA. Our results show that there is no significance difference among employed and non-employed women. Counselors can use this information to assist couples with marital difficulties. The implications of the findings are discussed.

Keywords: Socio-economic status, Marital Adjustment, Women, India

Introduction

Adjustment disorders are very common among people. 'Marriage' is an important social institution. Marital adjustment is the state in which there is an overall feeling in husband & wife of happiness and satisfaction with their marriage or with each other. Despite of thousands of couples with problems, where the causes and resolutions are clear, the adjustment disorders among couples are still continuing.

Marital problems are common among couples and there is no matter whether they are Working or non-working. Today women have multiple opportunities and choices. Yet many

women feel overworked at overwrought. Many women feel confused converting what direction their lives should take at what their priorities should be. Many women feel pressured by outside sources vying for their attention. A woman is too important to her husband and her role is too vital in the home. There are many lessons for thinking that the regret of working wife families is unwarranted. In the first place time constraints on the performance of household duties such as shopping, cooking, cleaning and in a particular on the time at which these tasks are performed in working wife families, suggest that different strategies are likely to be developed to cope with their problems.

There is a list of six areas of marital adjustment, which is defined by the psychologist, such as, religion, social life, mutual friends, in laws, money and sex. Another psychologist defines ten areas of marital adjustment, i.e. values, couple growth, communication, conflict resolution, affection, roles, cooperation, sex, money and parenthood. A study on marriage and marital adjustment in USA presents social activities and recreation, training and disciplining of children, religion, in law relationship, financial matters, sexual relationship, communication, mutual trust and companionship as the areas of marital adjustment.

Many researchers have conducted the negative effects of economic hardship on marital quality and stability. Economic strain is directly linked to couple's happiness, significantly contributed to lower reported marital satisfaction among married couples. The financial issues are a frequent trigger point for conflict among the couples led to more frequent fights and decrease marital harmony. (Gudmunson, et al 2007). In a recent Mori survey, 35 percent of women and 26 percent of men agreed that the economic downturn had reduced the quality of their marriage. Another study supported the relationship between finances and marital satisfaction by identifying that 15 percent of marital satisfaction was predicted by financial factors.

The destructive effect of alcoholism is also an important factor which need great adjustment. For example, Chilcoat and Breslau (1906) found that presence of an alcohol use disorder predicted subsequent divorce in a sample of young adult. The marital interactions of alcoholic couples are as negative as interactions in distressed married couple, which differ from the interaction of happy, non-distressed married couples.

Studies show that physical disabilities and chronic diseases can impact one's sexual functioning in different aspects. They can also affect marital relationship and satisfaction from

a sexual partner. Erectile dysfunction is common among men with respiratory dysfunction and hypoxia. The wives were significantly less satisfied with the relationship than the patients, which were related to communication problem. A factor which influences the perception of such problems in a very important way is the degree of affection in the relationship between the couples. The study's show that marital adjustment is associated with both psychological well being and physical functioning.

Infertility is known to cause an impact of the mental health of the infertile couple, causing anxiety, depression, social isolation and sexual dysfunction. The triad of the condition, its investigation & treatment ,the stigma associated with male and female infertility in traditional societal interaction cause a high level of psychological distress with a direct impact on the couples marital and sexual relations. Women in infertile couples reported poor marital adjustment and quality of life compared with controls. Men may experience less intercourse satisfaction, perhaps because of the psychological pressure try to conceive or because of the forced timing of intercourse around the women's ovulatory cycle.

Statistically married women have elevated rates of depression as opposed to unmarried ones, and this is an issue that most marriages will be faced during their life together. This is caused by marital stress and conflicts in relationship and roles. Symptoms of depression are insomnia, hypertension, feeling of sadness, anxiety, irritability, fatigue, energy loss and withdrawal from activation in commons and loss of interest in oneself and other as well as in sex. Working women with families are prone to depressing for they bear the weight of household work at their jobs together, working in two different environment, which are completely different to one another. This is why married women suffer more than mere from symptoms of depression, the double role they play are simply too much for most women to endure. The problem of marital life are increasingly common among couples. It is an open truth that working women have to face problems just by virtue of their being women. Social attitude to the role of women lags much behind the law. Certain working conditions itself put strain on women that what men experience. She has to almost always shoulder the burden of household chores as well. But in most families even now her salary is handed over to the husband. Most of the problems beset working women are in realty rooted in the social perspective of the position of women.

For the purpose of this work, working class women refer to women who have paid employment outside the home while non-working class women refer to women who are full time housewives.

The purpose of this study is the phenomenon of SES and its related variable i.e. marital adjustment which needs a great deal of research. The present study is an attempt to investigate marital adjustment among employed and non-employed married women. This research would be so helpful in knowing the difficulties faced by working and non-working women just to spend a simple married life. Because our society is man-oriented society, women have to face all problems. If they are working they are supposed to perform all duties at office as well as at home. This study will give valuable information that how SES effect marital adjustment.

Objectives

- To study the relationship of marital adjustment among working class and non-working women.
- To study the relationship of marital adjustment of working women with low & high SES.
- To study the relationship of marital adjustment of non-working women with low & high SES.

Hypothesis

- There is significant difference in the marital adjustment among working class and non-working women.
- There is significant difference in the marital adjustment of working women with low & high SES.
- There is significant difference in the marital adjustment of non-working women with low & high SES.
- There is significant difference in the marital adjustment among working class and non-working women at different SES levels.

Sample

The sample of 30 married women (15 working and 15 non-working) was taken for this research. Working women were lectures, maid and teachers. Convenient random sampling was used for this study.

Tools

MARITAL ADJUSTMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (constructed & standardized by Pramod Kumar & Km. Kanchana Rohatgi) :: scale contains 25 statements related to marital life. Against each statement, there were two alternatives “yes” or “no”. Respondent had to tick one alternative which best suited with their marital life.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS (SES) SCALE (hindi version by Ashok Kalia & Sudhir Sahu) :: designed to measure social position of a person in Urban& Rural areas according to the lifestyle prevailing in both the regions. Socio-Economic Status of a person in this scale is refer to as “the status of his/her family in relation to their level of socio-cultural participation, ability to influence mass, level of education, kind of occupation, financial position, health well-being, lifestyle, level of aspiration, kinds of gadgets, services & leisure facilities that the family enjoys”. This scale contains total 40 statements in all based on five different dimensions of socio-economic parameters.

Results

Table I :- t-test analysis of difference in marital adjustment between working class and non-working class housewives

<u>GROUP OF HOUSEWIVES</u>	<u>MEAN</u>	<u>t-VALUE</u>	<u>Df</u>	<u>TABLE VALUE</u>
Working	18.2	1.975	28	2.05
Non-Working	20.1			

N1=15,

N2=15

INFERENCE : There is no significant difference between working & non-working housewives.

Table II :- t-test analysis of difference in marital adjustment of working housewives with low SES & high SES.

<u>SES STATUS</u>	<u>MEAN</u>	<u>t-VALUE</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>TABLE VALUE</u>
High	86.6	10.21	8	2.31
Low	34.6			

N1=5,

N2=5

INFERENCE : There is a significant difference between high & low SES working housewives.

Table III :- t-test analysis of difference in marital adjustment of non-working housewives with low SES & high SES.

<u>SES STATUS</u>	<u>MEAN</u>	<u>t-VALUE</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>TABLE VALUE</u>
High	77.2	10.55	8	2.31
Low	33			

N1=5,

N2=5

INFERENCE : There is a significant difference between high & low SES non-working housewives.

Table IV :- One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) in marital adjustment of working & non-working housewives on different SES status.

<u>SOURCE OF VARIANCE</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>MSS</u>	<u>F-ratio</u>	<u>TABLE VALUE</u>
Among the group	5	11845.37	2369.07	60.43	2.60
Within the group	25	980	39.2		
TOTAL	30	12825.37			

N1=15,

N2=15

INFERENCE : There is a significant difference on different SES levels between working & non-working housewives

Discussion

Adjustment disorders are very common among people. 'Marriage' is an important social institution. Marital adjustment is the state in which there is an overall feeling in husband & wife of happiness and satisfaction with their marriage or with each other. Despite of thousands of couples with problems, where the causes and resolutions are clear, the adjustment disorders among couples are still continuing.

Marital problems are common among couples and there is no matter whether they are working and non working. Today women have a multiple of opportunities and choices. Yet many women feel overworked and overwrought. Many women feel confused concerning what direction their lives should take and what their priorities should be. Many women feel pressured by outside sources vying for their attention. A woman is too important to her husband and her role is too vital in the home. There are many lessons for thinking that the regret of working wife families is unwarranted. In the first place time constraints on the performance of household duties such as shopping, cooking, cleaning and in particular on the time at which these tasks are performed in working wife families, suggest that different strategies are likely to be developed to cope with their problems.

Many researchers have conducted the negative effects of economic hardship on marital quality and stability. Economic strain is directly linked to couple's happiness, significantly contributed to lower reported marital satisfaction among married couples. The financial issues are a frequent trigger point for conflict among the couples led to more frequent fights and decrease marital harmony.

The calculated t-value is (1.975) is less than the table value (2.05) at 0.05 level of significance, $df = 28$. The hypothesis is thus rejected. The implication is that there is no significant difference in the marital adjustment of working and non-working housewives. The calculated t-value is (10.21) is more than the table value (2.31) at 0.05 level of significance, $df = 8$. The hypothesis is thus accepted. There is therefore a significant difference in the marital adjustment of working housewives with low and high income status. Both groups show a high degree of marital adjustment. The calculated t-value is (10.55) is more than the table value (2.31) at 0.05 level of significance, $df = 8$. The hypothesis is thus accepted. There is therefore a significant difference in the marital adjustment of non-working housewives with low and high income status. Both groups show a high degree of marital adjustment. The calculated f value is

(60.43) is less than the table value. The result shows that there is no significant difference in the marital adjustment of working & non-working housewives with different SES levels. Thus the hypothesis is rejected.

The result of the first research hypothesis (Table 1) showed that there is no difference in the marital adjustment of working class and non-working housewives as measured by the Marital Adjustment Questionnaire. Wright (1978) in his research supports this finding; he concluded that both women who work outside in the home and full time housewives have benefits and costs attached to them. However, Adegoke (1987), Nathawat and Mathur (1993) and Rogers and May (2003) are of the view that working class women are generally more satisfied with their lives and marriage than non-working women. The difference between these findings could be attributed to cultural differences. The second hypothesis sought to find out if there was any difference in marital adjustment of working housewives with low and high income status. The results (Table 2) revealed that there was a significant difference in the marital adjustment of both high & low SES working housewives. The work of Kausar (2003) found that within the working class women, the socioeconomic background was not a statistically significant factor in their marital adjustment; it is deduced from this study that their personality traits played a greater role in their marital adjustment than their socioeconomic background. This finding does not agree with the studies of Iloyd (1980) that found that socioeconomic status is a contributing factor to marital adjustment. They believed that the higher the income, the lower the chance of a divorce. A woman who shares the responsibilities of the home with her husband is more likely to develop a philosophy of life that favours higher degrees of personal freedom of thought, expression, action and social relationships. The third hypothesis sought to find out if there was any difference in marital adjustment of non-working housewives with low and high income status. The results (Table 3) revealed that there was a significant difference in the marital adjustment with low & high SES of non-working housewives. The results showed that women respective with different SES levels doesn't enjoy equal marital adjustment. The fourth hypothesis examined if there is a significant difference in the marital adjustment among working & non-working housewives at different SES levels. This implies that SES enhances marital adjustment of both the housewives. It enhances their communication skills enabling them talk over their problems/sources of conflict, enhance their reasoning ability and ability to logically arrive at solutions to conflicts. Counsellors can use this information to assist couples with marital difficulties.

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