

Emotional Abuse and Psychological Well-Being among Arranged Marriage Keralites

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ABSTRACT

Quality of relationship plays a significant role in the lives of individuals with a great influence in their mental well-being, social behavior and productivity. Emotional abuse can be felt as destructive and damaging as physical abuse, and can severely impact mental health. It is often used as a way to maintain power and control over someone. The study intends to identify the relationship between Emotional Abuse and Psychological well-being among arranged marriage keralites. Two questionnaires were distributed to a group of married people (N=36 Males and N= 37 Females). A total of 73 people were selected from different states of Kerala. Quantitative approach was used along with descriptive research design and the sampling technique was convenient sampling. Emotional Abuse questionnaire (Jacobson et al.1994) was used to measure Emotional Abuse and PGI General Well-being measure (Verma et al.1989) was used to check psychological well-being. Pearson moment correlation and independent sample t test was incorporated to reach the findings. According to Pearson Correlation, there was a negative correlation between emotional abuse and psychological well-being among arranged marriage Keralites. Independent sample t test was computed on gender and results were found to be accepting the null hypothesis, there is no significant difference in emotional abuse and psychological well-being between males and females.

Keywords: Emotional abuse, Psychological well-being, Keralites

Emotional abuse is any abusive behavior that is not physical, which can embody verbal aggression, intimidation, manipulation, and humiliation that most frequently unfolds as a pattern of behavior over time that aims to diminish another person's sense of identity and dignity (DeSanctis). It happens over time as a pattern of behavior that is "sustained" and "repetitive". Emotional abuse is actually invisible, and it is another sort of challenge and frustration to visualize the abuse because of its damaging effects. Emotional abuse, like several alternative forms of cruelty, thrives within the dark once nobody understands, discusses, or acknowledges it. At the foremost level, psychological well-being (PWB) is kind of the same as its alternative terms that see positive mental states, like happiness or satisfaction, and in some ways, it is not necessary or useful to find distinctions between such terms. The psychological feature half is mostly appraisal of one's life. The

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emotive half may be a hedonistic analysis guided by emotions and feelings like frequency with which individuals experience pleasant or unpleasant moods in reaction to their lives. The belief behind this is often that almost all people assess their life as either smart or dangerous, so that they are able to provide judgments. Furthermore, individuals invariably expertise moods and emotions, that have a positive or a negative impact.

A total of 243 women were interviewed so as to find out the link between psychological violence and physical abuse. Analyses were conducted to work out whether or not the kinds of emotional abuse were associated with the frequency and severity of physical abuse. Women in long abusive relationships were compared to women who experienced short term violence. The extent to which women believed the threats and harassments as justified was used to assess the impact of emotional violence (Diane R. Follingstad, 1990). Loring and Marty Tamm (1994) used their own research and clinical expertise to understand the elements of public and hidden abuse and also tried to produce a brand-new paradigm for treating emotional abuse (Loring, 1994). Loring introduced artistic intervention techniques that alter therapists to observe and manage emotional violence on their own or within the presence of physical damage. It additionally addresses the pain of emotional violence, the isolation and depression it causes, and the way in which it destruct victims' lives (Loring (1994). A Study on awareness for emotional abuse done by E Goldsmith and Jennifer J Freyd (2003) investigated links between emotional violence and emotional awareness. The predictions enclosed a powerful link between emotional abuse and alexithymia. Eighty people participated in anonymous self-reported surveys and trauma inventories. Following symptomatic and unpleasant steps, participants were asked if they'd been mentally, sexually, or emotionally exploited. Emotional abuse and neglect were completely related with a difficulty in recognizing emotions. A study was done by Celia Doyle (1998) with a goal to do intervention in cases of psychological violence. In order to do so, each quantitative and qualitative information needed to resolve the varied aspects of the problems were explored. The findings enclosed a new operational description and a sign of prevalence. Emotional abuse is likely to be present in many families along with multiple stressors. Multi-factorial approach in assessing emotional violence in dating relationships was studied. A group of fifty-four items were developed to check four rationally derived subscales to measure Restrictive Engulfment, Hostile Withdrawal, Denigration and Dominance/Intimidation. An explorative study of partner activity reports by 157 female undergraduate students in dating relationships offered support for the hypothesized subscales. Denigration and Dominance/Intimidation had higher associations with physical violence than the other two types of emotional assault. The findings support the assessment of emotional violence in dating relationships as a multi-factorial construct (Murphy & Hoover, 1999).

A theoretical model of psychological well-being that included six distinct dimensions of well-being (Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Development, Positive Connections with Others, Purpose in Life, Self-Acceptance) was evaluated across a sample of 108 adults. This model offered support for a single second-order super factor. The model was superior in match over single-factor and alternative unit models. Comparisons with alternatively used metrics (positive and negative effects, life satisfaction) have shown that the latter neglects main aspects of positive functioning targeted in health and well-being theories (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Carol D Ryff (1989) pointed out that interventions for psychological well-being do not have any theoretical foundation, despite substantial analysis on the contours of positive functioning. Aspects of well-being resulting from self-acceptance, relationships with others, autonomy, environmental mastery and private development have been operationalised. Three hundred and twenty-one people from different age groups were scored

for these measures together with these six instruments. Results have shown that healthy relationships with others, autonomy, intention in life and private development have not been powerfully joined to previous appraisal indices, thereby supporting the argument that key dimensions of positive functioning haven not been mirrored within the empirical arena. (Ryff, 1989). Another study examined the relationship between marriage and psychological well-being using a sample of data from the National Survey of Families and Households panel. Eight totally different marital statuses were identified and used to test two competitive views on the link between marriage and individual psychological well-being. Findings confirmed the robust impact of marital status on psychological well-being and supported the protection perspective. The impact of married (cohabiting) quality on psychological well-being was significant. Findings conjointly indicated that the transition to habitation failed to have constant helpful effects as marriage on psychological well-being, suggesting that the protecting effects of marriage are bigger than those of cohabiting relationships (Hyoun K Kim, 2002). In the year of marriage, and immediately thereafter, the life satisfaction of those in first marriages, prior cohabiters and non-cohabiters combined increases to a value even higher than the baseline, significantly higher than that of pre-marital cohabiters. Subsequently, the life satisfaction of those in first marriages falls, but remains significantly above the baseline, at the same level as that of premarital cohabiters (Zimmermann & Easterlin, 2006).

The literature indicates that there are studies based on emotional abuse, psychological well-being and on married couples, but research linking all three factors simultaneously, allowing for the inference of relationships, is lacking. This research aims firstly to elucidate the direction and nature of the relationships between emotional abuse and psychological well-being, and secondly to understand whether there is any difference in these factors based on gender

Objectives

- To find out whether there is any significant relationship between emotional abuse and psychological well-being
- To find out whether there is any significant difference in emotional abuse between arranged marriage males and arranged marriage females.
- To find out whether there is any significant difference in psychological well-being between arranged marriage males and arranged marriage females.

Hypotheses

H_01 : There will be no significant relationship between emotional abuse and psychological well-being

H_02 : There will be no significant difference in emotional abuse between arranged marriage males and arranged marriage females

H_03 : There will be no significant difference in psychological well-being between arranged marriage males and arranged marriage females.

Participants

The population of the study is males and females who have done arranged marriage below 40 years of age. The present study comprises a conveniently selected sample of 73 people based on the pre-set inclusion criteria and exclusion criteria: 36 males and 37 females from different districts of Kerala. Convenience sampling was used for collecting the sample which is a type of non-probability sampling that involves the sample being drawn from that part of the population that is close to hand.

Tools used for the study

The following tools were used to measure emotional abuse and psychological well-being among arranged marriage Keralites.

Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (EAQ): The EAQ was developed by Jacobson and Gottman (1998). In their original study of battered married women, Jacobson and Gottman (1998) found severe emotional abuse was more likely to drive women out of a relationship than severe physical abuse. They identified four distinct categories of emotional abuse: destruction of pets and property, sexual coercion, isolation attempts, and degradation. Destruction of property was often used as an intimidation tactic, and sadistic behavior toward pets indicated a disregard toward the pain of living beings. Sexual coercion and marital rape can occur without physical force, and sexual coercion fell under the purview of emotional abuse when the victim was made to feel ashamed, guilty, or afraid to refuse her/his partner. Isolation attempts restricted a woman's freedom and often led to loneliness and feelings of claustrophobia. Degradation was the most common type of severe emotional abuse, including both public and private insults.

PGI General well-being Measure: The P.G.I. scale consists of 20 statements organized in four domains; physical (e.g., feeling bothered by illness or pain), mood (e.g., feeling cheerful most of the time), anxiety (e.g., feeling bothered by nervousness), self/others (e.g., feeling useful/wanted) of five items each. Higher total and domain-specific scores indicate higher levels of well-being. The questionnaire was developed by Verma and Verma (1989). The test-retest reliability was measured by Kuder Richardson correlation – 20 formula and was found to be .98, to have satisfactory validity and highly significant reliability. Gutman's split half reliability coefficient on the total was 0.86 (ten items in part one =.76 and ten items in part two = .78). The scale was correlated significantly with Bradbuff scale and general satisfaction level rating.

Procedure

The participants in this study were selected based on the inclusion-exclusion criteria. Informed consent was obtained from all the respondents before collecting the data. Two questionnaires regarding the humor style and emotional intelligence were administered to them along with the socio-demographic data sheet. The scale was administered to the participants through Google Forms. The respondents were given assurance based on the ethical guidelines of this study as well.

RESULTS

- There is a negative correlation between Emotional Abuse and Psychological well-being among arranged marriage couples.
- There is no significant difference in Emotional abuse among arranged marriage males and females.
- There is no significant difference in Psychological well-being among males and females who have done arranged marriage

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Table 1: The mean and standard deviation of males and females who have done arranged marriage

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	SD
Emotional Abuse	Male	36	36.54	16.795
	Female	37	11.72	17.535
Psychological well-being	Male	36	11.72	6.227
	Female	37	11.05	6.741
Total for Emotional Abuse	Males and females	73	38.74	17.201
Total for psychological well-being	Males and females	73	11.38	6.456

Table 2: Correlation between Emotional Abuse and psychological well-being

N=70 M=36.F=37	Emotional Abuse	Psychological well-being
Emotional Abuse		-.234**

Note: * *. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 3: t- test for Emotional abuse and psychological well-being based on gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. deviation	T	Sig (2 tailed)
Emotional Abuse	Male	36	41.00	16.795	1.109	.271
	Female	37	36.54	17.535	1.110	.271
Psychological well-being	Male	36	11.72	6.227	.440	.662
	Female	37	11.05	6.741	.440	.661

DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics. Among 73 people, the total mean for Emotional Abuse was 38.74 with a standard deviation of 17.201. The total mean for Psychological well-being was 11.38 with a standard deviation of 6.456. Males experienced more Emotional Abuse compared to females (Males=41.00, Females=36.54). The findings of the study are supported by previous research, with males found to be high in Emotional Abuse than females (Karakurt et al., 2013). Table 2 shows the correlation between Emotional Abuse and Psychological well-being among males and females who have done arranged marriage. The significance 2 tailed value for emotional abuse and psychological well-being was found to be .0001 which is less than 0.01. This indicates that there exists a significant relationship between Emotional Abuse and Psychological well-being among the sample. Hence, the null hypothesis; there will be no significant relationship between Emotional Abuse and Psychological well-being was rejected. The correlation coefficient (r) was -.234 which indicates that a negative correlation is existing between Emotional Abuse and psychological well-being. This means that people with high levels of Emotional Abuse are likely to experience low levels of psychological well-being. It may be noted that, the magnitude of the relationship is low indicative of a low degree of relationship. Interventions can be done among Emotionally Abused people in order to rise up their level of psychological well-being so as to enable them to contribute productively for themselves as well as for the society. Also, efforts can be taken to reduce the prevalence of Emotional abuse among the people. Table 3 shows the results of independent sample t test for Emotional Abuse and psychological well-being among males and females who have done arranged marriage. The mean value of emotional abuse for males was 41.00 (SD=16.795)

and for females it was 36.54 (SD=17.535). It shows that the male people as whole had more score in Emotional abuse than female people in the present study as per Emotional abuse questionnaire. The mean value of psychological well-being for males was 11.72 (SD=6.227) and for females it was 11.05 (SD=6.741). It shows that the males as a whole had more score in psychological well-being than females in the present study as per PGI General well-being Measure. The obtained t value for Emotional Abuse ($t=1.109$; $p=.271>0.05$) is not significant at 0.05 level. It could be seen that, there is no significant difference in Emotional abuse between male and female at 0.05 level, hence the null hypothesis, “There will be no significant difference in Emotional abuse among arranged marriage males and females” is accepted. The mean value obtained from male and females those who have done arranged marriage indicate that, there is only little difference in Emotional Abuse. The obtained t value for psychological well-being ($t=0.440$; $p=0.440>0.05$) is not significant at 0.05 level. It could be seen that, there was no significant difference in psychological well-being between male and females who have done arranged marriage at 0.05 level, hence the null hypothesis; “There will be no significant difference in psychological well-being among males and females who have done arranged marriage” is accepted. The mean value obtained from male and females indicate that, there is only little difference in psychological well-being.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings of this study, the significance 2 tailed value for emotional abuse and psychological well-being indicated that there was no significant relationship between Emotional Abuse and Psychological well-being among the sample. The correlation coefficient (r) value shows that a negative correlation is existing between Emotional Abuse and psychological well-being. This means that people with high levels of Emotional Abuse are more tend to experience low levels of psychological well-being. Rachel E Goldsmith and Jennifer J Freyd (2003) investigated links between emotional violence and emotional awareness and predicted a strong link between emotional abuse and alexithymia which is a condition where individuals face problems with feeling emotions. Interventions can be done among people who are more vulnerable to emotional abuse or among people with low level of psychological well-being to improve their quality of life. When the data was tested based on gender, no significant relationship between emotional abuse and psychological-wellbeing was observed between males and females who have done arranged marriage. This may be because of the small sample size which may not be considered as sufficient to represent the whole population and hence could not give scope for wider generalization to the findings. Social desirability could play a major role in affecting the results as the study uses self-report questionnaires. The questionnaires were circulated online so this also could have affected the concentration of participant resulting in inaccurate responses. More studies with a larger sample size can be conducted on the same variables within the Indian setting so that the results can be generalized to a wider population.

Implications of the study

- As per the study it can be suggested that the techniques and psychological methods to check Emotional Abuse and psychological well-being can be applied to people for their better well-being.
- The knowledge of this study opens door to the implementation of a various techniques to manage emotional abuse to a certain extent.
- It is the researchers desire that continued awareness programs and research in the field of emotional abuse and psychological well-being will help contribute to a

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platform in society that is able to contribute to happier and adaptively functioning individuals who are able to control impulses.

- The findings of the study can be used as a source of information for counsellors, psychologists, social workers, teachers and every individual as an eye opener to reduce the prevalence of emotional abuse and to improve psychological well-being.

Limitations of the study

- The data was collected from people residing in Kerala. The small sample size may not be considered as sufficient to represent the whole population and hence could not give scope for wider generalization to the findings.
- Many questionnaires given were returned incomplete. The data collected for this study was based on self-reported scale completed by sample in the study. Therefore, there is some potential reporting bias which may have occurred.
- Some questions in the questionnaire were not applicable for newly married couples.

Suggestions for further research

- Sample size was only 73 and samples were drawn from various districts of Kerala, more sample can be drawn for further study so that a more generalization of the findings could be obtained. Future research could include demographic and cultural considerations.
- In this study the variables included was only emotional abuse and psychological well-being and the study was conducted only on people between 18 and 40 years. We recommend researchers adopt similar approaches to measure various aspects related to Emotional abuse and psychological well-being on various age groups.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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