

Research Paper

## Gender Differences in Marital Adjustment Among Single Earner Couples and Dual Earner Couples in Indian Society

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### ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to examine the gender differences in marital adjustment among single and dual earner couples between 25 to 45 years of age range (Single earner couples =200; Working males =100 and Non-working females=100 and Dual Earner Couples=200; Working males=100 and Working Female s=100). The total sample consisted of 400 couples. The Marital Adjustment Questionnaire (MAQ) developed by Kanchana Rohatgi and Pramod Kumar were used for collection of data. Exploratory analyses and t –test of variables across gender and marriage categories was carried out. Correlation analyses were carried out in order to have a better understanding about the relationship among variables. Results indicated that there is a significant gender difference among single earner couples and dual earner couples in marital adjustment ( $p<.05$ ). It reveals that dual earner couples have better marital adjustment than single earner couples. It also reveals that the demographic variable ethnicity did not have significant difference in marital adjustment ( $p>.05$ ).

**Keywords:** *Gender differences, Ethnicity, Marital Adjustment and Couples*

Marriage could be an advanced development in today's dynamic society. individuals marry for varied reasons. Besides sex and sexual attraction that area unit primary concerns, love, economic security, friendly relationship, protection, emotional security, break loose loneliness and sad home state of affairs, and kids area unit the few alternative reasons which will represent an individual's disposition for wedding (Bowman, 1974). Today, everywhere the globe there's a contemporary trend that considers wedding and family life as a nonessential part in fulfillment and maintenance of human life. Single parenting, tubing babies and alternative scientific inventions to the brim of biological research area unit a part of human life and evolution that moves the society towards new understanding of family ethics. Generally, in ancient definition of wedding, the foremost vital outcome of matrimonial sex has been facts of life and familial bonding between the husband and therefore the adult female. The fundamental factors for happiness in wedding. the subsequent area unit the most vital basic characteristics for the happy married life:

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- Trust
- Building and maintaining confidence of security of emotional, sentimental and religious desires with care and respect.
- Understanding
- Adjustment
- Sexual gratification
- Fulfilling one's specific accepted roles sincerely.
- Serving for self-worth and temperament development.
- Bringing-up the kids with ethical, health, instructional, intellectual and socio-cultural values.
- Commitment to: free communication, frank discussion, privacy, mutuality, sexual equality, compatibility, compromise, adjustability, empathy, satisfaction, happiness, joyful friendly relationship, respect, sharing, intimacy, co-ordination, compassion and fair-looking presentation of self.
- Making certain the subsequent to not poke their nose among wedding: self-centeredness, stinginess, self-esteem, rigidity, pain the sentiments, arguments, neglect, helplessness, humiliation, criticism, contradiction, odiousness, provocative accusations.

The term marital adjustment corresponds to a continuous process of adjustment of wife and husband in conjugal life. According to Burgess and Cottrell (1939), "a well - adjusted marriage may be a marriage during which the attitude and actions of every of the partners produce an environment which is highly favorable to proper functioning of the personality structures of each partner." Vincent (1981) feels that the goal of marital adjustment is self - fulfillment for both partners together without sacrificing the individual self - fulfillment of either.

Sinha & Mukerjee (1990) defines marital adjustment as "the state during which there's an overall feeling in husband and wife of happiness and satisfaction with their marriage and with one another." It therefore calls experiencing satisfactory relationship between 18 spouses characterized by mutual concern, care, understanding and acceptance." All the marriages are aimed toward happiness in one or another way. Most couples become married to fulfill their expectations. Some of the expectations may be realistic while the others unrealistic. This is thanks to the complex nature of marriage and every individual is as complex as a universe. Therefore, in marriage two universes come together. Happiness, satisfaction and fulfillment of expectations are possible only by mutual adjustments that lead to a woman's concept of marriage. Marital adjustment is a life-long process, although in the early days of marriage one has to give serious consideration, As Lasswell (1982) points out, "Understanding the individual trait of the spouse is an ongoing process in marriage, because albeit two people know one another before or at the time of marriage, there's an opportunity that people may change during the life cycle. Marital adjustment therefore, involves maturity that accepts and understands growth and development within the spouse. If this growth isn't experienced and realized fully, death in marriage is inevitable.

### METHODOLOGY

#### *Sample*

A total 400 couples (200= single earner couples and 200= dual earner couples) were included in the study within 25 to 45 years of age range.

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The purpose of this study is to examine the gender differences in marital adjustment among single earner couples and dual earner couples. The Null Hypothesis was formulated that 1. There will be no difference in the degree of marital adjustment among single and dual earner couples.

### Instruments

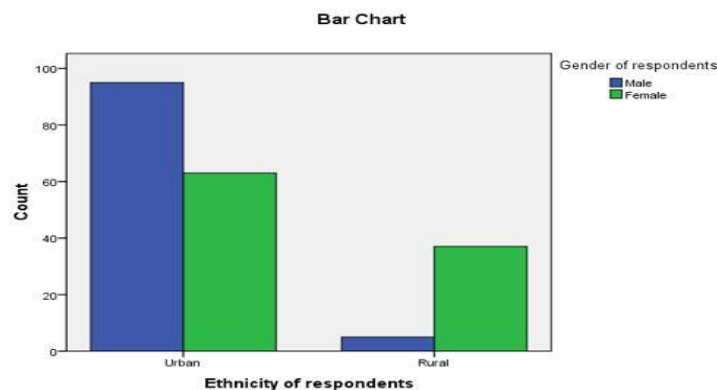
#### Marital Adjustment Questionnaire (MAQ)

Marital Adjustment Questionnaire by Pramod Kumar and Kanchana Rohatgi (1999) will be used. This scale is a simple measure of marital adjustment. The measure is often used as a quick screen to spot degree of marital adjustment. The scale involves 25 questions with dichotomous options (Yes / No). A 'yes' response is assigned a score 1 apart from items 4, 10 and 19 during which case reverse is applicable. This tool is meant for married couples with age running from 28-60 years.

### Procedure

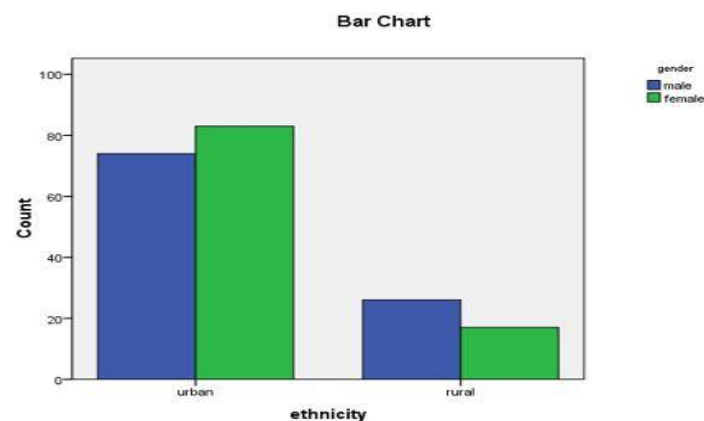
Data was collected from the sample by giving instructions and rapport establishment. After data collection, the data was analyzed through SPSS 16 version. The data was analyzed by using the statistics two-way ANOVA and one way ANOVA.

## RESULTS



*Fig. 1 Bar chart representing Ethnicity of dual earner males and female couples*

In the category of ethnicity, the above table 2 reveals that out of the total respondents, the majority of them (95%) males and (63%) females belonged to the urban areas, followed by (5%) males and (37%) females belonged to rural areas.



*Fig. 2 Bar chart representing Ethnicity of single earner males and female couples.*

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In the category of ethnicity, the above table 3 reveals that out of the total respondents, the majority of them (74%) males and (83%) females belonged to the urban areas, followed by (26%) males and (17%) females belonged to rural areas.

**Table 1 Showing Mean and S.D in Marital Adjustment for Ethnicity among Dual Earner Couples and Single Earner Couples (N=400)**

Marital Adjustment	Ethnicity	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Dual earner male couples	URBAN	95	17.64	2.52
	RURAL	5	17.80	1.78
Dual earner female couples	URBAN	63	17.82	3.55
	RURAL	37	17.67	3.972
Single earner male couples	URBAN	74	16.68	2.35
	RURAL	26	16.50	2.37
Single earner female couples	URBAN	73	16.47	2.87
	RURAL	27	16.37	2.64
Total N=400	URBAN	305	17.17	2.85
	RURAL	95	16.98	3.16

Table 1 showing mean and S.D of Marital Adjustment for Ethnicity among dual and single earner couples. It indicates that the mean score dual earner male couples are better in rural areas (17.80) than urban areas. The table also indicates that the mean score of dual earner female couples in marital adjustment is better in urban areas (17.82) than rural areas. It also indicates that the mean score of single earner male couples in marital adjustment is better in urban areas (16.68) than rural areas. The result also indicates that the mean score of single earner female couples in marital adjustment is better in urban areas (16.47) than rural areas. Overall, maximum participants in the sample belongs to urban area with highest mean score (17.17).

**Table 2 Showing the Summary of the Two-way ANOVA for Gender on Ethnicity in Marital Adjustment among Dual Earner Couples and Single Earner Couples (N=400)**

Source	Type III sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	100.93	3	33.64	4.01	.00*
Ethnicity	.236	1	.23	.02	.86
Gender*Ethnicity	.478	3	.15	.01	.99

Table 2 shows the summary of two-way ANOVA. The test was conducted to examine the significant effect of ethnicity and gender on marital adjustment. Result reveals that main effect of gender indicated a significant difference in marital adjustment,  $F(3)=4.01, p<.05$ . As for the main effect of ethnicity on marital adjustment, the result indicated insignificant difference of ethnicity on marital adjustment,  $F(1)=.02, p>.05$ . In the interaction effect between gender and ethnicity, it shows insignificant difference on marital adjustment,  $F(3)=.01, p>.05$ . The result shows that ethnicity doesn't have much of an impact on marital adjustment and also when interacting with gender.

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**Table 3 Showing Mean & S.D. of Dual and Single earner couples on total scores of Marital adjustments. (N=400)**

Scale	Group of Gender	Mean	SD
<b>Marital Adjustment</b>	DEMC	17.65	2.48
	DEFC	17.77	3.69
	SEMC	16.64	2.35
	SEFC	16.45	2.80
	N	400	

The Table 3 is showing Mean & S.D. value of Dual earner couples & Single earner couples on the total score of Marital adjustment. It indicates that the mean score of (17.77) dual earner female couple is comparatively larger than the mean score of (17.65) the dual earner male couple on the total score of Marital adjustment. It also indicates that the mean score of (16.64) the single earner male couple is comparatively larger than the mean score of (16.45) the single earner female couple on the total score of Marital adjustment. It also indicates that the mean score of dual earner female couple is comparatively larger than other three groups on the total score of marital adjustment.

**Table 4 Showing the Summary of the One-way ANOVA for Gender on Marital Adjustment. (N=400)**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	138.24	3	46.08	5.55	.00*
Within Groups	3288.25	396	8.30		

At \*.05 significance level

Table 4 depicts F value for Gender on Marital Adjustment. Significant ( $F= 5.55, (3,396) P< 0.05$ ) difference was found between male and female on marital adjustment. On this basis it can be observed that gender has an influencing factor to determine level of adjustment in marital life. Thus, it can be concluded that there is marginal difference between male and female couples in marital adjustment. Although the working female exhibit more adjustment in marital life than male counterparts. In case of single earner couples, adjustment is approximately equal for both male and female.

### DISCUSSION

The research was undertaken to investigate the gender differences in marital adjustment among single earner couples and dual earner couples. The null hypothesis was formulated that “There will be no difference in the degree of marital adjustment among single and dual earner couples” and findings reject the hypothesis. As the study reveals significant gender differences among single and dual earner couples in marital adjustment ( $p<.05$ ). The mean score of dual earner female couples (17.77) is higher than male couples (17.65). The mean score of single earner male couples (16.64) is higher than single earner female couples (16.45). It indicates that dual earner couples are better in marital adjustment than single earner couples. Overall, dual earner female couples are better than other three groups in marital adjustment. In the present time, both the working males and working female partners try to establish balance in both the household responsibilities and their professional duties too. Unlike the traditional Indian marriage system where husbands and wives expect each other to follow gender-based division of labor where the husband was responsible for

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financial support of the family and the wife was responsible for household works and child rearing.

The couples understand that in order to have a balanced married life they need to act as a unit where cooperation is essential and one must not feel burden to manage things alone. The male spouses in the present time are not as rigid as the earlier ones. One most important reason is those male spouses are not dominating because of several protective laws for women empowerment. On the other hand, female spouses have also gained self-confidence which was strongly missing in the past female partners. This is supported by Shikha Goel and Darshan Narang (2012). They reported that there is significant gender difference in marital adjustment of males and females. They have also stated that Demographic factors such as similarities of background between couples, duration of marriage, education etc. might contribute to marital adjustment. Also, because they are quite newly married so, things are new to them and not monotonous. This is because in the present scenario males are turning towards the realistic aspects of life where they are less demanding and more cooperative as compared to the earlier male attitude towards life.

Also, because they realize that it is worthy to live joyfully for both mental and physical health. Because prolong stress could lead to loss of one's well-being and also of people associated to them. As reported by Semegn Sendek and Daniel Sehay conducted a study on Marital adjustment among early age appropriate arranged and love matched marriage in Ethiopia in 2007. The study revealed that there is a significant difference between early age arrange and love matched marriage. The early married males have significantly higher marital adjustment than their counter females. Males were high in expression of affection than their counter females. In research conducted on Marital Adjustment, Mental Health and Frustration Reactions during Middle Age by Dr. Shikha Goel, Dr. Darshan Kaur Narang, and Dr. Kavita Koradia concluded that Couples are having better marital adjustment during early adulthood than in late adulthood. Even if, working females play dual roles and are overburdened but still they try to make adjustments in family and are satisfied and cool under all circumstances. They participate in family matters, cooperate more and make themselves available when ever required for family matters. They try to make recreation and satisfaction out of successful management.

Because marital adjustment involves maturity that accepts and understands growth and development within the spouse. To establish the balance and adjustment in marriage is a challenge and also could be an opportunity for the couples. While maintaining balance between one's own needs and considering their partners needs as well. It is important to understand that marital adjustment requires a lot of skills and deep understanding among couples and this itself helps them to find satisfaction with life because of the coping strategies they use in their relationship.

The study also reveals that there is no significant difference in ethnicity among single and dual earner couples in marital adjustment ( $p > .05$ ). The maximum percentages of couples belong to urban area. And couples belonging to urban area have higher mean scores than the couples who belong to rural area. It indicates that on basis of mean scores, the couples living in urban area have better marital adjustment than the couples living in rural areas. It may be due to the fact that there are several facilities available in the urban area which makes life more compatible for the couples. Where as in the rural areas there are limited facilities available which also effects life style and survival of the couples.

## **CONCLUSION**

Thus, it can be concluded from the above discussion that there is significant gender difference among single earner couples and dual earner couples in marital adjustment. And dual earner couples have better marital adjustment than single earner couples. It concludes both working male and female couples try to establish adjustment in their married life to have a smooth and balanced life. Income and financial support are an important factor which plays significant role in marital adjustment. For single earner couples, there is only male is the earning head of the family on who looks after the needs of the family. The single earner female couples manage the household responsibilities. In the present scenario, to manage and maintain the family needs mutual support as well as adequate money. For single earner male couples, it is really tough to maintain the family needs alone. Therefore, it effects their marital adjustment also.

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### ***Conflict of Interest***

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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