

Happiness And Marital Satisfaction Among Women: An Exploratory Study

Reeya Agarwal^{1*}

ABSTRACT

The current study is exploratory in nature intending to study the role of the age of getting married on women's happiness and marital satisfaction. Using the snowball sampling method, a sample of 176 women was selected. The participants were assessed on happiness and marital satisfaction measures using the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire and Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale. The findings revealed that there is no association between the age of getting married and a woman's happiness and marital satisfaction as women above 35 who got married before or after 25 years of age are equally happily and maritally satisfied. Happiness and satisfaction are positively correlated. The study also reveals that there is no significant difference between unmarried and married women in the age group of 18-25 on the scale of happiness.

Keywords: *Age of Getting Married; Married Women; Unmarried Women; Happiness; Marital Satisfaction*

The average age of Indian women getting married is 22 years (MoSPI, 2019). According to the researcher's observation, most Indian women get married as they feel they wouldn't find the "right person" to marry after the age of 25, and therefore, choose to get married before the age of 25 to increase their happiness and marital satisfaction in both short and long run. This belief is also a reason why a lot of Indian parents insist their daughters get married at an earlier age irrespective of their physical, emotional, and financial readiness. Sometimes, Indian women are forced to get married due to this belief, or they readily get married only because they believe in it too.

Amirnovin and Ghaffarian (2018) examined how marital satisfaction and happiness of men and women can be impacted by marrying at a late age or an early age. The age of 30 plus was considered late for both men and women to get married by the authors. Women marrying before 20 years of age was considered early and men marrying before 25 was considered early. It was found out that women who marry late are happier than women who marry early and men who marry early are happier than men who marry late. There were significant gender differences that impacted marital satisfaction and happiness, and the age of getting married also significantly impacted the marital satisfaction and happiness of an

¹Student; Loyola Academy Degree and PG College, Telangana, India

*Corresponding Author

Received: December 04, 2021; Revision Received: March 27, 2022; Accepted: March 31, 2022

Happiness And Marital Satisfaction Among Women: An Exploratory Study

individual. There has been no definite research done on the impact of the age of getting married on an Indian woman's happiness and marital satisfaction. Amirnovin and Ghaffarian (2018) have studied the impact of the age of getting married on happiness and marital satisfaction, but the study was only limited to men and women of Tabriz, Iran. Also, the authors considered the age of getting married early as 20 years or before.

Therefore, there is no evidence if getting married before or after 25 years of age is associated with the happiness or marital satisfaction of Indian women.

The current literature is ambiguous with regards to the association of the age of getting married with the happiness and marital satisfaction of Indian women. However, different people hold strong assumptions that getting married before the age of 25 affects their career and getting married after 25 years of age will be too late as they are no longer young when compared to women in their early 20s and they wouldn't be able to find their partners. Therefore, there is a need for extensive research in the area of the association of the age of getting married with a woman's happiness and her marital satisfaction. The current study attempts to provide information about the happiness and marital satisfaction of women belonging to different age groups and those who got married at different ages in their life.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Objectives

- To assess if there is any significant difference in happiness between unmarried and married women of the age group of 18-25 years.
- To assess if there is any significant difference in happiness between married women above the age of 35 who got married before 25 years of age and those who got married after 25 years of age.
- To assess if there is any significant difference in overall marital satisfaction between married women above the age of 35 who got married before 25 years of age and those who got married after 25 years of age
- To assess if there is any significant difference in happiness between married women in the age group of 18-25 years and married women above 35 years of age who got married before 25 years of age.
- To assess if there is any significant difference in overall marital satisfaction between married women in the age group of 18-25 years and married women above 35 years of age who got married before 25 years of age.
- To assess if there is any correlation between happiness and marital satisfaction in married women of all the group

Hypothesis

- There will be no significant difference in happiness between unmarried and married women of the age group of 18-25 years.
- There will be no significant difference in happiness between married women above the age of 35 who got married before 25 years of age and those who got married after 25 years of age
- There will be no significant difference in overall marital satisfaction between married women above the age of 35 who got married before 25 years of age and those who got married after 25 years of age

Happiness And Marital Satisfaction Among Women: An Exploratory Study

- There will be no significant difference in happiness between married women in the age group of 18-25 years and married women above 35 years of age who got married before 25 years of age.
- There will be no significant difference in overall marital satisfaction between married women in the age group of 18-25 years and married women above 35 years of age who got married before 25 years of age.
- Happiness and marital satisfaction will be positively correlated in married women of all the groups.

Design

The current research study employs an exploratory research design.

Sampling

The current research study employs the snowball sampling method. Any Indian woman in the age group of 18-25 or married Indian woman above the age of 35 was eligible to be a participant in the study. The sample size is 176. The sample size of the unmarried women in the age group of 18-25 is 44, married women in the age group of 18-25 is 44, married women above 35 years of age who got married before 25 years of age is 44 and married women above 35 years of age who got married after 25 years of age is 44.

Tools

1. Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Busby et al., 1995): This scale consists of 14 items. According to the study of Crane et al. (2000), the scale has a Cronbach's alpha of .90 implying high reliability. The correlation between this scale and Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test is .68 ($p < .01$). The correlation between the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale and the original Dyadic Adjustment Scale is .97 ($p < .01$). Both the correlational scores indicate that the scale has high validity. The scale successfully differentiates between 81% of distressed and non-distressed cases and therefore has discriminant validity as well. Scores for all individual items were summed up. Scores above 47 indicate non-distressed marriage and scores below 48 indicate marital distress.

2. Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (Argyle & Hills, 2002): The scale consists of 29 items. The scale has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.92 implying high reliability (Argyle & Hills, 2002). The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire's correlation with a measure of self-esteem, the life regard index, and the Depression-Happiness scale is 0.81, 0.77, and 0.90, respectively implying high validity (Bekhet & Nakhla, 2008). The scores for all 29 items were summed and divided by 29. Scores 1-2 indicated that the participant isn't happy, scores 2-3 indicated that the participant was somewhat unhappy, scores 3 -4 indicated that the participant is not particularly happy or unhappy, score 4 indicated that the participant is somewhat happy or moderately happy, scores 4 -5 indicated that participant is pretty happy, scores 5-6 indicated that participant is very happy, score 6 indicated that participant is too happy.

Procedure

A google form was generated which included the consent form, questions on demographic details, Oxford Happiness Questionnaire, and Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale. The participants were selected from the researcher's contacts. The participants were first asked to give their consent in the consent form in which details about the researcher and the study were mentioned clearly. They were then asked to fill their details in the demographic form that included name, age, gender, marital status, age of getting married, and e-mail id. After this, unmarried women responded to the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire and then they

Happiness And Marital Satisfaction Among Women: An Exploratory Study

were asked to submit the form whereas married women responded to all the questionnaires and then submitted the form. The responses for Oxford Happiness Questionnaire and Revised Dyadic Adjustment scale were scored. Data analysis was done using Shapiro–Wilk test, and the significant difference between different groups for each hypothesis was found using Mann-Whitney U tests, and Spearman’s rank order correlation was used to find the correlation between happiness and marital satisfaction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Comparison of married and unmarried women in the age group of 18-25

Happiness: There was no significant difference between the two samples at $p < 0.05$.

Table 1: U- test results for scores of unmarried and married women in the age group of 18-25 on the scale of happiness

Sample	Sum of ranks	Mean of ranks	Median	U – value	p-value
Unmarried women in the age group of 18-25	1845	41.93	4.189	1081	0.347
Married women in the age group of 18-25	2071	47.07	4.206	855	0.347

Hypothesis 1 predicted that there will be no significant difference in happiness between unmarried and married women of the age group of 18-25 years. Thus, the hypothesis was accepted. The possibility of the result can be that different people have different needs and therefore, some want to get married and others don’t. As a result, their happiness remains the same, at least in the short run.

Comparison of married women above the age of 35 who got married before and after 25 years of age

Happiness: There was no significant difference between the two samples at $p < 0.05$.

Table 2: U- test results for scores of Women above 35 who got married before and after 25 years of age on the scale of happiness

Sample	Sum of ranks	Mean of ranks	Median	U – value	p-value
Women above 35 who got married before 25 years of age	1956	44.45	4.620	970	0.99,
Women above 35 who got married after 25 years of age	1960	44.55	4.672	966	0.99,

Happiness And Marital Satisfaction Among Women: An Exploratory Study

Hypothesis 2 predicted that there will be no significant difference in happiness between married women above the age of 35 who got married before 25 years of age and those who got married after 25 years of age. Thus, the hypothesis was accepted. The present study is in contrast with the previous research (Amirnovin & Ghaffarian, 2018). There is a possibility of cultural difference or the differences in the age that has been considered early/late in the previous research.

Marital satisfaction: There was no significant difference between the two samples at $p < 0.05$.

Table 3: U- test results for scores of Women above 35 who got married before and after 25 years of age on the scale of marital satisfaction

Sample	Sum of ranks	Mean of ranks	Median	U – value	p-value
Women above 35 who got married before 25 years of age	2061.5	46.85	51.5	864.5	0.389
Women above 35 who got married after 25 years of age	1854.5	42.15	49.5	1071.5	0.389

Hypothesis 3 predicted that there will be no significant difference in overall marital satisfaction between married women above the age of 35 who got married before 25 years of age and those who got married after 25 years of age. The results indicated that the two samples were not significantly different from each other. Thus, the hypothesis was accepted.

Comparison of married women in the age group of 18-25 and above the age of 35 who got married before 25 years of age

Happiness: There was a low significant difference between the two samples at $p < 0.05$.

Table 4: U- test results for scores of married women in the age group of 18-25 and above the age of 35 who got married before 25 years of age on the scale of happiness

Sample	Sum of ranks	Mean of ranks	Median	U – value	p-value
Married women in the age group of 18-25	1680.5	38.19	4.206	1245.5	0.02
Married women above 35 who got married before 25 years of age	2235.5	50.81	4.620	690.5	0.02

Happiness And Marital Satisfaction Among Women: An Exploratory Study

Hypothesis 4 predicted that there be will no significant difference in happiness between married women in the age group of 18-25 years and married women above 35 years of age who got married before 25 years of age. The hypothesis was rejected.

Marital satisfaction: There was no significant difference between the two samples at $p < 0.05$.

Table 5: U- test results for scores of married women in the age group of 18-25 and above the age of 35 who got married before 25 years of age on the scale of marital satisfaction

Sample	Sum of ranks	Mean of ranks	Median	U – value	p-value
Married women in the age group of 18-25	2054.5	46.69	51	871.5	0.422
Married women above 35 who got married before 25 years of age	1861.5	42.31	51.5	1064.5	0.422

Hypothesis 5 predicted that there will be no significant difference in overall marital satisfaction between married women in the age group of 18-25 years and married women above 35 years of age who got married before 25 years of age. Thus, the hypothesis was accepted.

Correlation of happiness and marital satisfaction in married women of all age groups

The Spearman's rho revealed a statistically significant relationship between the scores on the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire and the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale in married women in the age group of 18-25, women above 35 who got married before 25 years of age, and married women above 35 who got married after 25 years of age ($r_s = 0.67351, 0.52022,$ and 0.54898 respectively)

Hypothesis 6 predicted that happiness and marital satisfaction will be positively correlated in married women of all the age groups. The results indicated a moderate and positive correlation between marital satisfaction and happiness at a 95% confidence level.

CONCLUSION

The present study concerns the understanding if a person's current age and their age of getting married has an association with their happiness and marital satisfaction. The reason behind this study can be the observation of the lack of financial independence at an early age as well as, most of the Indian women getting married before 25 years of age. The findings of the study reveals that there are no significant differences in both the groups. Most women get married due to pressure or the same belief that a happy marriage has an age.

This study attempts to bring an insight about the importance of getting married only when the person feels like they are ready instead of believing that marriages have a perfect age. The researcher believes that when people marry when they feel ready and are under no pressure, happiness and marital satisfaction will increase.

REFERENCES

- Amirnovin, Elham and Ghaffarian, Azizeh, Assessment of Marital Satisfaction and Happiness in Men and Women who are Married at Early Age and Old Age (November 20, 2018). RAIS Conference Proceedings - The 11th International RAIS Conference on Social Sciences, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3303479> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.330347>
- Bekhet, Abir & Zauszniewski, Jaclene & MD, Wagdy. (2008). Happiness: Theoretical and Empirical Considerations. *Nursing Forum*. 43. 12 - 23. 10.1111/j.1744-6198.2008.00091. x.
- Busby, Dean & Christensen, Clark & Crane, D. & Larson, Jeffrey. (1995). A Revision of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale for Use with Distressed and Nondistressed Couples: Construct Hierarchy and Multidimensional Scales. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*. 21. 289 - 308. 10.1111/j.1752-0606.1995.tb00163. x.
- Crane, D. & Middleton, Kenneth & Bean, Roy. (2000). Establishing criterion scores for the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMSS) and the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS). *American Journal of Family Therapy*. 28. 53-60. 10.1080/019261800261815.
- Fincham, F. D., & Beach, S. R. H. (2010). Marriage in the new millennium: A decade in review. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(3), 630–649. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2010.00722.x>
- Fincham, F. D., & Beach, S. R. H. (2010). Marriage in the new millennium: A decade in review. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72(3), 630–649. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2010.00722.x>
- Hills, P., & Argyle, M. (2001). Happiness, introversion–extraversion and happy introverts. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 30(4), 595–608. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869\(00\)00058-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(00)00058-1)
- Hills, P., & Argyle, M. (2002). The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire: A compact scale for the measurement of psychological well-being. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 33(7), 1071–1082. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869\(01\)00213-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(01)00213-6)

Acknowledgement

The author appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interests.

How to cite this article: Agarwal R. (2022). Happiness And Marital Satisfaction Among Women: An Exploratory Study. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 10(1), 1446-1452. DIP:18.01.148.20221001, DOI:10.25215/1001.148