

Research Paper

Gender Differences in Emotional Maturity, Marital Adjustment and Psychological Well-Being

Gobind^{1*}, Sheetal Khatri², Manju³

ABSTRACT

The present study was carried out to examine the gender differences in emotional maturity, marital adjustment and psychological well-being in males and females of Haryana. The sample comprised of 150 male and 150 female (N=300) within the age range of 30-45 years from Haryana, India. In the statistical part of this study, mean differences were checked by applying t-test using SPSS 21. The result indicates significant gender difference between married males and females on all the variables emotional maturity, marital adjustment and psychological well-being.

Keywords: *Emotional maturity, Marital Adjustment, Psychological Well-Being.*

The Expression, “Maturity” refers to a significant phase in growth of human being. Maturity as defined by Finley (1996) is “the capacity of mind to endure an ability of an individual to respond to uncertainty, circumstances or environment in an appropriate manner”.

In the view of Walter and Smithson (1974) “Emotional maturity is a process in which the personality is continually striving for greater sense of emotional health, both intrapsychically and intra personally”. Dosanjh (1960), "Emotional maturity means balanced personality. It means ability to govern disturbing emotion, show steadiness and endurance under pressure and be tolerant and free from neurotic tendency". Singh (1990) has reported that "Emotional maturity is not only the effective determinant of personality pattern but also helps to control the growth of an adolescent's development. A person who is able to keep his emotions under control, to brook delay and to suffer without self-pity might still be emotionally stunned". According to Menninger (1999), “Emotional maturity includes the ability to deal constructively with reality”. Therefore, Emotional maturity is a psychological term that is basically used to indicate person response to a particular situations and environment in a suitable manner. So, the emotions are good motivating factor that are focused on span of human life, thoughts, actions and affecting aspirations of an individual.

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Received: April 04, 2022; Revision Received: September 28, 2022; Accepted: September 30, 2022

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Marital adjustment is the state in which there is an overall feeling of couples happiness and satisfaction with their marriage life. Ernest and Leonard (1939) defined marital adjustment as “the integration of the couple in a union in which the two of them have mutual satisfaction and the achievement of common objectives”. It is required to establish adjustment whenever there is a conflict between man and his environment. It can be said that adjustment is necessary to avoid conflict between the two. This is the necessity for the man in the different fields of life from his birth to death to adjust stage by stage. The adjustment is important in various fields of life, one such field of life is marital life in which adjustment is very important factor. Landis (1975) explained “Marriage as a social institution which constitutes the fundamental and basic community of humanity. Two individual differing in sex are mutually attracted by mysterious force of instinct and love and commit freely and totally to each other to form a creative dynamic unit; a micro-community called family. He found six areas of marital adjustment; such as religion, social life, and mutual friends, in laws, money and sex”. According to Blood and Wolfe (1960) “There are eight areas of marital adjustment that is money, children, recreation, personality, in laws, roles, religion and sexual life”.

Ryff & Singer (1998) identified the word “human flourishing” for psychological well-being. Felce & Perry (1995) describe PWB as “a comprising of objective descriptors and subjective evaluation of physical, material, social and emotional well-being”. Ryan & Deci (2000) identified three types of psychological needs, these are- “competence, autonomy and relatedness”. The satisfaction of these three needs resulted in increase of subjective and psychological well-being. Well-being is such an important goal that every individual or society want to achieve. This term represents that something is in a good state.

Psychological well-being has diverse meaning to diverse people. According to Ryan and Deci (2008) “Psychological well-being is the combination of positive emotional states such as happiness and functioning with best efficacy in individual and social life”. Levi (1987) defined “Psychological Well-being as a dynamic state characterized by a reasonable amount of harmony between an individual’s abilities, needs and expectations, and environmental demands and opportunities”. According to Pollard and Lee (2003) wellbeing is a “complex, multi -faceted construct that has continued to avoid the researchers’ attempt to define and measure it.” Bandura (1986) in his social cognitive theory confirmed that the psychological well-being is the belief in their self-efficacy to cognitive resources required to control over the events. The term PWB is also used in the health trade as satisfaction with in all areas of life. According to Schlosser (1990) “Psychological well-being refers to both cognitive and affective aspects”. Diener & Diener (1995) explained PWB as a kind of person’s evaluation about life for being satisfied have cognitive evaluation and emotional satisfaction. Nowadays, PWB becomes more important concept and gets consideration. In the late 1950s and 1970s, PWB and positive mental health are getting attention.

Nathawat and Mathur (1993) conducted a study on “Marital adjustment and subjective well-being in Indian educated housewives and working women”. They concluded in study that employed women showed better marital adjustment than housewives.

Daniel T. L. Shek (1995) examined “Gender differences in marital quality and well-being” on a sample consisted of men and women (N=1499) married adults of china. The results discovered that males were high on marital quality as compared to females. Result revealed that men and women marital quality and well-being was positively and significantly

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correlated. The findings showed that influence of marital quality was greater in women than in men on well-being.

Bermudez et. al. (2003) studied relationship between “Emotional Intelligence, Psychological Wellbeing and Emotional Stability”. For this purpose, they had taken 65 men and women with age range of 18 to 33 years old. Findings showed that there exist positive correlations between all the variables.

Sjoberg (2008) examined “Emotional intelligence as a predictive factor for successful life adjustment, including the successful achievement of a well-balanced life”. Result showed that there is negative correlation between work to family and family to work interference and emotional intelligence. This shows that higher EI would be required for healthier balance between work and family.

Jackson, Miller, Oka, and Henry (2014) studied the gender differences in marital satisfaction. Results revealed non-significant gender differences in marital satisfaction.

Rani and Kumari (2014) conducted a study to examine the correlation among emotional maturity and adjustment of D.Ed. students, the results clearly showed that girls were high on emotional maturity than boys.

Sinha (2014) studied gender differences in emotional maturity. Analysis of the data revealed significant gender differences in emotional maturity.

Li, Kao and Wu (2015) conducted a study to find gender differences in psychological well-being. For this purpose, a sample of 653 adults (271 men and 382 women) was taken. It was found that men and women differ on psychological well-being. Women scored lower on autonomy and high on environmental mastery than men. Coefficient of correlation was high between environmental mastery and self- acceptance for men whereas correlation between positive relation with other and autonomy was high for women than men.

Emotionally mature people would be better in marital adjustment that would in turn increase the level of psychological well-being and vice-versa. By keeping in view, the relationship of the concerned variables the present research is being conducted.

Objectives

- To assess and compare married males and females on psychological well-being.
- To assess and compare married males and females on marital adjustment.
- To assess and compare married males and females on emotional maturity.

Hypotheses

- H1.** Married males would differ significantly from married females on the variable of Psychological well-being.
- H2.** Married males would differ significantly from married females on the variable of marital adjustment.
- H3.** Married males would differ significantly from married females on the variable of emotional maturity.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Sample of the present study consisted of 300 married male and female which were further divided into 150 male and 150 female. The age range of the subjects varies from 30-45 years, selected from Haryana through purposive sampling.

Tools

To measure the emotional maturity of respondents, emotional maturity scale was used. It was developed by “Singh and Bhargava (1990)”. “The tool has 48 items measuring 5 areas such as (a) emotional stability (1-10), (b) emotional progression (11-20), (c) social adjustment (21-30), (d) personality integration (31-40) and (e) independence (41-48)”. These items were scored on a five point scale. Items are indicated as if the answer is very much, much, undecided, probably and never and the scoring are as following; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Total score on this scale indicates total emotional maturity. Higher score on the dimensions indicates higher emotional maturity. The maximum obtained score is 240 and the minimum score is 48 on this scale.

To measure the marital adjustment of respondents Marital Adjustment Questionnaire (MAQ) was used. It was developed and standardized by “Kumar and Rohatgi”. It is used to identify couples who face problems in marital relations and need help. It gives a single composite score. The scoring of MAQ was done as per instructions given in manual. It consists of 25 highly discriminating "Yes - No" kind of items. The answer in "Yes" given 1 score but for items 4, 10 and 19 the reverse case was applicable. The total score gives the total marital adjustment scores of an individual. In this questionnaire, higher scores were reflected as having higher marital adjustment. The possible range of the questionnaire was 0 to 25.

To assess well-being of an individual in different circumstances, the Friedman well-being scale was used. The scale was developed by Philip H. Friedman (1994). The scale has 20 bipolar adjectives. It is self-administered questionnaire and easy to administer and interpret. It can be scored for measure of well-being (FWBC), and also measure the following 5 dimensions of Psychological well-being Sociability (FSOC), Emotional Stability (FES), Joviality (FJOV), Self-Esteem (FSES) and Happiness (FHAPP). The average time for completion of test was 2-3 minutes. The target population for this test is adults. It can be administered on both individual and group level. The subjects were requested to answer the questions on a 10-point scale that ranges from “very (0,1), moderately (2,3,4), neither (5), moderately (6,7,8) and very (9,10)”.

Procedure

First of all, goal of the study was explained to the subjects to maintain a proper rapport. Each participant was contacted separately and assured about the privacy of their information. After establishing a rapport, study related information was collected from the individual participant. All the subjects were approached individually and requested to fill up the questionnaires. Emotional maturity scale, Marital Adjustment Questionnaire and Psychological well-being scale. For the present study, the sample was purposively selected. All the subjects were requested to follow the standard instructions given on the questionnaire. Scoring of the questionnaires was done according to the manuals. The scores were put in to tabulated form and suitable statistics was employed as per the objectives employed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to examine the Gender differences between measures of emotional maturity, marital adjustment and psychological well-being. To fulfil the objective t test was applied and the results related to gender differences are shown in figure 1.1.

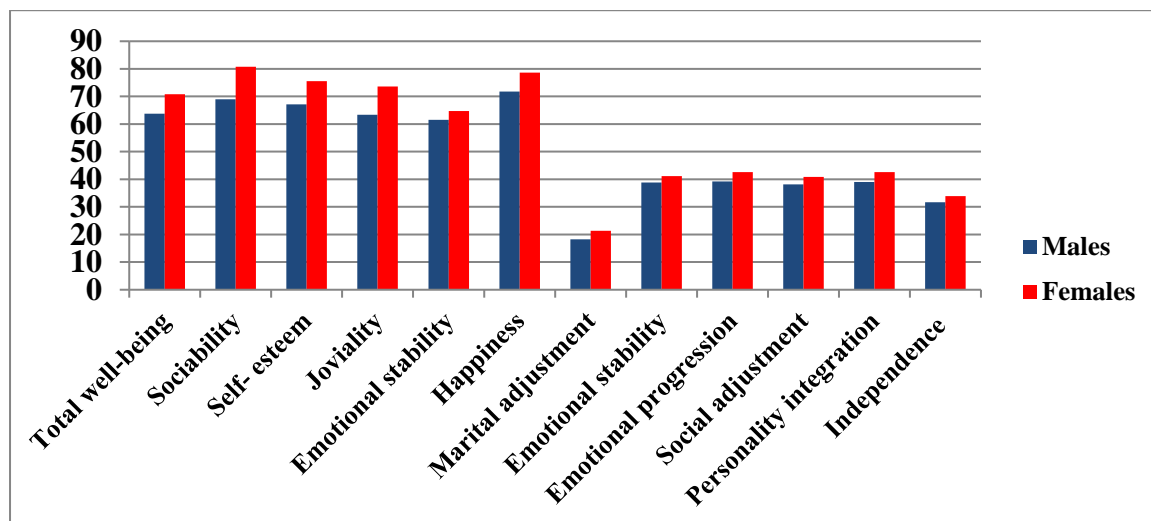


Figure 1.1 Showing Gender Differences on the variables of Emotional maturity, marital adjustment and psychological well-being.

Table 1 Showing Mean, S.D and t value on Psychological Well-being, Marital Adjustment and Emotional Maturity

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value
FWBC	Males	150	63.77	16.082	4.241**
	Females	150	70.81	12.438	
FSOC	Males	150	68.95	25.172	4.889**
	Females	150	80.77	15.590	
FSES	Males	150	67.11	16.369	4.798**
	Females	150	75.58	14.138	
FJOV	Males	150	63.33	19.107	4.937**
	Females	150	73.60	16.843	
FES	Males	150	61.52	16.661	1.835
	Females	150	64.74	13.578	
FHAPP	Males	150	71.80	20.269	2.952**
	Females	150	78.60	19.628	
MA	Males	150	18.27	3.599	8.640***
	Females	150	21.35	2.455	
ES	Males	150	38.80	5.402	3.839**
	Females	150	41.16	5.243	
ES	Males	150	39.23	6.260	4.873**
	Females	150	42.60	5.719	
SA	Males	150	38.18	6.977	3.442**
	Females	150	40.84	6.396	
PI	Males	150	39.03	8.077	4.465**
	Females	150	42.60	5.520	
IND	Males	150	31.69	4.966	3.920**
	Females	150	33.91	4.873	

FWBC= Total well-being, FSOC= Sociability, FSES= Self- esteem, FJOV= Joviality, FES= Emotional stability, FHAPP= Happiness, MA=Marital adjustment, ES= Emotional stability, EP= Emotional progression, SA= Social adjustment, PI= Personality integration, IND= Independence.

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According to table 1 the result of mean comparison of male and female on the composite score of psychological well-being was significant. It means the male and female differ significantly on the variable of psychological well-being. On the dimension of sociability males had a mean of 68.95 and females had a mean of 80.77 while SD for males and females was 25.17 and 15.59 respectively. The obtained t-value was found to be significant ($t=4.89$, $p<.01$). Thus, from the results it can be inferred that males and females have different quality of being sociable. Female scored significantly higher on the sociability, showed that they really liked to meet and spend time with others. The findings of the present study are supported by earlier studies (Croese et. al., 1992 & Bach 2000) which reported that women are more sociable than men. These conclusions are in line with the findings of the present study. On the self-esteem (FSES), the second dimension of psychological well-being, the male and female displayed significant difference with a mean value of 67.11 and 75.58 respectively. The SD value was 16.37 and 14.14 respectively. The obtained t- value was found to be significant ($t= 4.79$, $p<.01$). From the result it can be concluded that males and females have difference on self-esteem. Females scored significantly high on self-esteem, it reveals that females have high sense of self –worth as compared to males.

On the jovial (FJOV), another dimension of psychological well-being, the male and females showed significant difference ($t=4.94$, $p< .01$). The mean value for males and female were 63.33 and 73.60 respectively while SD value for male and females were 19.11 and 16.84 respectively. The higher mean value of males points out that they are friendly and shows good humor as compared to females. The fourth dimension of psychological well-being was emotional stability (FES) on which the male and female show do not significant difference ($t= 1.83$). For males and female mean values were 61.52 and 64.74 respectively, and the SD values is 16.66 and 13.58. Females scored high on emotional stability; in comparison to males but the difference was not statistically significant.

The fifth dimension of psychological well-being was Happiness (FHAPP) on which the mean and SD value for males were 71.80 and 20.27 respectively while the mean and SD value for females were 78.60 and 19.63 respectively. The obtained t-value was found to be significant ($t= 2.95$, $p<.01$). Females scored significantly higher on happiness. It can be said that females have the tendency of pleasure attainment and pain avoidance.

On the basis of results obtained it can be said that the hypothesis that “Married males would differ significantly from married females on the variable of Psychological well-being” got accepted.

On the second variable marital adjustment, the Mean and SD score for males on marital adjustment was 18.27 and 3.59 respectively and the Mean and SD score for females on marital adjustment was 21.35 and 2.45 respectively. The obtained t value was 8.64 which was found to be significant at .001 level. The result clearly showed that there is a significant difference between males and females on the dimension of marital adjustment and females scored higher than males. A study by Shikha Goel (2012) supported the present outcome that males and females differ on marital adjustment and females scored higher than males on marital adjustment.

So, on the basis of result it can be stated that the second hypothesis which state finding “Married males would differ significantly from married females on the variable of marital adjustment” got accepted.

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As for as Emotional maturity is concerned the mean and SD score for males on the first sub-scale i.e. emotional stability of emotional maturity was 38.80 and 5.40 respectively and for females it was 41.16 and 5.24. The obtained t-value was 3.84 ($p < .01$) which was found to be significant. Thus, there exist significant gender differences on emotional stability. As females scored high on emotional stability so it can be said that females have the tendency of better self-control over emotions than men. The mean and SD score for males on the second sub scale of emotional maturity i.e., emotional progression was 39.23 and 6.26 whereas Mean and SD scores for females were 42.60 and 5.72 respectively. The acquired t-value was 4.87 ($p < .01$) which was found to be significant. Females scored high on emotional progression, thus it can be concluded that females have the capability for growing positive emotions in relation to the environment. The third sub scale is social adjustment, the Mean and SD score for males on social adjustment was 38.18 and 6.98 respectively and Mean and SD scores for females was 40.84 and 6.39 respectively. The obtained t-value was 3.44 ($p < .01$) which was found to be significant. Result clearly showed that females have quality of better adaptation with social environment than male. On personality integration, the mean and SD score for males was 39.03 and 8.07 respectively and for females it was 40.89 and 5.52. The obtained t-value was 4.46 which was found to be significant at 0.01 levels. It revealed that significant difference was found in males and females on personality integration. Result showed that females never felt pessimistic about life and will admit their errors in comparison to males. The fifth sub scale is independence, where Mean and SD value for males and females was ($M=31.69$, $SD=4.96$, $M=33.91$, $SD=4.87$). The obtained t-value was 3.906 which were found to be significant. Females scored high on independence it may be because of exposure given to females by society. The findings of the present study are supported by earlier studies (Mahanta & Kannan, 2015 & Sinha, 2014) which reported that females scored high on emotional maturity than their male counterpart.

Thus, on the basis of results obtained the last hypothesis which states that “Married males would differ significantly from married females on the variable of emotional maturity” got accepted.

CONCLUSION

Form the results obtained it can be said that males and females differ significantly on variables of emotional maturity, marital adjustment and psychological well-being. Married females have better emotional maturity, marital adjustment and psychological well-being than their males counter parts. Research evidence showed that females have the quality of better adaptation with environment, and marital life have positive emotions and better self-control over emotion than males that would enhance the level of psychological well-being.

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Acknowledgement

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

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Gobind, Khatri, S. & Manju (2022). Gender Differences in Emotional Maturity, Marital Adjustment and Psychological Well-Being. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 10(3), 1836-1844. DIP:18.01.189.20221003, DOI:10.25215/1003.189