

Self-Esteem and Marital Adjustment- A Correlational Study

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ABSTRACT

Marriage includes the entire donation of self to one another, as well as identifying responsibility that adds to the well-being of both. In today's dynamic society, marriage can be a challenging endeavor. There are many reasons for people to get married. Marital adjustment is the mental condition in which spouses experience a general sense of contentment and pleasure with their marriage. A marriage with good adjustment outlasts one with poor adjustment. From this point on, research on relationship self-esteem and marital adjustment will help us better comprehend today's married people. The study is to discover the correlation between self-esteem and marital adjustment. The study's sample comprises of 130 married people (both men and women). The sample was acquired through easy sampling across using both online and offline means. The sample ranged in age from 20 to 60 years. The instruments utilized in the study were Stanley Coppersmith's Self-Esteem Inventories and Dr Har Mohan Singh's Marital Adjustment Inventory (MAI-s). Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyze the data. According to the findings, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient between marital adjustment and self-esteem is 0.291, significant at the 0.01 level, indicating a significant relationship between self-esteem and marital adjustment. It is also made clear that a spouse's self-esteem is connected to how well they adjust to marriage. This pattern would suggest that married people gain from their sense of self-worth. To be able to adapt and adjust properly in their married lives, people need to be taught how to develop self-esteem. A sense of identity and self-esteem are two of the many emotional advantages that a well-adjusted marriage offers its participants.

Keywords: *Marriage, Marital Adjustment, Self-Esteem, Correlation*

One of the most common institutions among humans is marriage. Marriage is the primary social institution that makes up the basic community of humans, according to Landis (1975). When two people of different sexes are drawn to one another by an enigmatic compulsion of love, they dedicate completely and freely to one another to create a creative unit known as a family. According to Stephens (1971), marriage is a legally recognized sexual union that is announced publicly and entered with the expectation that it will last.

According to Landis (1975), the following elements play a role in any love affair's initiation and growth before marriage.

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- a) Attraction on a physical level
- b) Satisfaction of certain personality needs, such as: someone to understand, respect, and admire one's principles; to acknowledge what a person strives to get; to feel one's moods; to help one make resolutions; foster aspiration; to empower being confident; to look at, cherish, to support in problems; to alleviate the feeling of lonely,
- c) Discussing shared interests and concerns
- d) The same aspirations for one's life

In today's evolving world, marriage is a complex affair. There are a variety of reasons why people get married. In addition to love and sexual attraction, which are the main factors, other factors that may influence a person's disposition for marriage include financial wellness, companionship, safeguarding, emotional safety, dissipating from solitude and an unhappy residence scenario, the adventure of shared interests, and having children. Some psychologists discuss homogamy in relationships. They contend that people have a tendency to automatically fall in love with and marry who satisfies the wants.

SELF ESTEEM

Self-esteem is your subjective assessment of your whole value or worth. It, like self-esteem, displays your level of self-assurance in your talents and characteristics. Your determination, mental health, and general quality of life may all be impacted by a strong sense of self-worth. However, very high or extremely low self-esteem might cause issues. You may find your optimal balance by expanding your awareness of your own degree of self-esteem.

Rosenberg (1965) defined self-esteem as “One's overall evaluation of how one feels and what one thinks in relation to oneself, along with their positive or negative aspects towards oneself.”

William James (1890) defined self-esteem as “the sense of worth that comes from constantly reaching standards for personally meaningful activity. James provided a simple formula for defining self-esteem: self-esteem equals achievement divided by our pretensions. Pretensions here refer to our ideals, concepts, and notions about our potential. Therefore, if our real results are low and our projected potential and desires are great, we regard ourselves as failures. However, if your achievement surpasses your expectations and you can undoubtedly remember a comparable occasion, you will feel amazing of yourself, and your sense of worth will rise.”

Low self esteem

Low self-esteem is regarded as a lack of self-esteem. If you have low self-esteem, you may feel timid or anxious around other people, believe you are inadequate, or harshly evaluate yourself. While some people with low self-esteem are aware that they are judging themselves too harshly, others cling to their negative thoughts so tenaciously that they appear to be real. Many people have low self-esteem, which raises your risk of developing other mental health issues. When you dislike yourself, you are more likely to have a pessimistic outlook on life. You can feel tight, despondent, or unmotivated. You may doubt your capacity to deal with problems as they emerge. You may criticize yourself in your head by saying things such, "I am stupid," "I will never be able to handle this," or "I don't amount to anything."

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If you have low self-esteem, you may have interpersonal challenges, problems at job or school, and other problems. When you get criticism or rejection, you may become enraged and withdraw from other people and activities. Furthermore, you may battle with body image, overuse drugs and alcohol, and cannot stand up for yourself being victim of abuse. Teens with lower self-esteem could use these harmful substances to try to be a part of the group, have a bad body image, or begin engaging in sexual activity more than their classmates.

High self-esteem

Aside from adoring oneself, having viewed oneself with love, worth, dignity, and respect is a sign of good self-esteem. A positive feeling of self-worth includes independence and self-belief in one's capacity to learn, achieve, and leave a difference in the world. It suggests that you value your thoughts, emotions, and opinions. A strong sense of self-esteem implies having a positive impression of oneself.

High self-esteem is simply a mindset that allows you to appreciate your successes, address your flaws, and feel good about your life and yourself. You can put everyday variations into context since you primarily love, believe in, and adore yourself. If you have strong self-esteem, you can remark, "I love myself with my imperfections and flaws," rather than "I have so many flaws."

Good mental health and well-being require a strong feeling of self-esteem. High self-esteem is advantageous since it allows you to develop coping strategies, deal with adversity, and put terrible things into perspective. You're also more prepared to deal with stress from friends, family, work, and school. Rather of feeling hopeless, stagnant, or useless because of perceived "failings," a person with high self-esteem is more likely to seek out what they can change or improve upon.

MARITAL ADJUSTMENT

Marital Adjustment is the process through which married couples adjust and alter their newly defined roles, understanding one other and operating as partners rather than 2 distinct individuals. It's also critical to align interests and beliefs, keep transparent lines of contact, and encourage the presentation of each other's communication.

According to Sinha and Mukerjee (1990)- marital adjustment- "the state in where the spouse has a complete sense of being happy and fulfilled in the relationship." Marital adjustment is defined as the integration of a couple with different personality traits into a bond in order to complement one another to achieve fulfillment and comparable goals.

A mental state known as marital adjustment occurs when partners feel generally pleased and satisfied with their marriage. As a result, it asks for a satisfying connection between spouses that is marked by mutual concern, care, understanding, and acceptance. In one way or another, all marriages aspire for happiness. Most couples marry with a lot of expectations. Some expectations either realistic, or unrealistic because marriage is a system where every individual is intricate like a cosmos. Consequently, union of two universes make marriage. Happiness, contentment, and expectation fulfillment are only achievable via reciprocal modifications that lead to a shared understanding of marriage.

Marital maladjustment is the discord or disequilibrium that exists between husband and wife that causes issues in their marriage. Marital maladjustment is a person's inability to adjust

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with their spouse as a result of difficulties that lead to incorrect coping and marital troubles. The number of divorces and separations in a given culture might simply indicate marital maladjustment.

One of the key reasons for marital adjustment troubles is the huge role change between spouses in their beliefs, values, and attitudes when they begin living together. Spouses start marriage with diverse attitudes about happiness, and their expectations of happiness varied as well. As a result, mutual communication and distribution are the foundations for marriage adjustment. Studies on married couples suggest that people who communicate well contain a high level of marital adjustment. Communication and adjustment have a strong favorable relationship. Couples who spoke more often adjusted better to interpersonal and relationship challenges, whereas others struggled. Communication is the main aspect of love, making each other aware of their emotions, wants, challenges, and expectations. Although serious considerations must be given in the early days of marriage, marital adjustment is an ongoing endeavor. Understanding the specific traits of the spouse is a continual task in marriage since individuals change over the life cycle, even if a couple was acquainted before getting married or at the moment. As a result, marital adjustment requires genuine acceptance as well as comprehension of the spouse's own development.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The research was conducted by Fekrat, F., Ebrahiminejad, G., & Razavi Nematollahi, V. in 2015 to look into the link between different variables including self-esteem, body image and marital adjustment with 380 married women working at a medical university. Data including demographic information and questions related to body image, self-esteem, and marital adjustment was collected. SPSS software and linear regression was used to evaluate the data. The vast majority of participants (85%) were over the age of 25, and the vast majority (65%) held a bachelor's degree or higher. Body image and self-esteem were shown to be substantially associated with marital adjustment. Body image was not as good an indicator of marital adjustment as self-esteem. Self-esteem and body image of women are important factors in how well adjusted a marriage is.

In 2018, self-esteem and emotional intelligence was examined as markers of marriage happiness among 120 married individuals in Ebonyi State, Nigeria by Eze Ogonnia Eze and Mba Esther. The participants included 65 men (25 to 70 years) and 55 females (22 to 65 years). To evaluate the idea, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, the Enrich Marital Satisfaction Scale, and the Schutte Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) were employed. The data were evaluated using a cross-sectional survey methodology, and a regression analysis using SPSS 20, was carried out. The regression statistical analysis revealed that marital satisfaction is significantly predicted by self-esteem and emotional intelligence.

Shanavas, P. and Venkatammal, P.V., (2014) studied the link between emotional intelligence, self-esteem, and financial contentment in marriage. To that end, 110 Kerala couples who had been marriage for no longer than fifteen years were picked at random. An emotional intelligence scale, a self-esteem scale, a financial happiness scale, and a marital adjustment questionnaire were used to collect data. Multiple regression analyses found an association between emotional intelligence, self-esteem, adjustment in marriage and financial contentment and which is significant. Emotional intelligence, or self-esteem, is positively connected with marital adjustment, according to the study's findings. The results showed that demographic factors (gender, number of kids children, and the duration of

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marriage) have no effect on marital adjustment. In contrast, family income demonstrated a direct association with marital adjustment.

In one study, the level of self-efficacy and marriage adjustment of married women have been assessed and compared (Jaleel, Umair & Chandola, Rupali. 2023). As a consequence, data from both older and younger married ladies were gathered. The General Self-Efficacy Scale (SES) and the Marital Adjustment Questionnaire (MAQ) were used to collect data. According to the findings, the average self-efficacy among younger married women was 21.28, while it was 21.82 among middle-aged married women. 0.86 was the T-score. The mean value among married middle-aged women was 21.28, and the T value was 0.27. It was found that self-efficacy and marital adjustment are positively correlated with the coefficient of correlation 0.40.

Onabamiro, A.A., Owoyele, J.W. and Elijah, A.O., (2017). investigated “Three-factor predictors of adjustment in marriage in a State of Nigeria.” Three factors were coping style, self-esteem and emotional intelligence. The null hypotheses were assessed using multiple regression analysis and Pearson's product-moment. According to the statistics, no significant association was found between variables emotional quotient, self-esteem, coping strategies and marital adjustment.

According to the study conducted by Taghizadeh, Mohammad & Kalhori, Elham. (2015) marital satisfaction and self-esteem, sexual pleasure, and economic condition are significantly related. The chance of marital dissatisfaction is 9 times greater in persons with poor self-esteem.

A recent study was investigated by Pronk, T. (2020) show a statistically significant and favourable association between high self-esteem and relationship satisfaction.

Bélangier, C., Di Schiavi, M.F., Sabourin, S., Dugal, C., El Baalbaki, G. and Lussier, Y., (2014) found a relationship between various variables including marital adjustment, specific coping strategies and self-esteem. Furthermore, cross-studies suggest that the marital adjustment of one's spouse has an impact on one's sense of worth.

Recent research was done in 2021 by Anyamene, A., Nwokolo, C., & Muojeke, N. E to investigate marital adjustment and self-esteem in females teaching at a school Anambra. The findings of the research indicated positive correlation but very low between both the variables which is non-significant.

Olukayode, O. O., Oyelami, A. I., & Idayat, O. B. (2019) study findings suggest that emotional intelligence, self-concept, and religion have a substantial effect on marital satisfaction among married public officials. This suggests that the 3 factors are effective markers of marital satisfaction.

Rationale of the Study

Marriage is one of the most widespread institutions among humans. Marriage is a complicated affair in today's changing environment. There are several reasons why individuals get married. The mental state in which couples have an general sense of satisfaction and pleasure in their marriage is known as marital adjustment. A well-adjusted marriage outlives a poorly adjusted marriage. Henceforth, the study of relationship self-esteem and marital adjustment will permit us a better understanding of today's married

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individuals. Some marriages end in divorce because of marital maladjustment. The negative and toxic experiences of married individuals when it comes to marital adjustment can be reduced as a result of this study. Additionally, this research will also be useful for professionals that deal with youth and married individuals like mental health professionals, counsellors engaging in the family counselling, couple counselling, etc. The study will also be directed toward means through which marital adjustment among individuals can be increased.

METHODOLOGY

Aim of the study:

The aim of the study is to find the relationship between self-esteem and marital adjustment.

Objective of the study:

To find out the relationship between self-esteem and marital adjustment.

Hypotheses:

There would be a positive relationship between self-esteem and marital adjustment.

Sample

The sample for the present research consists of 130 married individuals (male and female). The sample was collected through both online and offline mediums through convenient sampling across India. The age range of the sample was 20–60 years.

Inclusion Criteria

1. Participant's age should be between 20-60 years.
2. Participants should be in a marriage for more than a year.
3. Participants should be well-versed in English.

Exclusion Criteria

1. Individuals living in long-distance marriages.
2. Participants who have any mental or physical disability.
3. Participant's type of family- nuclear or joint is not considered.
4. Duration of the marriage is not considered.

Tools Used in The Study

The following tools are used in the study.

- 1) Coppersmith Self-Esteem Inventories developed by Stanley Coppersmith
- 2) Marital Adjustment Inventory (MAI-s) developed by Dr Har Mohan Singh

Coppersmith Self- Esteem Inventories- Dr. Stanley Coopersmith created the Coopersmith self-esteem assessment to examine the self-esteem of school kids and adults. The adult form is used in this question. Adults are defined as persons above the age of sixteen. It is made up of twenty-five components that have been modified from the school's abbreviated version. All SEI items are simple statements to which respondents respond "like me" or "unlike me." The coefficient of association between total school short form and adult version scores is more than 0.80.

The SEI can be scored quickly using the scoring keys included with the form. On the adult form, multiply the total raw score by four to get the total score.

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The SEI was administered to nearly 600 kids in grades 5, 9, and 12 in a rural school district by Spatz and Johnston (1973). 100 inventory were chosen from each grade, and Kuder-Richardson dependability estimates (KR20s) were computed. Coefficients obtained are 0.81 for grade 5, 0.86 for grade 9, and 0.80 for grade 12. The results imply that pupils in all three grades have appropriate internal consistency.

Kimball (1972) gave the SEI to 7600 public school pupils in grades 4–8. KR20s were developed for each grade level. The obtained coefficients range from 0.87 to 0.92.

Fullerton (1972) discovered a split-half dependability coefficient of 0.87 for 104 fifth and sixth grade students, although Taylor and Reitz (1968) discovered a value of 0.90.

Test-retest reliability was calculated for 103 college students who took the short form by Bedeian, Geagud, and Zmud (1977). Males have a coefficient of 0.80 while females have a coefficient of 0.82.

Kokenes (1974, 1978) published the results of a study on the validity of SEI constructs. Her investigations, which included around 7600 school pupils in grades 4 through 8, attempted to study the relative effect of family, friends, and school on the global self-esteem of preadolescent and adolescent children. Her study established the construct validity of Coppersmith's subscales for assessing sources of self-esteem.

Marital Adjustment Inventory (MAI-s)- Marital Adjustment Inventory (MAI-s) was developed by Dr Har Mohan Singh to assess the general marital adjustment of the individual. It is suitable for use by both sexes. It can be used for individuals within ranges of 20 years to 30 years and above. The inventory is divided into two forms: form A for men and form B for women. Each form has 10 questions. Each question may be replied to either yes or no only. Each yes or no item is then to be answered by placing (✓) yes on only one point out of ten points on the rating scale ranging from +10 (most favourable) to +1 (least favourable). Only selected answers are recorded and scored. To calculate the overall marital adjustment score, the values for each item are totaled using a scoring key. Each question can have a maximum of 10 scores, a minimum of 1 score, and a zero score if the response does not match what the scoring key indicated.

Table 1 displays the reliability coefficient for each of the six occupations on the inventory as well as the overall population. These were chosen to correct the odd-even terms and to run the Spearman Brown Prophecy method.

Table-1 Coefficient of reliability

1	Teacher (School)	0.89
2	Teachers (college)	0.85
3	Doctors	0.87
4	Businessmen	0.88
5	Lawyers	0.80
6	Clerks	0.90
	General Population	0.94

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Procedure

The data was collected through both online and offline mediums across India. Volunteers were chosen for data collecting, and rapport was formed. They were briefed on the purpose of the current inquiry. Instructions were delivered in accordance with the questionnaire. They were promised that their information would be kept private and used solely for research reasons, so they were asked to be open and honest in their replies. Queries were addressed as required. Approximately 15 to 20 minutes were required to fill out the details of the given study questionnaires. After the data was collected from all the volunteers, scoring was done, and raw scores were calculated. The scores were subjected to statistical analysis and results were obtained.

Statistical Technique

Keeping in mind the nature of the study and the nature of objective the investigator used the following statistical techniques. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to gather and evaluate the data. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test hypotheses.

RESULTS

The collected data were analyzed qualitatively. For investigating the correlation between our variables of the study self- esteem and marital adjustment, the "product-moment correlation" was determined. To verify the objective and to test the hypothesis, the present study has been analyzed as given below:

Table: 2 Correlation between Self-esteem and marital adjustment.

Variables	Self-esteem
Marital Adjustment	.291**

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

From Table it is observed that the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient between self-esteem and marital adjustment is 0.291, significant at 0.01 level indicates significant and positive correlation between marital adjustment and self-esteem. Hence our hypothesis that there would be a significant relationship between self-esteem and marital adjustment is accepted.

It is discovered that a couple's judgement of their worth is connected to how well they adjust to marriage. In other words, partners with high self-esteem typically experience greater well-adjusted marriage, whereas partners with low self-esteem typically experience lower marital adjustment.

It is also revealed that people with higher marital adjustment will have higher self-esteem and people with low marital adjustment will have lesser sense of self-esteem.

DISCUSSION

The investigation of the correlation between self-esteem and marital adjustment was the major goal of the current study. The findings indicate that adjustment in marriage and self-esteem are related in either man and woman. These data validate our hypothesis and that of other researchers. The study also discovered that a person's marital adjustment is positively correlated with their degree of self-esteem. These findings imply a connection between self-esteem and marital adjustment, but further research is required to determine the exact nature of this association. It is also made clear that a spouse's self-esteem is connected to how well

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they adjust to marriage. In other words, people with high self-esteem often experience more marital adjustment, while people with low self-esteem typically experience unhappy marriages. This pattern would suggest that married people gain from their sense of self-worth. In this situation, it could be appropriate to consider self-esteem as a resource that partners share and add to.

People with low self-esteem believe they are less capable and deserving than their partner. These sentiments of inadequacy and insecurity can result from this lack of confidence. Because it makes people view their partners in overly basic terms, low self-esteem can make it challenging to establish long-term love partnerships. For instance, a person with poor self-esteem can assume that their partner is usually unfaithful even though there could be a number of other explanations for the conduct that raises suspicion. Even though everyone else thinks the person is gorgeous, someone with low self-esteem may feel that they aren't attractive enough. And a person with poor self-esteem could believe that they are undeserving of affection when in fact they are. People who are insecure frequently perceive their spouses as being either "all good" or "all bad." People who are insecure could also think that their spouses have bad opinions of them. These presumptions cause people to feel insecure and inadequate, which can have an impact on how they interact with their partners. People with low self-esteem feel insecure, and they withdraw and avoid open communication with their partners. They are less confident in expressing their opinions to their spouses. Hence, the adjustment in the relationship suffers.

When the marital adjustment is higher, it means that the person has a sense of happiness and satisfaction in their marriage. Individuals receive positive feedback and love from their spouses and are respected by them. They feel that they are vital members of their family, and hence, this increases people's self-esteem. Positive and negative comments and evaluations from the partners in the marriage may either raise or demolish a person's self-esteem. Feelings of inadequacy in a marital relationship can lead to low self-esteem. When individuals are negatively judged by their partners and are unable to express their opinions because of these judgments, this leads to marital maladjustment, which in turn affects their self-esteem negatively. Another cause of marital maladjustment might be partners having affairs behind their backs, which makes individuals feel that they are not worthy enough or inadequate for their partners, hence lowering self-esteem.

The addition of this study's findings to the corpus of knowledge has the potential to lead to good change by educating married couples, counselors, therapists, and others on the influence self-esteem has on marital satisfaction. Marital discontent has a profound effect on people's physical, mental, and emotional health that extends across communities and into national and international organizations. Additionally, marital satisfaction is a key predictor of both marital success and failure. Initiatives can be encouraged to increase marital adjustment of couples, hence decreasing the divorce or separation rate, as elements that impact marital satisfaction are identified and investigated. In order to boost marital satisfaction of couples at all stages of marriage, the education of couples on how to handle self-esteem issues may be improved. Clinical professionals can affect a couple's self-esteem through their principles and methods for counselling families and couples. Our awareness and comprehension of the psychological consequences of married couples' self-esteem have been expanded by the current study.

It is important that individuals must be taught how to build self-esteem so that they can adapt and adjust well in their married life. Well-adjusted Marriage provides partners with

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many emotional benefits, developing a sense of identity and self-worth. Counsellors, educators & professionals could organize events for individuals in the direction of developing positive self-esteem for improved marital adjustment. Couples and marriage counsellors should take into account the importance of self-esteem when dealing with their cases of marital disputes or marital maladjustment. Married people with self-esteem issues might seek psychological assistance to keep their relationships together.

This study has constraints due to the correlational framework, which prevents us from defining the causality. Since self-esteem considered as a very stable personality feature that is acquired in infancy, we can say that an individual's perception of their own value will affect how they adjust to married life in the future. The participant's work, family structure, socio-economic standing duration of marriage, and kind of marriage (arranged vs. love marriage) are some demographic variables that have not been examined in the current study but may be pertinent to its dimensions.

Further research can be conducted on a diverse population, including different cultures. The influences of gender differences and social demographic characteristics can be explored in further research. Further research on marital adjustment can be conducted keeping in view the aspects of the duration and type of the marriage (love marriage and arranged marriage).

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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