

## Marital Satisfaction, Emotional stability and Quality of Life Among Married Women

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between Marital Satisfaction, Emotional stability and Quality of Life among married women belonging to early adulthood and middle adulthood age groups. This research study intends to focus on the dynamics between the two different stages of life span and understand the influence of marital satisfaction and emotional stability of the individuals in determining their quality of life. A non-probability purposive sampling method was used to assess a sample of 200 respondents from various major cities across India. It was hypothesized that there would be no significant relationship between Marital satisfaction and Emotional stability and between marital satisfaction and Quality of Life. It was also hypothesized that there would be no significant relationship between Emotional stability and Quality of Life which was tested using Pearson's Correlation. The difference between the early adulthood and middle adulthood was tested using Independent sample T test and Linear Regression was also used to analyse the data. It was found that there is a significant relationship between the variables Marital Satisfaction, Emotional Stability and Quality of Life. Both Marital Satisfaction and Emotional stability were significantly associated with Quality of Life. There was no significant difference in the Quality of life between early adulthood and middle adulthood married women. The results are further interpreted. Implications and limitations of the study are discussed.

**Keywords:** *Marital Satisfaction, Emotional Stability, Quality of Life, Married Women*

Lifestyle changes and inter- personal relationships can significantly have an increasing effect on the quality of life. India stands in the 58<sup>th</sup> position in the Quality of Life Index ranking as of 2021 and is considered to be having a very low quality of life. (WHO, 2022). This shows that there are various factors which can get along the way of determining the quality of life. It also implies that quality of life is not limited to the individual himself/ herself but is also determined by the external factors such as environment and the society as a whole. The realms of the inner and outer social system in each individual's life plays a vital role in determining their general well- being and quality of life. A low quality of life does not essentially mean that there is no scope for improvement, rather, it is important to note that it can possibly have an effect over the other

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aspects of life and bring out remarkable changes in one's physical and psychological areas of functioning. 'The most important factors for a positive perception of quality of life are the social environment, in particular, family relationships and health. Economic and environmental factors have approximately the same effect. Socio-political environment factors have the least influence.' (Tvaronavicienie, M. et al., 2022).

Various research studies have been conducted in the field of quality of life to assess the underlying factors that determine the quality of life as well as the extent to which each factor can influence or have an effect on the quality of life among people. It is also important to note that the researches are not confined to one specific region or population, the true essence of it lies in understanding the dynamics across different social strata, cultures and economic classes of people across the globe. This research study is focused on a specific population of women, within a specific geographic location and is aimed at analyzing the relationship between variables being studied and the extent of influence among the variables on each other and the dynamics of it on the whole.

'Marital satisfaction is gaining increasing concern in modern society.' (Li, T., et al., 2011). 'Marital satisfaction is defined as an individual mental state that reflects the perceived benefits and costs of the marriage. The higher the cost, the lower the satisfaction perceived with the marriage and the partner, and similarly, the higher the perceived benefits, the higher the satisfaction obtained from the marriage and the partner' (Stone & Shackelford, 2007). 'Marital satisfaction occurs due to a variety of factors. Research studies done across various regions reveal that Personality traits are among the factors influencing marital satisfaction.' (Karney et al., 1995). The personality type of an individual determines their thought patterns and behaviors with their spouses and family members. Other factors such as the occupation, type of marriage, age, cultural background, sexual inclination etc. can be the influencing factors that determine the level of satisfaction in a marriage. The roles and responsibilities of the women in a family also has an influence on the marital satisfaction as it was explored recently in a research study performed in Korea which stated that married women had a more egalitarian gender attitude which directly or indirectly had an influence on the marital satisfaction. Further, communication quality had a greater influence on the marital satisfaction of women as compared to men. (Yoo, G., 2020). A recent research was conducted to analyze the difference in marital satisfaction among arranged and love marriage couples in South Asia, the study revealed that there was no significant difference between the two groups in terms of the marital satisfaction and also has inferred that women are more dissatisfied with marriages in general as compared to men because of various gender role differences. (Khalid, S., 2022).

One of the key factors allowing an individual to handle different circumstances are the emotional stability of an individual. Emotional stability enables the person to develop an integrated and balanced way of perceiving the problems of life. This organizational ability and structured perception helps one to develop reality-oriented thinking, judgment and evaluation ability. (Chaturvedi, M., & Chander, R, 2010). Individuals who have greater emotional intelligence tend to have greater emotional stability i.e. they are better at stabilizing their moods. Emotionally stable persons tolerate minor stresses and strains of day to day living without becoming emotionally upset, anxious, nervous, tense, or angry. They are able to maintain composure under minor emotional stress. (Fattah, A., 2020). Since the emotional stability of an individual enables a person to have a different perception and approach towards people around them and the issues they come across, they are in a better position to handle complex situations in and around their family and work space. In terms of

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the ability to be emotionally flexible also has an influence on the adaptability of the individual to a non- conducive environment.

In terms of a wedding, newly built relationships as well as a different nocturnal environment has to be confronted by the spouse, specially Indian women who leave their homes and live in an entirely new atmosphere. Social support moderated the relation between adaptability and life satisfaction, such that the positive relation between adaptability and life satisfaction was stronger for individuals with higher levels of social support than for individuals with lower levels of social support. (Zhou. M & Lin. N., 2016).

This study aimed to compare specific populations of married women belonging to early and middle adulthood as there is an upsurge in the need for understanding the multi-dimensional factors which may create a non- conducive environment for their physiological and psychological well- being. “Midlife represents a critical period of health transition requiring optimal health attention. This escalates among women due to the socio-economic and cultural barriers and their physiological needs, which require intensive interventions to combat.” (Puri, P., Sinha, A., Mahapatra, P. et al., 2022).

### METHODOLOGY

#### *Objectives*

The objectives of this study are

- To study the relationship between Emotional Stability and Marital Satisfaction.
- To study the relationship between Emotional Stability and Quality of Life.
- To study the relationship between Marital Satisfaction and Quality of Life.
- To study the difference between Early Adulthood and Middle Adulthood married women.

#### *Sample*

The sample comprised of two hundred married women belonging to different age groups ranging between 25-55 years of age residing across major cities in India. The married women have completed at least 5 years of marriage. The criteria also required the women to be living with their spouse and belong to the specific age group. Purposive Sampling technique was used in order to gather the sample.

#### *Instruments*

Three measures were used in this study,

- 1. ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale:** ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale is a measure of Marital Satisfaction developed by Fowers, J., B., & Olson, H., D. (1993). The EMS consisted of 15 items. Out of these, nine items are directly scored and six items are reverse scored. Nine items that are scored directly (item number 1,3,4,6,7,10,11,13 &15) and six are reverse scored (item number 2,5,8,9,12 &14). Respondents were asked to answer each item by indicating the extent of their agreement on a 5 point Likert.
- 2. Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ):** Emotion Regulation Questionnaire is a measure of Emotion Regulation developed by Gross, J.J., & John, O.P. (2003). The ERQ consisted of 10 items used to measure respondents' tendency to regulate their emotions in two ways: (1) Cognitive Reappraisal and (2) Expressive Suppression. Respondents answer each item on a 7-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

**3. World Health Organization Quality of Life Instrument (WHOQOL-BREF):**

The WHOQOL-BREF is widely used for comparing indices of Quality of Life across cultures. The questionnaire consists of 26 items covering the domains of physical health (7 items), psychological health (6 items), social relationships (3 items) and environmental health (8 items).

**Research Design**

This is a quantitative research study that deploys the statistical analysis of the data by carrying out co-relation as well as t- test analysis. The co-relation is intended to analyse the strength of relationship between the variables chosen for the study i.e Marital satisfaction, Emotional Stability and Quality of Life. After checking on the correlation between the three variables, the independent sample t- test is used to compare and contrast the sample data collected between the Early Adulthood and Middle Adulthood married women. Linear Regression is performed to predict the value of Quality Of Life based on Marital Satisfaction and Emotional Stability.

**RESULTS**

**Table No. 1 Pearson’s Correlation between Marital Satisfaction, Emotional Stability and Quality of Life**

	Marital Satisfaction	Emotional Stability	Quality of Life
Marital Satisfaction	1	0.437**	0.506**
Emotional Stability	0.437**	1	0.334**
Quality of Life	0.334**	0.506**	1

Table 1 shows the level of significance between the three variables using Pearson’s correlation. The results show that Marital satisfaction has perfect correlation with Emotional Stability as the Pearson’s correlation value was 0.437 and significance value which was  $p < 0.01$ . Emotional regulation has a perfect correlation with Quality of life as the Pearson’s correlation is 0.334 and significance value was 0.01 which was  $p < 0.01$  and Marital Satisfaction is also perfectly correlated with Quality of life as the Pearson’s correlation is 0.506 and the significance value was 0.01 which is  $p < 0.01$ .

**Table No. 2 Shows results on independent samples t test among early adulthood and middle adulthood married women**

	Early Adulthood		Middle Adulthood		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
Marital Satisfaction	49.15	7.42	48.65	11.05	0.34	0.729

Table 2 shows the results of *t-test for independent samples*: A two-tailed t-test for independent samples (equal variances assumed) showed that the difference between early adulthood and middle adulthood with respect to the independent variable Marital Satisfaction was not statistically significant,  $t(200) = 0.34, p > .729$ .

Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between early adulthood and middle adulthood age groups of married women, was accepted.

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**Table No. 3 Shows results on independent samples t test among early adulthood and middle adulthood married women**

	Early Adulthood		Middle Adulthood		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
<b>Emotional Stability</b>	46.00	10.95	42.70	12.13	1.71	0.087

Table 3 shows the results of *t-test for independent samples*: A two-tailed t-test for independent samples (equal variances assumed) showed that the difference between early adulthood and middle adulthood with respect to the independent variable Emotional Stability was not statistically significant,  $t(200) = 1.71, p > .087$ .

Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between early adulthood and middle adulthood married women, was accepted.

**Table No. 4 Shows results on independent samples t test among early adulthood and middle adulthood married women**

	Early Adulthood		Middle Adulthood		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
<b>Quality of Life</b>	55.08	7.51	55.23	9.80	1.09	0.914

Table 4 shows the results of *t-test for independent samples*: A two-tailed t-test for independent samples (equal variances assumed) showed that the difference between early adulthood and middle adulthood with respect to the independent variable Emotional stability was not statistically significant,  $t(200) = 1.09, p > .914$ .

Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between early adulthood and middle adulthood age groups of married women, was accepted.

**Table No. 5 Shows results on linear regression between the independent variables marital satisfaction, emotional stability and dependent variable quality of life.**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the estimate
1	0.522 <sup>a</sup>	0.272	0.256	6.909

Predictors; (Constant), Emotional stability, Marital Satisfaction

Dependent Variable: QOL

Table 5 shows the results of the linear regression done to predict the Quality Of Life based on the independent variables Marital Satisfaction and Emotional Regulation. The results indicate that for every unit increase in Marital Satisfaction, there was an increase in variance by 0.44. For every unit increase in emotional stability there was an increase in variance by 0.13. The overall variance according to R square value was 27% was found.

## **DISCUSSION**

The research study shows that marital satisfaction plays a major role in influencing the quality of life of married women and the ability of women to cope with different stressors so as to maintain emotional stability becomes crucial in their day to day life. At every stage of life individuals are confronted with a multitude of challenges, yet, the internal and external environment needs to be maintained at an optimum level of balance to overcome the

challenges and achieve a stable lifestyle. The results of this study can aid in better understanding of family issues and individual coping abilities of women which in turn would pave way for development of appropriate psychological interventions in therapeutic settings. Further research can be initiated in terms of analyzing the prospects of emotions, marital satisfaction and quality of life among older adults and different gender groups. Social and economic status of middle aged women can be further analyzed to bring about an awareness among Urban masses so as to ignite a change in the thought process and encourage people to translate the same into the rural society.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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