

Research Paper

## Perceived Partner Responsiveness, Self Reflection, Insight and Self Esteem among Married Individuals: A Correlation Study

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### ABSTRACT

Marriage is the aspect of life that holds significance and influences an individual's perception towards their spouse and themselves. An evaluative aspect in marital relationships is how partners perceive each other, understand, communicate and are responsive to their needs. This perception can influence one's own reflective self and deep insights with the feelings of esteem and worthiness. The aim of the present study was to discern the correlation between Perceived Partner Responsiveness, Self Reflection, Insight and Self Esteem among married individuals. The study consisted of 106 married individuals who have been into a marriage of at least 3 or more years. The tools used for the data collection process are Perceived Partner Responsiveness Scale (PPRS) by Reis and Carmichael (2006), Self Reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS) by Franklin and Langford (2002) and Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES) by Rosenberg (1965). The findings of the study suggest that Perceived Partner Responsiveness has a significant positive correlation with Self Reflection & Insight ( $r = .16, p < .01$ ); a moderately positive correlation with Self Esteem ( $r = .36, p < .01$ ). Also, Self Reflection & Insight shares a significant positive correlation with Self Esteem ( $r = .36, p < .01$ ). The study suggests practical implications in understanding marital dynamics and insights for developing strategies to marital counseling.

**Keywords:** *Perceived Partner Responsiveness, Self Reflection and Insight, Self Esteem, Married Individuals*

In the context of marital relationships, the issue of perceived partner's responsiveness assumes a critical role, which impacts on the level of both, emotional closeness and relational satisfaction (Reis & Shaver, 1988). This perception is not restricted to the surface level of the individuals' emotions but rather goes hand in hand with intrapersonal processes like awareness, understanding and self-respect (Reis et al., 2004; Overall et al., 2006). In the context of the marriage, these variables are used as the key determinants of individual attitudes to self and partner as well as overall relationship quality (Reis et al., 2004; Laurenceau et al., 1998). Therefore, the purpose of this research is to discern the relationship between perceived partner responsiveness, self-reflection, insight, and self-esteem among married individuals. Perceived partner responsiveness is defined as the subjective perception of one's spouse or partner's sensitivity, understanding, and

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Received: December 21, 2024; Revision Received: February 08, 2025; Accepted: February 12, 2025

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supportiveness towards one's emotional and psychological needs within the marital relationship (Reis & Carmichael, 2006). Self Reflection is the inspection and evaluation of one's thoughts, feelings and behavior are meta-cognitive factors central to the process of purposeful, directed change and Insight is the clarity of understanding of one's thoughts, feelings and behavior are meta-cognitive factors central to the process of purposeful, directed change (Carver & Scheier, 1988). Self-esteem is the extent to which an individual evaluates themselves positively or negatively based on their self-worth, self-respect, and overall sense of personal value (Rosenberg, 1965).

The self-appraisals of the helpfulness of the partners is one of the most important criteria for the allocation of the several distinct aspects of psychological processes and relationships between them. For Instance, Impett et al., (2017) discovered that partners who receive support by their counterparts are willing to let go of the relationship in the way that can contribute to better satisfaction of the self image. Similarly, Schoebi and Randall (2015) have endorsed the fact that perceived partner's responsiveness has positive association in regulation of distress and manner in which one reflects on self and thereby self-esteem. Reis and Clark (2013) continued the previous research where he discovered that responsive partners are able to demonstrate high levels of self-disclosure which makes individuals to practice self reflection in their personalities hence, they can be said to undergo positive personality change. This was supported by Silvia Phillips (2013) who noted that benefits of self-reflection to increased one's emotional quotient with room to improve on the interpersonal relation also benefit from positive social relation, which could be from a responsive partner. Neff & Karney (2005) therefore acknowledges the position in revealing that self-reflection and insight which is under compassed by Self-Compassionate people can best be achieved through availability of a responsive partner, promotes the increase of one's communication and problem solving capability hence improving relationship quality. Further, longitudinal studies by Laurenceau et al. (1998) and Laurenceau & Kleinman (2011) are useful to explain how this perceived partner response emphatically predicted an increase in global self-esteem and psychological well-being of many adults, possibly because relationship memories are more easily retrieved in securely attached people. Holmes, Murray & Griffin (1996) investigates how partner's perceived sensitivity is crucial and since this will boost self esteem hence the satisfaction in the relationship.

Collectively, the obtained results have highlighted the importance of perceived partner responsiveness for self-insight, self-esteem, self-reflection, and, thus, for the relationship satisfaction and well-being. Despite much work having been done on perceived partner responsiveness, few studies have looked at the cumulative effects of the above mentioned elements on marital satisfaction and psychological well being. Studies examining these processes more particularly among married persons are limited. Therefore, these gaps, may help future researches to understand the role of intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics within the marriage. Hence, understanding the role of perceived partner responsiveness in promoting self reflection, insight and self esteem in marriage could provide valuable insights into the mechanisms of marital satisfaction and stability.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The present study was aimed to discern the relationship between perceived partner responsiveness with self reflection, insight and self esteem among married individuals. With a sample of 106 married individuals who have been into a marriage of at least 3 or more years. Participants undergoing any separation or divorce were excluded from the study. The

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prime method used for collecting data was convenient sampling and data was collected from the areas of Delhi- NCR. A rapport was established with all the participants with a brief introduction about the topic wherein the privacy and confidentiality was assured for all the participants with informed consent. The data was collected via survey i.e. using Google forms. The participation for all the participants was voluntary. The purpose of the study was explained. Following the same the participants carried out standardized tests including- Perceived Partner Responsiveness Scale (PPRS) by Reis, Clark and Holmes (2004), Self Reflection and Insight Scale (SRIS) by John Franklin and Peter Langford (2002) and Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES) by Morris Rosenberg and Claire Seligman (1965). The participants were appreciated for their contribution and were shown gratitude by the end after the completion of data collection. A correlational research design was employed in the present study followed by data analysis.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis of data was carried out with the help of SPSS version 29. The patterns of associations between perceived partner responsiveness, self reflection, insight and self esteem among married individuals. To check these associations Pearson correlation analysis were performed.

*Table 1 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for study variables*

Variables	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Perceived partner responsiveness	106	120.45	28.38	-		
Self-reflection & Insight	106	69.32	7.08	.16**	-	
Self-esteem	106	28.64	3.91	.36**	.36**	-

\*\*p<.01

The findings between Perceived Partner Responsiveness and Self Reflection & Insight showed a positive correlation between Perceived Partner Responsiveness and Self Reflection & Insight. A significant positive correlation was revealed ( $r = .16$ ,  $p < .01$ ) which means that people who experience mutual partner responsiveness are eager to think about themselves and get gain from self reflection. This suggests that individuals who feel supported and understood by their partners are more likely to engage in self-reflection and achieve deeper personal insights. This result supports the notion that positive interpersonal interactions can facilitate personal growth and self-understanding, consistent with theories suggesting that feeling valued by a partner enhances self-worth and introspection. However, Perceived Partner Responsiveness also showed a positive correlation with Self Esteem ( $r = .357$ ;  $p < .01$ ). This indicates that individuals who perceive their partners as responsive and supportive tend to have higher self-esteem. This correlation aligns with attachment theory, which suggests that a responsive partner provides emotional security, thereby reinforcing an individual's self-worth and enhancing relational satisfaction. Based on this, It can be concluded that increased levels of perceived partner responsiveness pertain to increase the level of self esteem among married individuals.

Furthermore, there is a moderately positive correlation between Self Reflection & Insight and Self Esteem ( $r = .361$ ,  $p < .01$ ). This suggests that engaging in self-reflection and gaining personal insights are associated with improved self-esteem. This finding is consistent with research indicating that individuals who engage in introspection and develop personal insights often experience enhanced self-esteem.

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This means that people who spend their reflection time and gain insight about themselves are likely to have better self esteem as compared to others who do not.

Altogether, in terms of the discovered study, it emphasized that even though the coefficient for Perceived Partner Responsiveness and Self Reflection and Insight was comparatively lesser, it shows that responsive partners help in personal growth and increased insight. On the other hand, Perceived Partner Responsiveness and Self Esteem were higher which proves that supportive partners help boosts up one's self esteem. Furthermore, a correlation that indicates that self reflection and insight have positive relationship with Self Esteem which imply that personal development and self exploration positively relates to increase in self esteem.

In summary, the study underlines the importance of perceived partner responsiveness in fostering personal growth, self-reflection, and self-esteem. The presence of a supportive partner appears to be contributing significantly to an individual's psychological well-being, enhancing both personal development and self-worth. These findings highlight the critical role of responsive relationships in promoting overall life satisfaction and emotional health.

### ***Limitations and Suggestions***

Despite offering valuable insights into the relationship between the variables it is important to acknowledge its limitations which are that due to the correlational design of the study, the study offers insight solely among the relationship between variables which restricts to infer causalities. Although, there is a significant relationship between the variables, It cannot be determined whether the variables directly influence each other or share a cause and effect relationship. The sample size for the study was relatively smaller to draw inferences on larger population. Also, the study relies on self report measures which can cause potential biases due to social desirability and self perception. Participants might have responded in ways that are more socially acceptable and desirable than reflecting true responses.

### ***Practical Implications***

The findings for the study suggest significant practical implications such as the study helps in understanding marital dynamics and therapists and counselors may take insights to develop strategies for marital counseling. Findings, also contributes in community programs aimed at strengthening marriages and reducing marital stress. By promoting the importance of responsive partner interactions, these programs can contribute to the overall well being of married individuals and leading to healthier communities.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study aimed at finding the significant relationship between Perceived Partner Responsiveness, Self Reflection, Insight and Self Esteem among married individuals. Wherein the study highlights the role of Perceived Partner Responsiveness in fostering Self Reflection & Insight and enhancing Self Esteem among married individuals. This shows the significance of supportive and responsive partners in promoting individual psychological well being aspects such as esteem and insight. By fostering such an environment in marital relationships, It may contribute towards an individual's personal growth and Self Esteem.

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***Acknowledgment***

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:*** Rashi, V., & Prerna, G. (2025). Perceived Partner Responsiveness, Self Reflection, Insight and Self Esteem among Married Individuals: A Correlation Study. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 13(1), 747-752. DIP:18.01.070.20251301, DOI:10.25215/1301.070