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Research Paper

Attachment Styles, Gratitude, Forgiveness & Dyadic Adjustment as predictors of Marital Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

Marriage is virtually found in all societies, and a majority of individuals in every society get married at least once in their lifespan. It has been established that the satisfaction of married couples is even more important than the marriage itself. Taking an inspiration from John and Julie Gottman's Sound House Relationship Theory, the present study has attempted to study the effect of attachment style, gratitude, expression of gratitude, forgiveness, and dyadic adjustment on marital satisfaction. The study comprised of 200 married males and females (100 males & 100 females) between the age group of 25-50 years. Anxious & Avoidant Attachment styles are found to be negatively correlated with marital satisfaction whereas, gratitude, expression of gratitude, forgiveness & dyadic adjustment are positively correlated with marital satisfaction. Apart from this, a significant difference in gender in marital satisfaction is found. Females are found to have a lowered marital satisfaction as compared to males. Lastly, the duration of marriage is also seen to impact marital satisfaction. Individuals in 5 years and below of marriage reported to have higher marital satisfaction than those married for 10 years and above.

Keywords: *Marital satisfaction, attachment styles, dyadic adjustment, gratitude, forgiveness, duration of marriage*

Conjugal relationship is one the most central relationship in the life of most adults (Glaser & Newton, 2001). Marriage is referred to as a socially approved, economic, and sexual union that takes place usually between a man and a woman that is denoted symbolically in some way or the other (e.g., marriage certificate, ceremony, symbols—rings) (Ember et. al., 2006). Marriage, typically involves coupling of two people having different desires, needs & interests. Men and women have been acknowledged to experience marriage differently (Jackson et.al., 2014). Marital satisfaction is referred to as a state in which the wife and the husband experience a sense of happiness and satisfaction from each other most of the time. It is considered to be an extent to which an individual has adapted to his or her present marital situation as compared to the expected marital situation (Winch, 2012). Even though marriage is a highly desired relationship amongst adults, however satisfaction in a marital relationship is a cause of concern. A large number of individuals in 21st century, both males & females are at a greater risk of marital failure and dissatisfaction, and are not in stable martial relationship (Petty,2010). An alarming increase

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in the divorce rates, indicate a psycho-social and behavioral gap that exists in understanding the key skills and knowledge that is essential in order to maintain marital satisfaction (Orathinkal & Vansteenwegen, 2006). Identification of the factors contributing to marital satisfaction allows an individual to know variation in context of how an individual tend to feel, think and interact in a romantic relationship, which have been attributed to their attachment styles (Meyers & Landsberger, 2002).

An attachment style is generally referred to as the relational behavior that takes place between an individual and their primary caregiver, so as to get their basic needs fulfilled by them at the initial stage and later, that tends to develop a schema or a response set for their interaction with the outside world (Dawsen et.al.,2014). Individuals with an anxious attachment style have reported their experience of marriage to be characterized as being obsessive, with feelings of jealousy and being extremely sexually attracted towards their partner. Whereas individuals with an avoidant attachment style reported to fear intimacy in relationships. Securely attached individuals have been seen to be in trustworthy and happy relationship, and also considered to be more accepting of their spouse. (Meyers & Landsberger, 2002).

In the recent decade however a growing research on the positives, leading to marital satisfaction has been initiated. It has been established that the positives are also worth paying attention to and character strengths have captured the interest of scientists in recent years (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Gratitude and forgiveness are considered as interpersonal strengths that have been seen to foster wellbeing (Frederickson, 2004; Watkins, 2004). Apart from being grateful, an expression of gratitude and appreciation of the spouse is considered one of the important factors that are seen to contribute to a long term satisfying marriage. Individuals who are high on gratitude tend to have a higher degree of life satisfaction (McCollough et.al.,2004).

In marital context, forgiveness is referred to as a lower level of blaming one another, a decrease in the degree of anger towards one's spouse, especially in regard to betrayal, an increase in the level of understanding amongst each other and a behavior which reflects a deeper sense of peace at emotional and mental level experienced by the forgiver (Gordon et.al.,2009). It has been witnessed that one of the major steps towards reconciliation with one's spouse is by forgiving them. This is seen to have a therapeutic effect on the relationship, leading to greater marital satisfaction and also in resolving both long and short term marital conflicts (Fincham et.al.,2004) and reducing disagreement in a couple (Orathinkal and Vansteenwegen (2006).

The perceived level of agreement and disagreement of a couple on a wide variety of issues in their relationship such as, religious issue, conventionality, philosophy of life, demonstration of affection, matters of finances, sexual relation, amongst others has been referred to as dyadic adjustment (Comin & Santos,2012).

A higher amount of satisfaction is experienced amongst spouses who are compatible with one another in various aspects of life like being sexually satisfied, the amount of time they spend with each other, and the way they choose to spend their leisure time.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Inclusion criteria for participation was 200 married males & females (100+100) between the age group of 25-50 years, who were Computer literate and well versed with English language. Snow ball sampling was done for selection of the sample.

Research design

The study is a correlational study in which Attachment styles, gratitude, forgiveness and dyadic adjustment are the Independent Variables (IV) and Marital Satisfaction is the (DV). T test was computed to find the gender differences in marital satisfaction.
Lastly, analysis of variance was done to see the duration of marriage on marital satisfaction.

Tools Used

Total 6 Scales were administered through Google forms via online medium for the collection of the requires data, which are as follows-

1) Enrich Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS)-

The scale consists of 15 items with Marital Satisfaction (10 items) and Idealistic Distortion (5 items). The scoring is done on a 5 point Likert type scale, where, 1=strongly agree, 2=moderately agree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4= moderately agree, 5=strongly agree. The items 2, 5, 8, 9,12,14 are reversely scored. After reversely scoring the negative items, an individual raw score for both the subscales are obtained for summing up the items appropriate for each of them individually. After the raw scores are obtained, a percentile score of both the obtained raw scores is found in the norm table. Next the final, EMS score is obtained by using the following formula, where, PCT= percentile score for individual marital satisfaction and ID= percentile score of individual idealistic distortion.
EMS= PCT- [(.40 * PCT) (ID * .01)] .40 is taken as constant.
A high score indicates a higher marital satisfaction. The scale is a reliable and valid measure of marital satisfaction. Cronbach alpha for internal reliability of the scale was .86 and the inter item correlation is strong, ranging from .52 to .82. The test retest reliability was measured with a reliability coefficient of 0.86.

2) The Adult Attachment Scale (AAS)-

The scale consists of 18 items with 3 subscales, namely, close, depend and anxiety, that is a measure of 3 adult attachment styles, namely, Secure, Anxious and Avoidant. There are 6 items each measuring each of the subscale. The test-retest reliability for the Close, Anxiety and depend subscales were .68, .52 and .71 respectively. The scoring is done using 5 point Likert type scale, where, 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5= strongly agree. The secure attachment style has a high score on close and depend subscale and a low score on anxiety subscale. An anxious attachment style is marked by high score on anxiety subscale and a moderate score on close and depend subscale. An avoidant attachment style has a low score on close, depend and anxiety subscale. The items 1, 2, 3,4,5,6 are depend subscales. Items 7,8,9,10,11,12 are anxiety subscales and items 13,14,15,16,17,18 are close subscales. Items 1, 2, 5,6,7,15,16 and 18 are reversely scored.

3) The Gratitude Questionnaire (GQ-6)

It consists of 6 items designed specifically to assess the individuals tendency to recognize, respond to and experience gratitude in his/her life. The participants are required to answer 6 items on a scale of 1-7 where, 1=strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = neutral, 5 = slightly agree, 6 = agree, 7 = strongly agree. For items 3 and item 6, reverse

scoring is done in order to inhibit response bias. The scores range between 6-42, where, a high score is correlated with a high disposition gratitude. The test has good internal reliability, with coefficient alpha ranging between 0.82-0.87.

4) Expression of Gratitude in Relationship Scale-
It consists of 3 items measuring a couple's expression of gratitude in a marital relationship. The Cronbach Alpha was measure to be .94. The scoring is done on a 5 point likert type scale, where, 1= Never and 5= Very Frequently.

5) Marital Offence - Specific Forgiveness Scale-
It is 10 item scale that focusses on when the respondent has reportedly felt hurt or wronged by his/her partner. The scale measures three dimensions –resentment, avoidance and benevolence. The scoring is done using a 6 point, Likert type scale, where 1-strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3-somewhat disagree, 4-somewhat agree, 5-agree, 6-strongly agree. The items 1, 3, 4,6,7,8 measure the resentment and avoidance. Whereas, 2, 5,9,10 measures the Benevolence and are reversely scored.

6) Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS)-
The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) consists of 14 items and is designed to assess 7 dimensions of couple relationship assesses seven dimensions of couple relationships - decision making, values and affection, stability and conflict regulation, and Cohesion through activities and discussion.

The scale is a reliable and valid measure of dyadic adjustment in couples. The Cronbach alpha was measured to be .90. The scale is also seen to have a high construct validity, by having supporting a high correlation with a similar measure. The correlation of RDAS with original Dyadic adjustment Scale was .97. The scoring is done on a 5 or 6 point Likert type scale. The scoring is done by summing up the score on all the 14 items. The score ranges between 0 to 69, where a lower scores is an indicator of a higher relationship distress. The cut-off score for the scale is 48. The scores above 48 and above indicate non-distressful relationships and scores of 47 and below is an indicator of relationship or marital distress.

Procedure
The study was conducted by sending out consent forms to 200 married males & females.
The consent forms and further the tests were sent via online medium (through Google-Forms, sent via what's App and E-mail). All the instructions were mentioned clearly at the top of each section in the Google Form.

After the collection of all responses and their scoring the results were calculated using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0, and Microsoft Excel.

Statistical Analysis
The data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) where descriptive statistics (Mean & SD), correlation, regression, t test & ANOVA was done.

Hypotheses
- H_1 There is a negative relationship between anxious attachment style and marital satisfaction

- H_2 There is a negative relationship between avoidant attachment style and marital satisfaction
- H_3 There is a positive relationship between gratitude and marital satisfaction
- H_4 There is positive relationship between expression of gratitude and marital satisfaction
- H_5 There is a positive relationship between forgiveness and marital satisfaction
- H_6 There is a positive relationship between dyadic adjustment and marital satisfaction
- H_7 Marital satisfaction of females is lower than that of males
- H_8 Duration of marriage has an impact on marital satisfaction

RESULTS

Table No.1 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	200	35.16	7.005
Anxious Attachment Style	200	11.82	3.794
Avoidant Attachment Style	200	30.11	8.780
Gratitude	200	35.31	4.714
Expression of Gratitude	200	13.31	1.764
Forgiveness	200	45.92	8.633
Dyadic Adjustment	200	53.10	8.148
Marital Satisfaction	200	121.45	21.186

Table No.2 Correlation b/w Anxious Attachment Style, Avoidant Attachment style, Gratitude, Expression of Gratitude, Forgiveness, Dyadic Adjustment & Marital Satisfaction

	Anxious Attachment Style	Avoidant Attachment Style	Gratitude	Expression of Gratitude	Forgiveness	Dyadic adjustment	Marital Satisfaction
Anxious Attachment Style	1						
Avoidant Attachment Style	.416**	1					
Gratitude	-.347**	-.282**	1				
Expression of Gratitude	-.247**	-.167*	.532**	1			
Forgiveness	-.418**	-.497**	.507**	.438**	1		
Dyadic adjustment	-.322**	-.329**	.553**	.657**	.622**	1	
Marital Satisfaction	-.402**	-.357**	.521**	.600**	.675**	.799**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table N0.2 indicates that there is negative relationship between Anxious Attachment Style and Marital Satisfaction, which came out to be r = -.402**, p <0.01, which is significant at 0.01 level. Similarly, a significant negative between Attachment avoidance and Marital Satisfaction was found at 0.01 level i.e. r= -.357**, p <0.01.

Next, a significant positive correlation was found between gratitude and marital satisfaction at 0.01 level, r=.521**, p<0.01. Further, the relationship between Expression of gratitude and Marital Satisfaction was also positive & significant at 0.01 level, that is r= .600**, p< 0.01.

The significant positive correlation between Forgiveness and Marital Satisfaction was also found at 0.01 level, that is, r= .675**, p<0.01. Lastly, a positive significant relationship came out to be seen between dyadic adjustment and Marital satisfaction at 0.01 level, that is, r = .799**, p<0.01.

Table No.3- Regression Analysis of all Dyadic Adjustment, Forgiveness, Anxious Attachment Style & Expression of Gratitude

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Adjusted R
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	6.031	6.196		.973	.332	
	Dyadic adjustment	2.165	.116	.799	18.670	.000	0.636
2	(Constant)	-2.893	5.954		-.486	.628	
	Dyadic adjustment	1.674	.137	.617	12.185	.000	
	Forgiveness	.763	.133	.291	5.748	.000	0.687
3	(Constant)	10.047	8.143		1.234	.219	
	Dyadic adjustment	1.647	.136	.607	12.072	.000	
	Forgiveness	.670	.137	.256	4.875	.000	
	Attachment Anxiety	-.610	.265	-.100	-2.302	.022	0.689
4	(Constant)	1.082	9.042		.120	.905	
	Dyadic adjustment	1.455	.161	.537	9.037	.000	
	Forgiveness	.659	.136	.252	4.839	.000	
	Attachment Anxiety	-.589	.263	-.096	-2.241	.026	
	Expression of Gratitude	1.458	.665	.113	2.192	.030	0.699

a. Dependent Variable: Marital Satisfaction

Table No.3. Shows the regression analysis where all the variables studied in the research, were put into the equation and whereby, dyadic adjustment, forgiveness, anxious attachment style and expression of gratitude came out to be the major predictors towards marital satisfaction. 63.6% variance in Marital Satisfaction is explained by Dyadic Adjustment. Further, it indicates, that 1 unit increment in Dyadic Adjustment, increases the Marital Satisfaction by 1.45.

- 68.7 % variance in Marital Satisfaction is explained both by Dyadic Adjustment and Forgiveness. Further, 1 Unit increment in forgiveness, increases marital satisfaction by .65.
- 68.9 % variance in Marital Satisfaction is explained by Dyadic Adjustment, Forgiveness and Attachment Anxiety and 1 Unit increment in Attachment Anxiety decrease marital satisfaction by .58.
- 69.9% variance in Marital Satisfaction is explained by Dyadic Adjustment, Forgiveness, and Attachment Anxiety & Expression of Gratitude. 1 Unit increment in Expression of Gratitude increases Marital Satisfaction by 1.45

Table No.4- Mean, S.D & t values of Males & Females

	Gender	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**	**t**	**df**	**sig. (2-tailed)**
Anxious Attachment Style	1	100	11.54	3.619	.366	-.926	194	.000
	2	100	12.04	3.932	.397			
Avoidant Attachment Style	1	100	30.88	9.324	.942	1.390	194	.166
	2	100	29.15	8.000	.808			
Gratitude	1	100	35.76	4.262	.431	1.179	194	.240
	2	100	34.97	5.033	.508			
Expression of Gratitude	1	100	13.71	1.464	.148	3.112	194	.01**
	2	100	12.98	1.822	.184			
Forgiveness	1	100	43.29	8.691	.878	-4.638	194	.001***
	2	100	48.70	7.631	.771			
Dyadic Adjustment	1	100	52.58	8.164	.825	-1.128	194	.261
	2	100	53.87	7.787	.787			
Marital Satisfaction	1	100	118.93	21.806	2.203	-1.981	194	.05*
	2	100	124.71	18.977	1.917			

Table No.4, indicates the difference between males and females in marital satisfaction and its predictors, where 1=females and 2= males. There is a significant difference in marital satisfaction in males and females at 0.05 level. Males score higher on marital satisfaction as compared to females.

There is also a highly significant difference in males and females on forgiveness at 0.001*** level as a predictor of marital satisfaction. Males tend to forgive more as compared to females. On the other hand, females tend to express more gratitude as compared to males, and a significant difference on expression of gratitude at 0.01** level as a predictor of marital satisfaction came out between males and females.

Table No.5- Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
1	87	126.25	16.518	1.771	129.77	77	157
2	55	120.82	21.232	2.973	126.80	54	149
3	58	114.59	25.496	3.348	121.29	41	151
Total	200	121.39	21.221	1.516	124.38	41	157

Table No.5 shows the descriptive statistics of duration of marriage. The data was divided into three groups, where 1 refers to 5 years & below of marriage, 2 refers to 5-10 years of marriage and 3 refers to 10 & above years of marriage. N=200, Total Mean= 121.39 & S.D= 21.221.

Table No.6- ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3413.939	2	1706.969	3.903	.022
Within Groups	84402.592	193	437.319		
Total	87816.531	195			

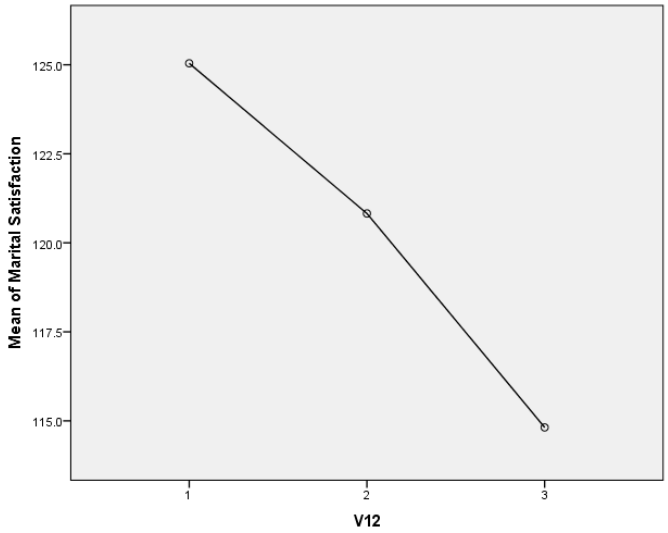
Table No.6 indicates the ANOVA scores, where the Sum of Squares = 87816.531, df between groups is 2, while that of within groups is 193. $F(2,193)= 3.903$, $p< 0.05$, which is significant.

Table No. 7 Post Hoc test

(I) V12	(J) V12	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	4.218	3.624	.476	-4.34	12.78
	3	10.225*	3.672	.016	1.55	18.90
2	1	-4.218	3.624	.476	-12.78	4.34
	3	6.007	4.183	.324	-3.87	15.89
3	1	-10.225*	3.672	.016	-18.90	-1.55
	2	-6.007	4.183	.324	-15.89	3.87

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table No. 7 shows the Post Hoc test to indicate the mean difference in duration of marriage. A difference in group 1 i.e. 5years& below of marriage & group 3 i.e. 10 years & above came out to be significant at 0.05 level.



The above Graph represents the impact of duration of marriage on marital satisfaction where, a decrease in the marital satisfaction with duration of marriage can be observed in the picture.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The concept of marital satisfaction is an area of great importance for researchers and married couples (Fincham & Beach,2010). For the researchers, it helps in providing a deep understanding as to how the relationships work, and in identifying the factors that contribute to marital satisfaction. It also assists the counsellors to employ the strategies that benefit those seeking counselling, and educate them well enough to those factors that lead to marital dissatisfaction (King,2016). The present study was carried out to investigate the relationship between attachment styles, gratitude, forgiveness and dyadic adjustment on marital satisfaction. Apart from this, the gender differences in marital satisfaction and duration of marriage on marital satisfaction have also been studied.

Based on the past researches and literature, few hypotheses were framed and tested. The first one being, there is a negative relationship between Anxious Attachment Style and Marital Satisfaction. A correlational study using SPSS was done for the same. The correlation came out to be significant at 0.01 level. Thus, the ***first hypothesis*** that there is a negative relationship between Anxious Attachment Style and Marital Satisfaction is accepted.

The ***second hypothesis*** was, 'There is a negative relationship between attachment avoidance and marital satisfaction. The correlation came out to be significant at 0.01 level. Therefore, we accept the second hypothesis that there is negative relationship between Attachment Avoidance and Marital Satisfaction. Our results are consistent with another study conducted on 24 participants ranging between 25-45 years of age in India, where marital satisfaction was positively correlated with secure attachment style and a negative correlation was found between marital satisfaction and anxious insecure attachment styles, pertaining to need of constant validation from the partner, leading to less marital satisfaction (Shah et.al., 2018). A significant negative correlation between avoidant and anxious attachment style with marital satisfaction was also concluded in a study conducted on a sample of 146 couples (292 individuals) in Iran. One of the reasons attributed for marital dissatisfaction amongst individuals with insecure attachment styles (Avoidant and anxious) was a loneliness and a fear of rejection in the relationship (Mohammadi et.al., 2016). Individuals with anxious

attachment styles feel that their relational needs are not met by their partners which confirms to their fears, that in turn contributes to their lower marital satisfaction (Hazan, 1994). Such individuals are likely to overact to stressors and employ attachment hyper activating strategies in order to regulate their emotions like, clingy behavior and demand for care and attention (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2007). However, individuals with avoidant attachment styles make use of deactivating strategies, such as denying the need to attach themselves with others and being self-reliant. These strategies are usually put into use in order to avoid pain and distress, that they have experienced in the past as a consequence of lack of availabity of parents or caregiver (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2007).

The ***third hypothesis*** that was framed was, there is a positive relationship between Gratitude and Marital Satisfaction'. The correlation was done and the result came out to be significant at 0.01 level. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted.

Similar results were also observed in a study conducted on 240 Iranian Women, to study the effect of Gratitude on Marital Satisfaction. The results indicated a positive relationship between Gratitude and Marital Satisfaction. One of the reasons attributed to the same is that gratitude enables the individual to focus on the good in the relationship. It provides a conducive environment where we are conscious of the goodness in marriage, overlooking the negatives (Saeidi, Ebrahimi & Soleimanian, 2019).

The ***fourth hypothesis*** was 'There is a positive relationship between expression of gratitude and marital satisfaction'. The correlation came out to be positive and significant at 0.01 level. Therefore, the hypotheses is accepted. Our results are consistent with a study conducted on 50 couples, showing a positive significant relationship between gratitude and expression of gratitude in marital satisfaction. One of the reasons for the same could be a higher perceived support and intimacy, observed amongst the grateful individuals contributing to marital satisfaction (Mitchell, 2005). Felt and expressed gratitude toward a spouse is likely to enhance positive interactions & reciprocity, as a result of increased positive experiences in a relationship, the individuals experience higher marital satisfaction (McCullough, Kilpatrick et al., 2001)

The ***fifth hypothesis*** was, there is a positive relationship between forgiveness and marital satisfaction. The result came out to be significant at 0.01 level. Therefore, we accept the hypothesis. Our results are consistent with a study conducted on 200 married women in Iran. The Pearson correlation and a multiple regression analysis of data concluded a significant positive relationship between forgiveness and marital satisfaction ($p<0.001$). The study also concluded forgiveness to be one of the best predictors of marital satisfaction (Mirzadeh & Fallachai, 2012). Similar results were obtained in another study conducted on 80 couples (N=160) in the city of Tehran, ranging between 18-31 years of age. Pearson correlation was done for analysis and a positive significant relationship between forgiveness and marital satisfaction was concluded ($p<0.05$). Besides this, forgiveness index was also concluded to determine 0.40 variance in Marital satisfaction (Askari, 2016). Forgiveness in a relationship can help in handling marital conflicts, and reducing disagreement in a couple adding to marital satisafction (Orathinkal and Vansteenwegen (2006).

The ***sixth hypothesis*** was, 'There is a positive relationship between Dyadic Adjustment and Marital Satisfaction'. After calculating the correlation, the result came out to be positive and significant. Hence, the hypothesis was accepted.

A similar study on the relationship between dyadic adjustment and marital satisfaction and subjective well-being, was conducted on a sample of 106 Brazilian men and women with a mean age of 42 (+&- 11 yrs.). Through correlation and multiple stepwise regression, it was ascertained that all the factors of dyadic adjustment show a significant positive correlation with marital satisfaction (Comin & Santos, 2012). As the partners in an intimate relationship are mutually dependent on each other, therefore, dyadic adjustment is seen to have an impact on marital satisafction (Razak et.al.,2015).

Similar results are also concluded in a study conducted on 69 married couples, where dyadic adjustment was positively related to marital satisfaction, and the research implies to look for dyadic coping strategies for greater marital satisfaction (Brown et.al.,2019)

The ***seventh hypothesis*** was, 'Marital satisfaction of females is lower than that of males. A significant difference was found in marital satisfaction in males and females at 0.05 level. Men were found to be more satisfied in marital relationship as compared to women. Therefore, we accept the hypothesis that marital satisfaction of females is lower than that of males.

Our results are consistent with a study conducted on 653 married participants, where a significant difference in marital satisfaction in males and females was found, where men were to found to have more marital satisfaction as compared to women (Rostami et.al.,2014). Apart from this a number of studies have been conducted where women have likely to have reported significantly lower marital satisfaction as compared to men (Stevenson & Wolfers, 2009; Whiteman et.al.,2007).

Bernard (1972) has famously quoted that there are two marriages in every marital union, his and hers, where his is better than hers. One of the reasons attributed to the same is the view that marriage is oppressive to women, in a male dominated society. Women with a subordinate role in marriage, do not have an equal control in family and money matters, and are more likely to experience interpersonal violence in marriage (Finlay & Clarke, 2003). This inequality in decision making, division of labor, child care and household tasks are likely to add to lower marital satisfaction in women in comparison to men (Stevens et.al.,2005).

The ***eighth hypothesis*** was, 'The duration of marriage has an impact on marital satisfaction'. The result came out to be significant at 0.01 level, therefore we accept the hypothesis. The marital satisafction in the 0-5 years of marriage came out to be more as compared to the marital satisafction in 5-10 and 10 & above years of marriage. The expression of gratitude, forgiveness and dyadic adjustment was also observed to be higher in 0-5 years of marriage, which could be one of the reason for higher marital satisafction in these years.

The time spent by marital partners have been seen to correlate with satisfaction in marriage (Lavner & Bradbury, 2010). Past research has suggested the marital satisafction to be highest at the time of wedding and tends to decline with years (Burgess & Wallin, 1953). Marital satisafction has also been seen to be higher in the early years of marriage and later to witness a decline after child birth (Patrick et.al.,2007).

CONCLUSION

Various factors contribute to marital satisfaction. The variables in the present study, namely, gratitude, expression of gratitude, forgiveness and dyadic adjustment are positively correlated with marital satisfaction, whereas, anxious attachment style and avoidant attachment style is negatively correlated with marital satisfaction. Apart from this dyadic adjustment is the largest predictor of marital satisfaction, followed by forgiveness, anxious attachment style and expression of gratitude. There is also a significant difference in marital satisfaction in males and females. Women have been reported to have lower marital satisafction as compared to males. Significant difference in males and females have also been reported in variables, like forgiveness and expression of gratitude. Women express more gratitude in relationship as compared to females and males are more forgiving in a relationship as compared to females.

Lastly, the impact of duration on marriage on marital satisfaction was studied. Those in first 5 years of marriage reported a higher marital satisfaction than those in 5-10 & 10 and above years of marriage.

Implication

An important implication of the study is to have a deeper understanding of factors contributing towards marital satisfaction and dissatisfaction amongst the couples. It is widely beneficial for the therapists and family counsellors apart from an individual themselves in order to gain a deeper insight into the foundation of marital life so that that factors leading to divorce or unhappy marriages can be managed and factors contributing towards marital satisfaction can be enhanced. Having an understanding of the predictors of marital satisfaction an intervention in the similar direction can be undertaken. Therefore, growing research in this area is crucial and beneficial for providing effective relationship management techniques and strategies.

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Conflict of Interest

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