

Research Paper

Marital Well-Being in Young Couples: A Comparative Study of Husbands' and Wives' Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

The present study, entitled “Marital Well-being in Young Couples: A Comparative Study of Husbands' and Wives' Perspectives”, aimed to assess and compare couple satisfaction, dyadic adjustment, resilience and perceived partner responsiveness among young married couples aged 22–32 years in Hisar, Haryana. A total of 38 couples (N=76) participated in the study. Standardized tools, including the Couple Satisfaction Index, Dyadic Adjustment Scale, Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale, and Perceived Partner Responsiveness Scale, were employed to gather quantitative data. The findings revealed that young husbands consistently reported significantly higher levels of couple satisfaction, dyadic adjustment, and resilience compared to young wives, with all results being statistically significant at the 1% level. However, while young wives reported higher levels of perceived partner responsiveness than their husbands, the difference was not statistically significant. These gender-based differences point to a discrepancy in marital perceptions among young couples, with wives reporting lower well-being on most dimensions. The results highlighted the need for early marital counselling interventions focusing on emotional communication, shared expectations, and individual resilience. The study underscores the importance of addressing gender-specific concerns in young marriages to promote long-term relational health and suggests strategies to support young couples at risk of marital dissatisfaction.

Keywords: *Young Husbands, Young Wives, Couple Satisfaction, Dyadic Adjustment, Resilience, Perceived Partner Responsiveness, Gender Differences*

Understanding Marital Well-being in Early Adulthood

Marital well-being refers to an individual's subjective evaluation of the quality and satisfaction derived from their marital relationship, encompassing emotional intimacy, communication, conflict resolution, and mutual respect (Fincham & Beach, 2010; Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2000). For young couples, typically in the age range of 22–35 years, marital well-being is intricately tied to their transition into adulthood roles such as managing finances, balancing career ambitions, navigating parenthood, and adjusting to independent living (Arnett, 2015; Glenn, 1998). Early years of marriage often involve idealistic expectations about intimacy and emotional support, which may clash with practical

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stressors, thereby influencing the trajectory of marital satisfaction (Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Lavner et al., 2012). Moreover, younger couples tend to experience higher levels of relational instability, more intense conflict, and fluctuating satisfaction compared to long-term married couples (Kamp Dush & Taylor, 2012; Umberson et al., 2005).

Background of the Study

Marriage is a significant developmental milestone that shapes psychological well-being, particularly during young adulthood when individuals are also navigating career establishment, identity formation, and interpersonal growth. In India, marriage continues to hold deep cultural significance, with expectations surrounding gender roles, familial obligations, and emotional expression often differing between spouses. Young married couples today, especially in urban and semi-urban settings, encounter unique challenges as they attempt to balance traditional marital norms with modern values of equality, independence, and mutual respect. While research in Western contexts has explored couple satisfaction and adjustment extensively, Indian studies, particularly those focusing on gendered experiences of young spouses—remain limited. Psychological constructs such as resilience and perceived partner responsiveness are also underexplored within early Indian marriages. Understanding how young husbands and wives perceive marital well-being, and how gender differences influence relational dynamics, is essential to designing culturally sensitive marital counselling and early intervention programs.

Statement of the Problem

In the Indian socio-cultural context, young marriages are often shaped by conflicting demands of tradition and modernity. Despite entering marital life with shared aspirations, young husbands and wives may experience differences in emotional needs, role expectations, and coping mechanisms. These differences can lead to varying levels of satisfaction, adjustment, and responsiveness, yet such gender-specific disparities are frequently overlooked in empirical research. Most existing studies tend to treat the couple as a unit, without disaggregating perceptions based on gender. This creates a gap in understanding how each partner uniquely experiences the early phase of marriage. Given the rising instances of marital stress and dissatisfaction among young couples in India, especially in transitional settings like Hisar, Haryana, it becomes imperative to examine both perspectives. The present study addresses this gap by comparing marital well-being across four psychological domains, i.e. couple satisfaction, dyadic adjustment, resilience, and perceived partner responsiveness, between young husbands and wives. The findings aim to inform targeted psychological support and relational interventions for young Indian couples.

Gender Differences in Perception: Young Husbands and Wives

A growing body of research points to distinct gendered perceptions of marital well-being. Young husbands often associate satisfaction with physical intimacy, emotional support, and companionship, while young wives may place higher value on communication quality, emotional validation, and equitable division of labour (Kurdek, 2005; Bloch, 2013). Studies show that women are generally more expressive about dissatisfaction and more sensitive to relational stressors, which can make them early indicators of marital distress (Markman, Stanley, & Blumberg, 2010; Whisman et al., 2006). In Indian cultural settings, where traditional gender norms often persist even in urban, educated groups, young wives continue to shoulder the “double burden” of professional work and domestic caregiving (Ramu, 1988; Rajadhyaksha & Bhatnagar, 2000). These expectations may lead to role overload, contributing to fatigue and reduced marital satisfaction (Desai & Andrist, 2010; Singh & Tripathi, 2021). Conversely, young husbands may face societal pressure to act as primary

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earners and decision-makers, often prioritizing financial stability over emotional expression, which may affect relational intimacy (Joseph & Sharma, 2017; Nath, 2022).

The Indian Context: Marriage, Expectations, and Modernity

Marriage in India occupies a central cultural position, viewed not only as a personal bond but as a social institution embedded in family and community networks (Uberoi, 2006; Chadda & Deb, 2013). Young Indian couples, especially those in urban areas, often find themselves negotiating the tension between traditional expectations and modern aspirations, such as dual careers, nuclear living, and autonomy in decision-making (Allendorf & Pandian, 2016; Gupta, 2011). Parental involvement, joint family dynamics, and the continued relevance of caste, community, and religious norms often shape marital functioning, making the Indian context markedly different from Western societies (Fuller & Narasimhan, 2008; Medora et al., 2002). These factors necessitate an examination of both spouses' perspectives to understand the nuances of marital well-being within contemporary Indian society.

Rationale of the Study

Marriage is a dynamic relationship shaped by personal, interpersonal, and contextual factors. Among young couples (22–32 years), early marital years involve navigating emotional adjustment, career pressures, and evolving expectations around intimacy and communication, factors that significantly influence couple satisfaction. During this phase, partners are still developing key relationship skills such as resilience, dyadic adjustment, and responsiveness to each other's needs, which are essential for long-term stability. In the Indian context, limited empirical research has explored marital well-being from both young husbands' and wives' perspectives. Most studies tend to generalize across the couple or emphasize one partner's viewpoint, often overlooking how psychosocial factors interact to affect relationship satisfaction. This study aims to bridge this gap by comparing the perspectives of young married husbands and wives in Hisar, Haryana. The findings are expected to enhance culturally sensitive marital counselling and relationship education practices for young Indian couples.

Objectives of the Study

- To assess the level of couple satisfaction among young married husbands and young married wives (22–32 years of age).
- To examine gender differences in variables such as couple satisfaction, dyadic adjustment, resilience, and perceived partner responsiveness among young married couples.
- To provide coping strategies that enhance couple satisfaction among young married adults, especially those identified as being at risk of relational distress.

Hypothesis to be Tested

- **H1:** There will be a significant difference in the level of couple satisfaction between young husbands and young wives.
- **H2:** Young husbands will report significantly higher couple satisfaction compared to young wives.
- **H3:** There will be a significant difference in dyadic adjustment between young husbands and young wives.
- **H4:** Young husbands will report significantly higher dyadic adjustment than young wives.

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- **H5:** There will be a significant difference in resilience between young husbands and young wives.
- **H6:** Young husbands will report significantly higher levels of resilience compared to young wives.
- **H7:** There will be a significant difference in perceived partner responsiveness between young husbands and young wives.
- **H8:** Young wives will perceive significantly higher partner responsiveness from their partners as compared to young husbands.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Couple Satisfaction in young married couples

Couple satisfaction in young marriages is shaped by emotional, practical, and sociocultural factors. **Kurdek (1999)** highlights that while newlyweds often experience a "honeymoon phase," marital satisfaction may decline over time due to stressors like career transitions, parenting, and role negotiations. **Lavner & Bradbury (2010)** found that unmet expectations and poor communication often erode early marital happiness. **Karney & Bradbury (1995)** emphasize the need for intentional responsiveness and problem-solving to sustain satisfaction. **Kurdek (2005)** adds that women prioritize emotional closeness, communication, and support, leading to dissatisfaction if emotional needs go unmet. In contrast, men often derive satisfaction from shared activities, sexual intimacy, and practical fulfilment (**Clements et al., 1997**). **Rastogi (2009)** notes that in collectivistic societies like India, traditional gender norms may increase emotional burdens on women, though urban couples are slowly shifting towards egalitarian roles. **Mahalwal et al., (2021)** observed that young men tend to report higher couple satisfaction and sexual attitudes than women, reflecting persistent gender gaps. Overall, young couples' satisfaction depends on their ability to adapt to emerging challenges and align their emotional and practical expectations through mutual understanding.

Dyadic Adjustment in young married couples

Dyadic adjustment means encompassing satisfaction, cohesion, consensus, and affection, can be particularly volatile in young marriages (**Spanier, 1976**). **Kurdek (2005)** observed that early marital years often bring stressors like financial instability, career establishment, and parenting, which disrupt emotional balance. **Karney & Bradbury (1995)** noted that younger couples, due to limited emotional maturity, may struggle with conflict resolution and role negotiation, leading to poor adjustment. **Fatma et al., (2019)** found gender and marital status significantly influenced dyadic adjustment, especially among women undergoing infertility treatment. Women often report lower adjustment due to higher emotional and domestic expectations (**Proulx et al., 2007**). **Rastogi & Wampler (1999)** further explain that in India, gender socialization leads women to prioritize harmony even at the expense of personal needs. **Seema & Kumar (2012)** highlighted that young urban women face tension balancing modern aspirations and traditional expectations, impacting adjustment. Despite challenges, **Joann et al., (2010)** found consistency in mutual perceptions of marital satisfaction over time, suggesting that with communication and shared effort, dyadic harmony can be sustained. Therefore, fostering adaptive relational strategies is essential for enhancing adjustment in young couples.

Resilience in young married couples

Resilience is the ability to adapt and recover from stress, is critical for young married couples managing early life challenges. **Karney & Bradbury (1995)** emphasize that young

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marriages often face instability from career building, financial pressures, and emotional immaturity. **Bouchard et al., (1999)** noted that couples in this stage tend to rely more on individual coping strategies than joint problem-solving, making them more vulnerable during conflict. **Gottman & Levenson (1992)** observed that poor emotion regulation and impulsive reactions in early marriages often hinder resilience. However, **Cutrona (1996)** highlighted that shared goals and open communication can build a solid foundation for long-term adaptability. **Neff & Karney (2005)** found that women often assume the role of emotional regulators, enhancing relational stability, though they may experience burnout from unequal emotional labour. **Umberson et al., (2005)** emphasized that young men depend heavily on their wives for emotional support but may lack reciprocal expression. **Levenson et al., (1994)** added that men's emotional suppression can obstruct collaborative coping mechanisms. Therefore, fostering resilience in young couples involves developing balanced emotional labour, mutual support, and conflict resolution skills, helping them transition successfully through marital development.

Perceived Partner Responsiveness in young married couples

Perceived Partner Responsiveness (PPR) significantly shapes intimacy and satisfaction in young marriages. **Gable et al., (2006)** noted that young couples, typically aged 22–35, often seek high levels of emotional availability and validation from their partners, influenced by romantic ideals and early-stage bonding needs. However, role transitions, work stress, and conflict can diminish these perceptions (**Impett et al., 2010**). According to **Overall et al., (2006)**, young partners tend to react emotionally to daily stressors, which may reduce their capacity for supportive responsiveness. Gender differences are evident in how responsiveness is perceived and expressed. **Pietromonaco et al., (2006)** found that young women often feel dissatisfied when emotional validation is lacking, despite their active efforts to maintain emotional closeness. In contrast, **Cutrona et al., (1997)** noted that men often express responsiveness through instrumental actions, solving problems rather than offering emotional comfort, which may not align with their partners' needs. This mismatch can lead to a perception gap, where husbands underestimate their wives' emotional expectations. Enhancing PPR in young marriages requires awareness of these expressive differences and fostering empathetic communication, ensuring both partners feel seen, supported, and emotionally connected.

METHOD

The present study entitled, “Marital Well-being in Young Couples: A Comparative Study of Husbands' and Wives' Perspectives” was conducted to compare the couple satisfaction after marriage and psychological well-being of the young married husbands and the young married wives. Also to check the satisfaction level of these young adults in their marriage. A systematic procedure was designed for conducting the investigation, analysis and interpretation of the data. The sample for the present study was drawn from the urban areas of Hisar city. Hisar, located in the northwestern part of Haryana, India, presents a unique and contextually rich setting for studying marital dynamics across generations. The sample size comprised of total 38 young married couples (N=78), which included the young married husbands and the young married wives, in the age range of 22-32 years, living in Hisar, Haryana. The sample was divided to have an equal number of young married husbands (n₁=38) and young married wives (n₂=38).

To carry out this comparative study, only young married husbands and young married wives (22-32 years) in Hisar city were shortlisted. Then, a list of young married couples (22-32 years) was prepared, 76 young married adults, which included 38 young husbands and 38

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young wives (22-32 years), who were interested to become a part of this study as a sample were selected purposively. The selected subjects were approached to assess their satisfaction level, happiness status, dyadic adjustment, resilience, and perceived partner responsiveness in correlates of their couple satisfaction.

Criteria for Sample Selection:

- The study was limited to young married couples within the age range of 22-32 years.
- The study was limited to Hisar city.
- The study was limited to young couples belonging to married relationship.

Tools/Measures

The Couple Satisfaction Index (CSI-32), developed by James L. Funk and Ronald D. Rogge in 2007, is a widely used self-report measure designed to assess relationship satisfaction with high precision. Unlike traditional relationship scales, the CSI-32 was developed using Item Response Theory (IRT), allowing it to capture a broad spectrum of satisfaction levels with greater sensitivity. The scale consists of 32 items, with some rated on a Likert scale (e.g., 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree) and others using bipolar adjectives (e.g., “unsatisfied – satisfied”). The total score ranges from 0 to 161, with higher scores indicate greater relationship satisfaction, while lower scores may suggest distress or dissatisfaction. While there is no strict cutoff, studies suggest that scores below 104.5 may indicate relationship distress. The CSI-32 is widely used in relationship studies, counselling, and therapy to assess and track changes in relationship quality over time, making it a valuable tool for both researchers and practitioners.

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) is a widely used self-report questionnaire designed to measure the quality and adjustment of romantic relationships. It was developed by Graham B. Spanier in 1976 and has since been used in research and clinical settings to assess relationship satisfaction, cohesion, consensus, and affectional expression. It consists of 32 items measuring four key dimensions: Dyadic Consensus, Dyadic Satisfaction, Dyadic Cohesion, Affectional Expression. Scores range from 0 to 151, with higher scores indicating better relationship adjustment. A cutoff around 100 often distinguishes distressed from non-distressed couples. The DAS is valuable in couples therapy and research, helping assess relationship dynamics and identify distress.

The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) is a psychological assessment tool developed by Kathryn M. Connor and Jonathan R.T. Davidson in 2003 to measure resilience, or an individual's ability to cope with stress and adversity. It was originally designed for clinical and research settings, particularly in relation to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression. In relationship, it helps assess how well partners cope with stress, adapt to challenges, and support each other during difficult times. Resilience in relationships is crucial for overcoming conflicts, life transitions, and external stressors such as financial difficulties, health issues, or family pressures. The CD-RISC consists of 25 items, which are evaluated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 0-4: not true at all (0), rarely true (1), sometimes true (2) often true (3), and true nearly all of the time (4) except for items 2.4 and 6 in which case reverse is applicable these ratings result in a number between 0-100, and higher scores indicate higher resilience. Higher resilience scores suggest that partners are better equipped to manage relationship challenges, communicate effectively, and maintain emotional stability.

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The Perceived Partner Responsiveness Scale (PPRS), created by Harry T. Reis and colleagues, evaluates how much individuals feel heard, valued, and supported by their romantic partners. It examines three main aspects: understanding, which reflects a partner's ability to listen and acknowledge one's emotions; validation, which captures feelings of acceptance and respect; and caring, which assesses emotional support and affection. The scale consists of various statements, typically rated on a Likert scale (e.g., 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree), where higher scores indicate stronger perceived responsiveness. Studies suggest that greater partner responsiveness leads to better relationship satisfaction, emotional security, and intimacy, while lower scores may signal relational difficulties. The PPRS is commonly applied in relationship research and therapy to explore how responsiveness influences trust, communication, and long-term stability.

RESULTS

The present study was conducted to assess the level of dyadic adjustment, resilience and partner responsiveness as predictors of couple satisfaction among young husbands and young wives. The study also sought to examine whether factors like dyadic adjustment, resilience and partner responsiveness were affecting the satisfaction levels of young husbands and young wives. Also to assess the levels of couple satisfaction, dyadic adjustment, resilience and perceived partner responsiveness among young husbands and young wives.

1. Couple satisfaction among young husbands and wives

Table 1.1: Distribution of the sample as the per level of couple satisfaction perceived by young married couples

Couple Satisfaction	Total (N=76)		Young Husbands (n1=38)		Young Wives (n2=38)		Chi-square value	p-value
	N	%	n1	%	n2	%		
Low	38	50	2	5.3	36	94.7	62.199	0.0001**
Moderate	29	38.2	29	76.3	0	0		
High	9	11.8	7	18.4	2	5.3		

Total sample (N) =76; Young husbands (n1) = 38; Young wives (n2) = 38

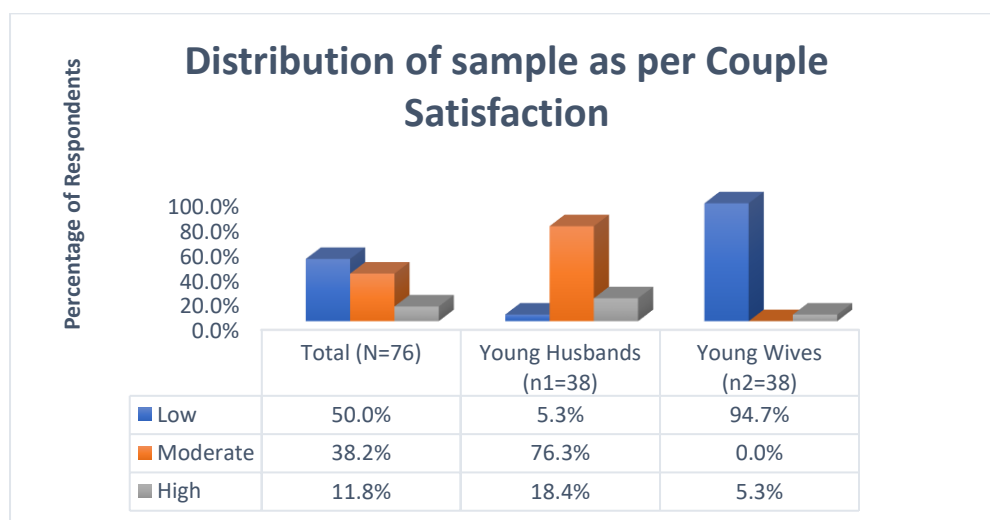


Figure 1.1: Distribution of the sample as per the level of couple satisfaction among young married couples

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Table 1.1 and figure 1.1 represent the distribution of the couples across different levels of couple satisfaction as perceived by young married couples. The majority of the couples (38.2%) perceived a moderate level of couple satisfaction whereas 50 percent of couples perceived low, and 11.8 percent perceived a high level of couple satisfaction. The majority of young husbands (76.3%) perceived moderate couple satisfaction, while most young wives (94.7%) perceived a low couple satisfaction. A few young husbands (5.3%) perceived low couple satisfaction. 18.4 percent of young husbands and 5.3 percent of young wives perceived a high level of couple satisfaction. The distribution of young husbands and wives was significant at a 1 percent level of significance across different levels of couple satisfaction with significant p-value as 0.00001 (<0.01). Thus, a high percentage of young husbands (18.4%) couples perceived a high level of couple satisfaction as compared to young wives (5.3%).

Table 1.2: Differences in perception of couple satisfaction (Mean ± SD) by young married couples

Variable	Young Husbands		Young Wives		t-value	p-value
	(n1=38)		(n2=38)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Couple Satisfaction	141.89	6.746	126.82	9.120	8.194	0.0001**

Total sample (N) =76; Young husbands (n1) = 38; Young wives (n2) = 38

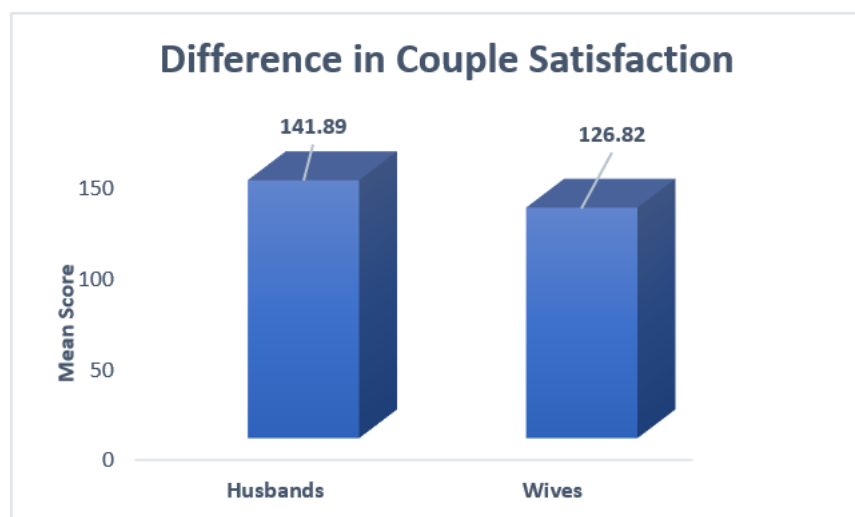


Figure 1.2: Differences in perception of couple satisfaction (Mean ± SD) among young married couples

Table 1.2 and figure 1.2 give the differences in mean scores in the perception of couple satisfaction by the young married couples. Findings were revealed to be significant ($p < 0.01$). According to the results, young husbands (Mean=141.89) reported more couple satisfaction as compared to young wives (Mean=126.82) with a standard deviation of 6.746 and 9.12, respectively. It was hypothesized in the present study that young husbands would have higher couple satisfaction as compared to young wives. Hence, according to the findings, the hypothesis was proved to be accepted.

2. Dyadic adjustment among young husbands and wives

Table 2.1: Distribution of the sample as the per level of dyadic adjustment perceived by young married couples

Dyadic Adjustment	Total (N=76)		Young Husbands (n1=38)		Young Wives (n2=38)		Chi- square value	p-value
	N	%	n1	%	n2	%		
	Low	38	50	5	13.2	33		
Moderate	31	40.8	28	73.7	3	7.9		
High	7	9.2	5	13.2	2	5.3		

Total sample (N) =76; Young husbands (n1) = 38; Young wives (n2) = 38

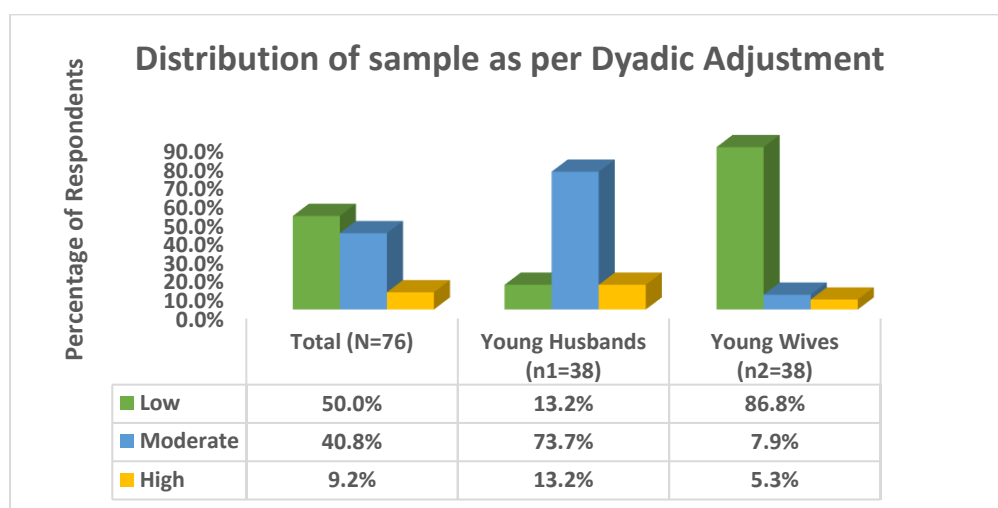


Figure 2.1: Distribution of the sample as per the level of dyadic adjustment among young married couples

Table 2.1 and figure 2.1 reveal the distribution of the sample in the levels of dyadic adjustment perceived by young married couples. When the data was distributed, it was interesting to note that a major section of the young married couples (40.8%) perceived moderate levels of dyadic adjustment. However, 73.7 percent of the young husbands and 7.9 percent of young wives perceived moderate results in this dimension. 13.2 percent of young husbands and 5.3 percent of young wives perceived high levels of dyadic adjustment. The total (50%), as well as young husbands (13.2%) and young wives (86.8%), perceived low dyadic adjustment. The results depicted significant differences in the distribution of dyadic adjustment with significant p-value (0.0001) at 1% level of significance. Thus, most of the young husbands perceived significantly high dyadic adjustment as compared to young wives.

Table 2.2: Differences in perception of dyadic adjustment (Mean ± SD) by young married couples

Variable	Young Husbands (n1=38)		Young Wives (n2=38)		t-value	p-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
	Dyadic Adjustment	123.58	5.044	110.58		

Total sample (N) =76; Young husbands (n1) = 38; Young wives (n2) = 38

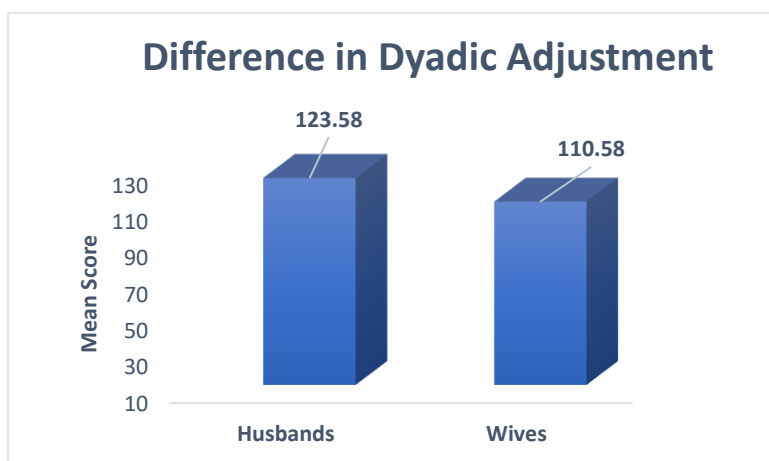


Figure 2.2: Differences in perception of dyadic adjustment (Mean ± SD) among young married couples

Table 2.2 and figure 2.2 give the differences in mean scores in the perception of dyadic adjustment among young married couples. Findings were revealed to be significant ($p < 0.01$) at a 1 percent level of significance with p-value as 0.0001. According to the results, young husbands (Mean=123.58) perceived significantly high dyadic adjustment as compared to young wives (Mean=110.58) with standard deviations of 5.044 and 5.783, respectively. It was hypothesized in the present study that young husbands would have higher dyadic adjustment as compared to young wives. Hence, according to the findings, the hypothesis was proved to be accepted.

3. Resilience among young husbands and wives

Table 3.1: Distribution of the sample as the per level of resilience perceived by young married couples

Resilience	Total (N=76)		Young Husbands (n1=38)		Young Wives (n2=38)		Chi- square value	p-value
	N	%	n1	%	n2	%		
	Low	34	44.7	0	0	34		
Moderate	31	40.8	30	78.9	1	2.6		
High	11	14.5	8	21.1	3	7.9		

Total sample (N) =76; Young husbands (n1) = 38; Young wives (n2) = 38

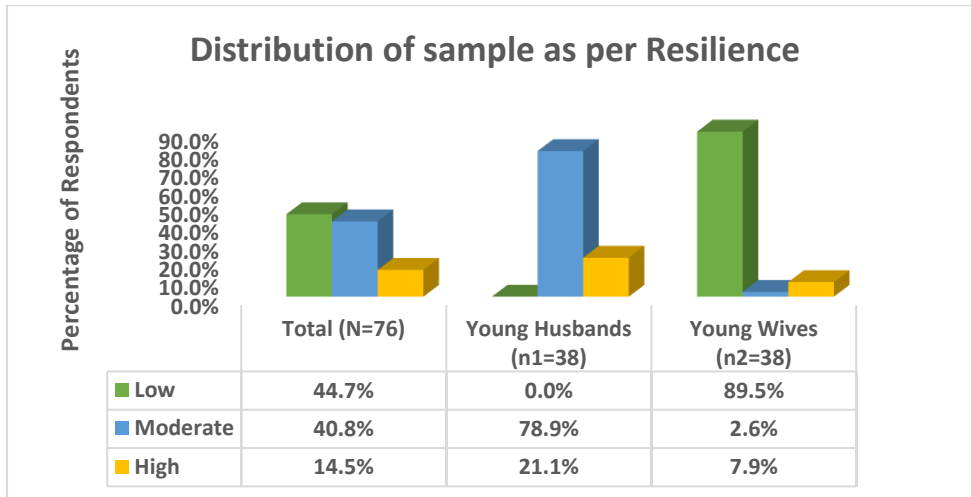


Figure 3.1: Distribution of the sample as per the level of resilience among young married couples

Table 3.1 and figure 3.1 exhibit the distribution of the sample across different levels of resilience as perceived by young married couples. In the total sample, a major proportion (44.7%) of couples reported resilience at a low level followed by 40.8 percent who perceived a moderate level of resilience. Only 14.5 percent of the total sample recorded a high level of resilience. The majority of young husbands (78.9%) reported resilience at a moderate level, whereas 89.5 percent of young wives reported the low dimension. Only 21.1 percent of young husbands and 7.9 percent of young wives reported resilience at a high level. The chi-square value depicted the distribution of both groups across different levels of resilience as perceived by the couples was significant at 1 percent level of significance with p-value as 0.0001. Though the distribution was significant, thus a high percentage of young husbands (21.1%) perceived a high level of resilience as compared to young wives (7.9%).

Table 3.2: Differences in perception of resilience (Mean ± SD) by young married couples

Variable	Young Husbands		Young Wives		t-value	p-value
	(n1=38)		(n2=38)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Resilience	74.79	5.052	66.45	7.518	5.677	0.0001**

Total sample (N) =76; Young husbands (n1) = 38; Young wives (n2) = 38

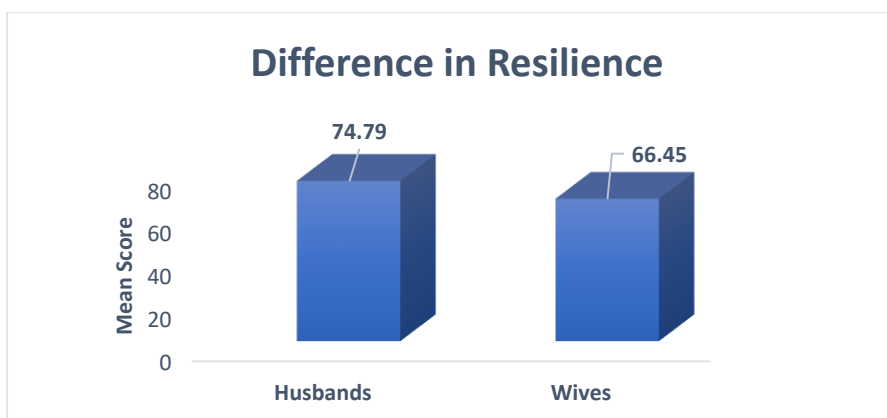


Figure 3.2: Differences in perception of resilience (Mean ± SD) among young married couples

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Table 3.2 and figure 3.2 present differences in the mean scores of resilience as perceived by young married couples. It revealed that the young husbands (mean scores=74.79) perceived significantly more resilience as compared to the young wives (mean scores= 66.45) with a standard deviation of 5.052 and 7.518, respectively. It was hypothesized in the present study that young husbands would perceive higher resilience levels as compared to young wives. Hence, according to the findings, the hypothesis was proved to be accepted.

4. Perceived partner responsiveness among young husbands and wives

Table 4.1: Distribution of the sample as the per level of perceived partner responsiveness perceived by young married couples

Perceived Partner Responsiveness	Total (N=76)		Young Husbands (n1=38)		Young Wives (n2=38)		Chi-square value	p-value
	N	%	n1	%	n2	%		
	Low	18	23.7	10	26.3	8		
Moderate	39	51.3	21	55.3	18	47.4		
High	19	25	7	18.4	12	31.6		

Total sample (N) =76; Young husbands (n1) = 38; Young wives (n2) = 38

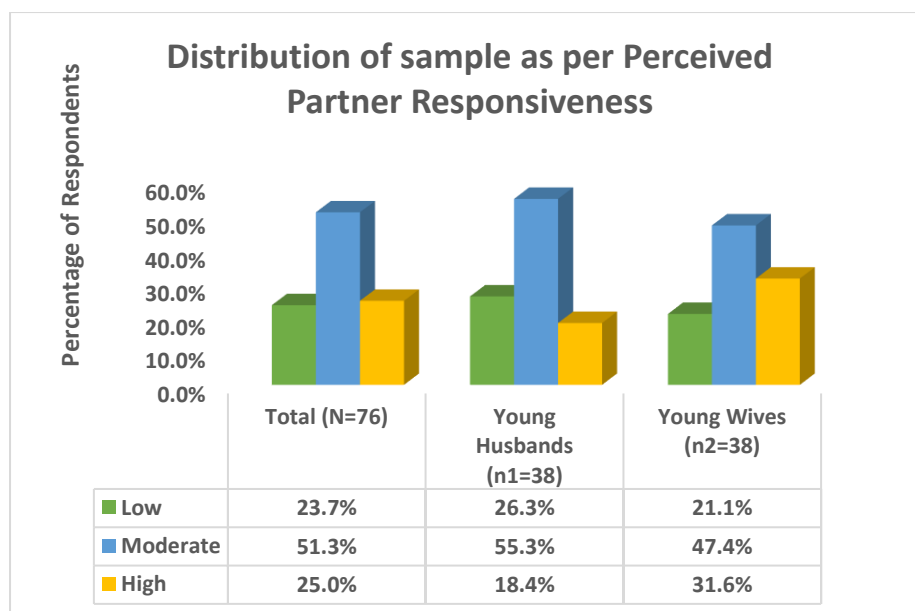


Figure 4.1: Distribution of the sample as per the level of partner responsiveness among young married couples

Table 4.1 and figure 4.1 show the distribution of the sample across different levels of partner responsiveness as perceived by young married couples. Major section of couples (51.3%) perceived a moderate level of partner responsiveness. However, 55.3 percent of young husbands and 47.4 percent of young wives showed moderate results in this dimension. 26.3 percent of young husbands and 21.1 percent of young wives showed a low level of partner responsiveness, whereas 18.4 percent of young husbands and 31.6 percent of young wives showed high levels of partner responsiveness. The results depicted non-significant differences in the distribution of partner responsiveness for both groups as the p-value is $0.413 > 0.05$. Though the distribution was not significant, thus a high percentage of young

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wives (31.6%) perceived a high level of partner responsiveness as compared to young husbands (18.4%).

Table 4.2: Differences in perception of perceived partner responsiveness (Mean ± SD) by young married couples

Variable	Young Husbands		Young Wives		t-value	p-value
	(n1=38)		(n2=38)			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Perceived Partner Responsiveness	73.84	6.578	77.53	8.642	2.091	0.040*

Total sample (N) =76; Young husbands (n1) = 38; Young wives (n2) = 38

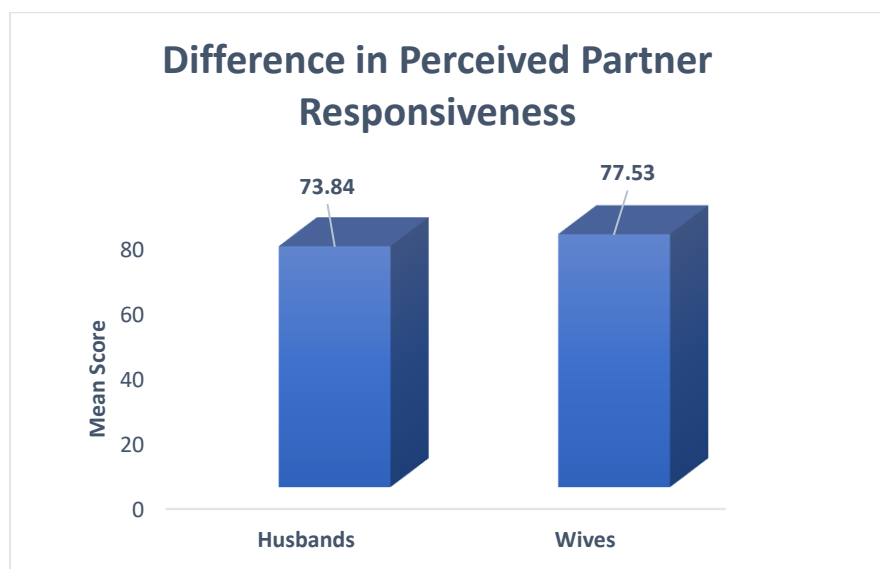


Figure 4.2: Differences in perception of partner responsiveness (Mean ± SD) among young married couples

Table 4.2 and fig 4.2 depict the differences in the mean scores of partner responsiveness as perceived by young married couples. It revealed that the young husbands (mean scores=73.84) perceived insignificantly lesser partner responsiveness as compared to the young wives (mean scores= 77.53) with a standard deviation of 6.578 and 8.642, respectively. It was hypothesized in the present study that young wives would perceive higher partner responsiveness levels as compared to young husbands. Hence, according to the findings, the hypothesis was proved to be rejected.

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to assess and compare couple satisfaction, dyadic adjustment, resilience, and perceived partner responsiveness between young husbands and young wives, with a focus on gender-based differences in marital well-being. The findings reveal significant differences across three key domains, couple satisfaction, dyadic adjustment, and resilience, with young husbands consistently reporting higher scores than young wives. The only exception was perceived partner responsiveness, where wives reported higher scores, although the difference was not statistically significant.

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The first key finding relates to **couple satisfaction**. The result supports the hypothesis that young husbands experience greater couple satisfaction than their wives. These findings of this result align with Kurdek (2005) and Mahalwal et al., (2021), who noted that men often associate marital satisfaction with physical intimacy, practical support, and companionship, domains that may be more consistently fulfilled in early marital years. Conversely, women's satisfaction is more dependent on emotional closeness, mutual communication, and equitable sharing of household responsibilities (Lavner & Bradbury, 2010; Rastogi, 2009). The lower satisfaction among wives may reflect unmet emotional needs and the pressures of the "double burden" of professional and domestic roles, particularly in Indian semi-urban settings like Hisar (Rajadhyaksha & Bhatnagar, 2000; Desai & Andrist, 2010).

Regarding **dyadic adjustment**, the results indicate a notable gender gap, with young husbands reporting significantly higher levels of adjustment compared to young wives. Over majority of husbands fell in the moderate adjustment range, whereas a large majority of wives reported low levels of adjustment. The findings of this result were in line with those of Proulx et al., (2007) and Seema & Kumar (2012), who observed that women in young marriages often struggle with balancing evolving career ambitions, familial obligations, and expectations of emotional caregiving. In Indian society, where gender socialization often encourages women to prioritize harmony over personal fulfilment (Rastogi & Wampler, 1999), this may lead to suppressed conflict and poorer adjustment outcomes. Moreover, men may perceive themselves as better adjusted simply because they are less affected by, or less attuned to, the emotional nuances of the relationship.

In terms of **resilience**, the data show that young husbands again scored significantly higher than wives. A majority of wives reported low resilience, while most husbands reported moderate or high levels. The findings of this result were in line with those of Neff & Karney, 2005; Sharma & Ghosh, 2021, who observed that, gender disparity suggests that husbands, influenced by traditional masculine norms, may cope with stress in more task-focused or compartmentalized ways, thereby perceiving themselves as more resilient. On the other hand, wives may experience emotional fatigue due to their disproportionate engagement in emotional labour and caregiving, which undermines their resilience. Levenson et al., (1994) and Umberson et al., (2005) noted that women often assume the role of emotional regulators in relationships, which, while beneficial for the couple, can diminish their own psychological resources if unreciprocated.

Interestingly, the study found no significant difference in **perceived partner responsiveness**, although young wives reported slightly higher scores than husbands. Wives perceived high responsiveness compared to the husbands. This partial alignment with the hypothesis suggests that while wives might perceive their partners as emotionally or practically responsive, these efforts may not translate into satisfaction if they do not align with their expectations for emotional connection. This resonates with findings by Pietromonaco et al., (2006) and Cutrona et al., (1997), which emphasized the gendered nature of responsiveness, where men often show support through actions (instrumental support), and women seek emotional expressiveness and validation. The mismatch between these expectations may create a perceptual gap in the relationship, even when overt support is present.

Collectively, the results underscore the gendered nature of marital experiences in young Indian couples. While husbands report higher satisfaction, adjustment, and resilience, wives experience more emotional burden and report lower scores in these domains. These findings

support the need for early marital counselling interventions that are gender-sensitive and culturally contextualized. Interventions should prioritize emotional communication training, equitable role distribution, and couple-based resilience strategies. Given the transitional nature of gender norms in Indian society, especially in urban and semi-urban contexts, future research must further explore how evolving roles impact marital well-being and how couples can be supported in navigating these challenges.

SUMMARY

Salient Findings

- i. The majority of the couples (38.2%) perceived a moderate level of couple satisfaction whereas 50 percent of couples perceived low, and 11.8 percent perceived a high level of couple satisfaction. The majority of young husbands (76.3%) perceived moderate couple satisfaction, while most young wives (94.7%) perceived a low couple satisfaction. A few young husbands (5.3%) perceived low couple satisfaction. 18.4 percent of young husbands and 5.3 percent of young wives perceived a high level of couple satisfaction. The distribution of young husbands and wives was significant at a 1 percent level of significance across different levels of couple satisfaction with significant p-value as 0.00001 (<0.01). Thus, a high percentage of young husbands (18.4%) couples perceived a high level of couple satisfaction as compared to young wives (5.3%).
- ii. Findings of differences in mean scores in the perception of couple satisfaction by the young married couples were revealed to be significant ($p<0.01$). According to the results, young husbands (Mean=141.89) reported more couple satisfaction as compared to young wives (Mean=126.82) with a standard deviation of 6.746 and 9.12, respectively. It was hypothesized in the present study that young husbands would have higher couple satisfaction as compared to young wives. Hence, according to the findings, the hypothesis was proved to be accepted.
- iii. In the distribution of the sample in the levels of dyadic adjustment perceived by young married couples, when the data was distributed, it was interesting to note that a major section of the young married couples (40.8%) perceived moderate levels of dyadic adjustment. However, 73.7 percent of the young husbands and 7.9 percent of young wives perceived moderate results in this dimension. 13.2 percent of young husbands and 5.3 percent of young wives perceived high levels of dyadic adjustment. The total (50%), as well as young husbands (13.2%) and young wives (86.8%), perceived low dyadic adjustment. The results depicted significant differences in the distribution of dyadic adjustment with significant p-value (0.0001) at 1% level of significance. Thus, most of the young husbands perceived significantly high dyadic adjustment as compared to young wives.
- iv. Findings of the differences in mean scores in the perception of dyadic adjustment among young married couples were revealed to be significant ($p<0.01$) at a 1 percent level of significance with p-value as 0.0001. According to the results, young husbands (Mean=123.58) perceived significantly high dyadic adjustment as compared to young wives (Mean=110.58) with standard deviations of 5.044 and 5.783, respectively. It was hypothesized in the present study that young husbands would have higher dyadic adjustment as compared to young wives. Hence, according to the findings, the hypothesis was proved to be accepted.
- v. The distribution of the sample across different levels of resilience as perceived by young married couples, revealed a major proportion (44.7%) of couples reported resilience at a low level followed by 40.8 percent who perceived a moderate level of resilience. Only 14.5 percent of the total sample recorded a high level of resilience.

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The majority of young husbands (78.9%) reported resilience at a moderate level, whereas 89.5 percent of young wives reported the low dimension. Only 21.1 percent of young husbands and 7.9 percent of young wives reported resilience at a high level. The chi-square value depicted the distribution of both groups across different levels of resilience as perceived by the couples was significant at 1 percent level of significance with p-value as 0.0001. Though the distribution was significant, thus a high percentage of young husbands (21.1%) perceived a high level of resilience as compared to young wives (7.9%).

- vi. The differences in the mean scores of resilience as perceived by young married couples, revealed that the young husbands (mean scores=74.79) perceived significantly more resilience as compared to the young wives (mean scores= 66.45) with a standard deviation of 5.052 and 7.518, respectively. It was hypothesized in the present study that young husbands would perceive higher resilience levels as compared to young wives. Hence, according to the findings, the hypothesis was proved to be accepted.
- vii. The distribution of the sample across different levels of partner responsiveness as perceived by young married couples, revealed that a major section of couples (51.3%) perceived a moderate level of partner responsiveness. However, 55.3 percent of young husbands and 47.4 percent of young wives showed moderate results in this dimension. 26.3 percent of young husbands and 21.1 percent of young wives showed a low level of partner responsiveness, whereas 18.4 percent of young husbands and 31.6 percent of young wives showed high levels of partner responsiveness. The results depicted non-significant differences in the distribution of partner responsiveness for both groups as the p-value is $0.413 > 0.05$. Though the distribution was not significant, thus a high percentage of young wives (31.6%) perceived a high level of partner responsiveness as compared to young husbands (18.4%).
- viii. The differences in the mean scores of partner responsiveness as perceived by young married couples, revealed that the young husbands (mean scores=73.84) perceived insignificantly lesser partner responsiveness as compared to the young wives (mean scores= 77.53) with a standard deviation of 6.578 and 8.642, respectively. It was hypothesized in the present study that young wives would perceive higher partner responsiveness levels as compared to young husbands. Hence, according to the findings, the hypothesis was proved to be rejected.

Coping strategies to improve satisfaction among young married couples

A fulfilling relationship thrives on trust, love, and emotional closeness. To enhance marital well-being among young married adults, it is essential to adopt effective coping strategies that address the unique challenges faced during the early years of marriage. Couples should prioritize open and empathetic communication to foster mutual understanding and manage conflicts constructively. Building emotional intimacy through regular quality time, shared goals, and appreciation of each other's efforts can strengthen the relationship bond. Developing individual and joint resilience through stress-management techniques, such as mindfulness, physical activity, and problem-solving skills, can help couples navigate personal and relational stressors. It is also important for partners to maintain realistic expectations and adapt to changing roles and responsibilities with flexibility and cooperation. Seeking premarital or early marital counselling can equip couples with essential relational skills, especially in areas of dyadic adjustment and responsiveness. Additionally, cultivating a support network of trusted family and friends, while maintaining appropriate boundaries, can offer emotional reinforcement without interference. These strategies, when

practiced consistently, can promote long-term satisfaction, stability, and emotional well-being in young marriages.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Conclusion

The present study sought to assess and compare couple satisfaction, dyadic adjustment, resilience, and perceived partner responsiveness among young married couples aged 22–32 years in Hisar, Haryana. The findings revealed significant gender-based differences across most dimensions of marital well-being. Young husbands reported notably higher levels of couple satisfaction, dyadic adjustment, and resilience than their wives, with statistically significant differences affirming the proposed hypotheses. Conversely, although young wives perceived greater partner responsiveness compared to their husbands, this difference was not statistically significant, resulting in the rejection of the related hypothesis. These outcomes suggest that young husbands tend to evaluate their marital relationships more positively than their wives, highlighting a divergence in relational experiences and expectations during the early years of marriage. The study underscores the critical need for gender-sensitive counseling interventions and early marital support strategies that emphasize open communication, emotional attunement, and resilience-building. Such efforts are essential to fostering mutual understanding and promoting long-term marital well-being among young couples navigating the formative phase of their marital journey.

Implications for Future Research

The findings of the present study offer valuable implications for future research. Longitudinal studies are recommended to examine how couple satisfaction, dyadic adjustment, resilience, and partner responsiveness evolve over time, providing a deeper understanding of marital development. Future research should also explore dyadic dynamics using models like the Actor–Partner Interdependence Model (APIM) to assess mutual influence within couples. Studies conducted in diverse cultural, socio-economic, and regional contexts are needed to improve the generalizability of findings. Qualitative approaches, such as interviews or focus groups, can help uncover the reasons behind gender differences in marital perceptions. Additionally, the impact of external stressors like work-life balance, financial issues, and parenting responsibilities should be investigated. Exploring the role of gender role expectations, digital communication, and social media can offer contemporary insights. Intervention-based research testing the effectiveness of counselling and resilience-building programs is crucial. Lastly, comparative studies across age cohorts can highlight how marital well-being changes over the lifespan.

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Conflict of Interest

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