

A Comparative Analysis of Mental Well-Being In Relation To Employment and Marital Status among Females in Haryana Region

Bindu Kumari^{1*}, Parmila Devi², Jyoti³

ABSTRACT

Marriage is a bag full of personal and social responsibilities for women in Indian context. Job is an accumulative burden on females because of highly gendered nature of domestic work in Indian families. Managing multiple roles may have an impact on the Mental Well Being of females. The present study compared the Mental Well being of working married to non working married and working unmarried to non working unmarried Indian females of age range 20-45 years using t-test as method of analysis. Previous studies provided evidence that change in job pattern may result in better Mental Health. Results of the present study also found that Mental Well Being of working females is better than non working in both married and unmarried conditions.

Keywords: *Mental Well Being, Employment, Marital Status, Gendered Work*

According to World Health Organization (2005), Mental Well Being is a state of an individual in which he/she realizes his/her own potential, can cope with daily stressors of life, work productively and make contributions to the society. It is an indicator to good quality of life. The traditional scenario of Indian society had assigned work; the responsibilities of women were childrearing and maintenance of house whereas men were breadwinner of the family which led to the gendered nature of domestic work. Indian women under the influence of education and inflation are seeking employment in various areas and the number of working women is increasing. Indian women are expected to perform dual role duties which results in role strain and hence mental well being of an individual is compromised (Myrdal & Klein, 1956). Wives of dual career couple still share a disproportionate share of domestic work (Emmons et al., 1990). The work overload is a predictor of psychological distress in working women (Noor, 1995). Women's occupy social roles of paid worker, wife and mothers in today's scenario (Baruch &

¹ Assistant Professor, Dept. Of Psychology, Hindu Girls College, Sonapat, india

² Assistant Professor, Tau Devi Lal College of Education, Manana, India

³ Research Scholar, Maharani Kishori Jat Kanya Mahavidyalya, Rohtak, India

***Responding Author**

Received: March 16, 2017; Revision Received: April 7, 2017; Accepted: April 25, 2017

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Barnett, 1986). Role overload, anxiety, role conflict may result in an impaired psychological well being. The 'Scarcity Hypothesis' states that human energy is limited and social structures creates overly demanding role obligations which in turn cause impairment in well-being. However, many western studies show positive association between working women and psychological well being contradicting Scarcity Hypothesis. Indian women may differ in this association because of patriarchal norms; women have to deal with psycho-social, cultural barriers and facilitators that have an impact on well being (Singh, Kaur & Singh, 2014).

Another contrasting hypothesis is 'Enhancement Hypothesis' (Marks, 1997; Sieber, 1974) which entails the benefits of multiple role involvement. The multiple role involvement is positively related to status; self esteem and yield a variety of sources of stimulation, gratification & social validation. Pietromonoco et al. (1984) reported that more roles a woman occupies more different areas of her life she reports to be as source of pleasure. Employment typically has positive consequences for women, either as primary source of well being or buffer against stress experienced in other roles (Barnett & Baruch, 1985). Nathawat & Mathur (1993) found that working women reported higher scores on general health, life satisfaction and self-esteem measures and lower scores on helplessness, insecurity & anxiety as compared to housewives.

However, the well being was also found to be effected by the type of job and work place environment. Srimathi (2010) examined well being of 325 women in different organizations i.e. industry, hospitals, banks, educational institutions, BPO using random selection method. It was found that the women in industries had least psychological well being where as medium level of well being was found in bank employees and teachers had highest level of well being. Chawla & Sodhi (2011) also compared school teachers and BPO professionals on work life balance sub scales and found that Indian female professionals are looking for supportive workplaces that help them to manage their multiple roles. Women in workplace face challenges like poor perception of likelihood of success, child care, time management and work family role balance (Collins & Abichandani, 2016).

The present study investigates the Mental Well Being of Indian females in relation to employment and marital status. Working women with less time and ability left after job hours have to attend child care tasks and domestic responsibility which impacts their well being. The present study will also add evidence to the existing contradictory literature of association of employment and well being of women.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the perception of married women for division of domestic labour.
2. To study the difference in mental well being of the working unmarried and non working unmarried women.

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3. To study the difference in mental well being of the working married women and non working married women.

Based on the objectives, following hypotheses were framed.

Hypotheses

1. There will be no difference in perception of division of labour in household activities of males and females as perceived by women.
2. There will be no difference in mental well being of unmarried working and non working women.
3. There will be no difference in mental well being of married working and non working women.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

A total of 140 women (Age Range= 20-45 years) from Haryana region were selected using Random Sampling Method.

The sample was divided into four categories,

Nonworking Unmarried (N=35) who had completed their graduation degrees.

Working Unmarried (N=35) were private school teachers and working in beauty parlours.

Nonworking Married (N=35) were housewives.

Working Married (N=35) included government school teachers.

Instruments

The Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale by NHS Scotland, 2006 was used for assessment of Mental Well Being. It consisted of 14 items which includes functional and feeling aspects of Mental Well Being. The scoring pattern is 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5. The score range from 14 to70. A question “Who do you think that domestic activities are equally divided into them and their counterpart?”

Procedure of Data Collection

Stratified Random sampling technique was used for data collection. Women of age group 20-45 years working married, working unmarried, non working married and non working unmarried were contacted and purpose of study was made clear to them. Instructions were delivered to the participants and help was provided in case they found any difficulty in understanding any question. Filled questionnaires were collected and checked for further analysis of data.

Statistical Analysis

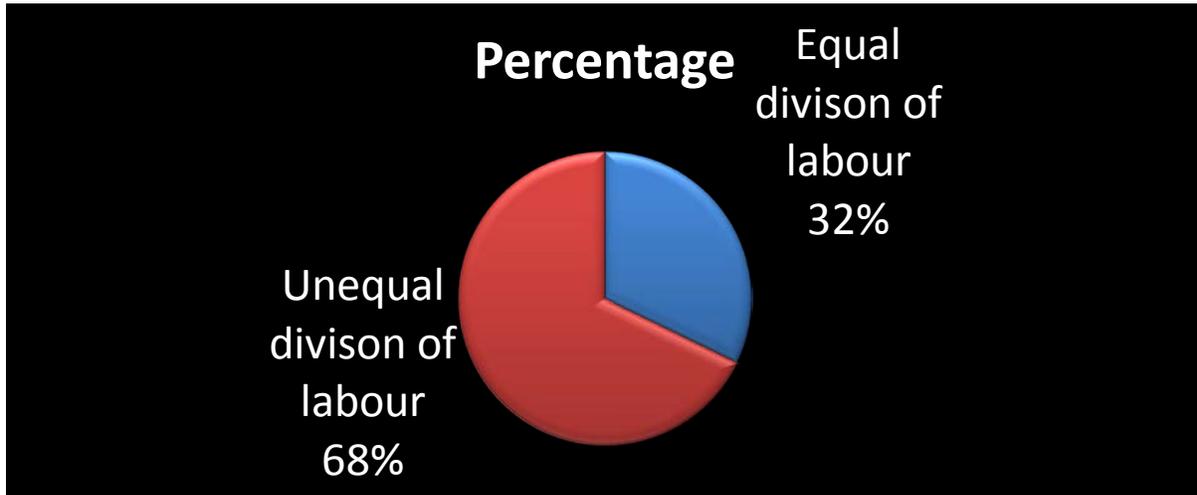
1. Percentage method
2. Descriptive statistics

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3. Independent sample t test

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Graph 1 Graph Showing the Percentage of Perception of Women for Division of Domestic Labour



In response to the question “Who do you think that domestic activities are equally divided into them and their counterpart?” 68% participants responded that there is unequal distribution of division of domestic labour and 32% participants responded that there is equal division of domestic labour as they found that their male counterparts equally take care of social household responsibilities and they cook and take care of children when they are ill.

Table 1 Showing Mean, S.D & t-Value among Working Unmarried and Non-Working Unmarried Women

Variable(Mental well being)	N	Mean	S.D	t value	Sig. Level (two tailed)
Non-Working Unmarried Women	35	52.23	8.26	-3.801	.001
Working Unmarried	35	57.29	6.39		

The results in Table 1 reveals that the Mean score value of Mental well being in Non Working Unmarried women is 52.23 and 57.29 for Working Unmarried women. The S.D value for Non Working Unmarried women is 8.26 and 6.39 for Working Unmarried women. The results depict that working unmarried women has better mental well being than non working unmarried women. Working women earn money and have a sense of accomplishment. The result supports the Enhancement Hypothesis (Marks, 1977).

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Figure 1 – Mean Value of Working Unmarried and Non-Working Unmarried Women

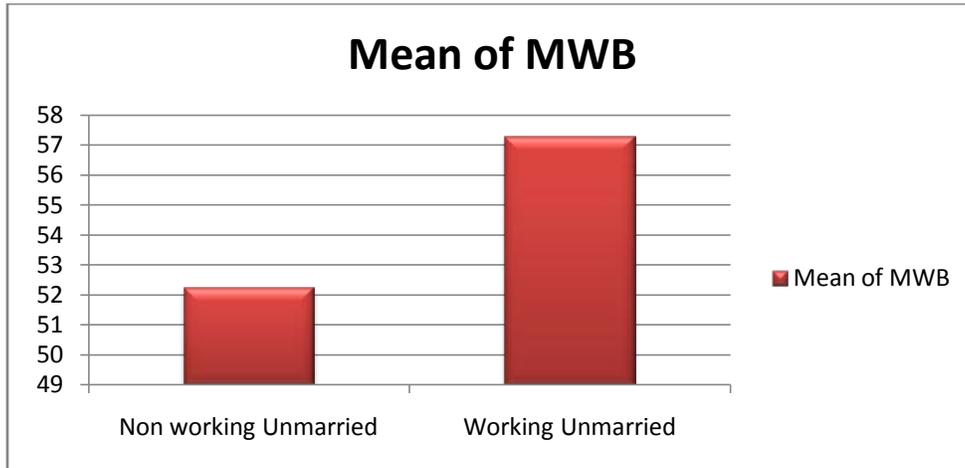
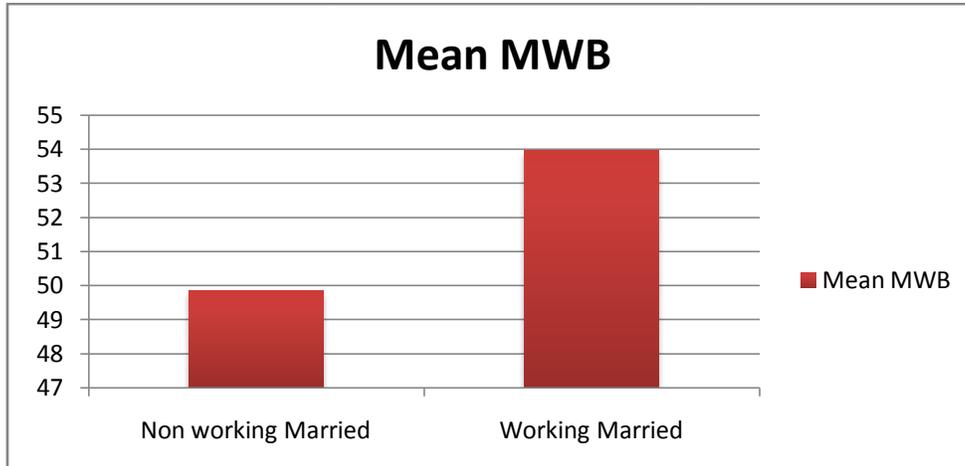


Table 2 Showing Mean, S.D & T-Value among Working Married and Non-Working Married Women

Variable (Mental well being)	N	Mean	S.D	t value	Sig. Level (two tailed)
Non-Working Married Women	35	49.86	7.88	-2.31	.024
Working Married	35	53.97	6.93		

The results in Table 2 reveals that the Mean score value of Mental well being in Non Working Married women is 49.86 and 53.97 for Working Married women. The S.D value for Non Working Unmarried women is 7.88 and 6.93 for Working Unmarried women. The results depict that there is a significant difference in mental well being of working married women has better mental well being than non working married women. Gigy (1980) also reported that married women are happier than unmarried one. However, well being is much related to quality of marriage than marriage itself.

Figure 2 – Mean Value Of Working Married And Non-Working Married Women



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The present study provides evidence in favour in previous studies that job/employment increase the mental well being in women. The employment provides interpersonal support, financial security and increases self confidence of women, hence, resulting in good mental well being. The percentage of working women in low and women because of domestic work and child rearing activities do not opt for job. The present study will help in promoting job culture among females which in turn will result in proper utilization of human resources which in turn will result in good mental well being.

Acknowledgments

The author appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interests: The author declared no conflict of interests.

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How to cite this article: Kumari B, Devi P (2017), A Comparative Analysis of Mental Well-Being In Relation To Employment and Marital Status among Females in Haryana Region, *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, Volume 4, Issue 3, ISSN:2348-5396 (e), ISSN:2349-3429 (p), DIP:18.01.005/20170403