

Comparative Study of Marital Adjustment and Psychological Well-Being among Dual Career Couples

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ABSTRACT

A successful marriage not only indicates of a satisfied life but also generates a sense of well-being. Marriage is a union between two families and individuals. The present study was planned to understand the marital adjustment and psychological well-being among dual career couples. The sample of study involved 150 dual career couples (75 males and 75 females) of the state of Haryana with the age range of 30 to 45 years. The couples were administered marital adjustment questionnaire by Kumar and Rohatgi (1976) and psychological well-being scale by Philip H. Friedman (1994).

Keywords: *Marital Adjustment, Psychological Well-Being, Dual Career Couples*

In past few years, there has been a rapid increase in dual career couples due to entry of females in professional life. In dual career families both husband and wife are out for employment. Typically men have been the economic provider of the family where as women have looked after home and children. They are accepted their role. But in today's developing time men are no longer considered to be an economic provider of the family. The women in India have changed their roles over the past, through the rise in women education. Because of psychological need to develop self-identity women are entering in professional careers. Due to rise in dual career life style joint families are replaced by nuclear families. Rapport and Rapport (1971) has first introduced the term "dual career". He defined the dual career family as a social unit, where the two partners pursue a professional career. According to Sekaran (1985) continued rise in dual career couples, various outcomes such as physical and psychological distress and well-being stimulated by increased stress experienced from multiple role strain felt by dual career couples. However many benefits of dual career have been also brought in many studies.

Psychological well-being

Psychological well-being refers to how people evaluate their lives. Psychological well-being is defined as positive functioning and the quality of life of an individual. A layperson call psychological well-being "Happiness", "peace", "fulfillment" and "life satisfaction". Ryff (1991) proposed the six dimensions of psychological well-being and these set of dimensions related to positive psychological functioning. These dimensions are autonomy, environmental

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Received: August 27, 2019; Revision Received: September 29, 2019; Accepted: September 30, 2019

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mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others purpose in life and self- acceptance. Ryff (1989) thought that wellbeing could be better understand by breaking it down into six dimensions and each of which contributing to people's experience of wellbeing.

According to Deci and Ryan (2008) Psychological well-being is the combination of positive emotional states such as happiness and functioning with best efficacy in personal and social life. It functions with optimum effectiveness in individual and social life. In the Huppert (2005) view high psychological well-being is reported as being happy, capable, well-supported and better adjusted with life. He also claims that psychological well-being include better physical health.

Kumar (2006) states that well-being is related to how one views the nature of man and what point of view is valued. Over the past few decades women's participation has increased in labor force. Continued rise have led to increased interest in the effects of employment on women's well-being. The entry of women in professional life has been investigated as either advantageous (role enhancement) or disadvantageous (role strain) to women's psychological well-being. According to Elgar & Chester (2007) Women employment may be associated with better psychological functioning. This effect may be mediated by the interest of one's time and resources within a particular identity role.

Psychological wellbeing mainly in labor force and especially in the perspective of women employees has received much attention. The most important factors which bring a lot of changes in the life of women are their career. It brings with many expectations, pressures, time demands and commitments which may affect the mental health of women. The relationships between employment and mental health of women have been studied by several researchers.

Marital adjustment

There are several fields of life where adjustment becomes more important. One of them is marital life because adjustment is necessary to avoid conflicts. The phenomenon of marital adjustment is given importance in all cultures because marriage is important commitment of an individual of his or her life. A successful marriage not only creates a satisfied life but it also produces a sense of well-being. Marriage is a union between two families and individuals. The secret of successful marriage doesn't mean the lack of conflict but it means the methods of resolving the conflicts. Ernest and Leonard (1939) explained marital adjustment as "the integration of the couple in a union in which two personalities are not merely merged but interact to complement each other for satisfaction and achievement of common objectives".

Lewis and Spanier (1979) identified three important factors that predict marital adjustment. First factor is reward from spousal interaction, according to this factor positive attitude towards spouse such as respect for each other will enhance their marital adjustment. The second is personal and social resources, a couple will be better adjusted when they have more social and personal resources. The last factor that predicts marital adjustment is satisfaction with lifestyle.

The dual career couples require more efforts to make adjustments between demands and pressures of two important areas i.e. their career and family. A study of Elloy & Smith (2003) reveals that dual career couples experience higher levels of stress, conflict, role overload, and role conflict than single career couples.

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Objectives of the study

1. To compare marital adjustment of males and females.
2. To compare psychological well-being of males and females.
3. To assess and see relationship between marital adjustment and psychological well-being of dual career couples.

Hypotheses of the study

1. Females would score higher on marital adjustment than their male counterparts
2. Females would score higher on psychological well-being than their male counterparts.
3. There would be positive relationship between marital adjustment and psychological well-being.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

A sample of 150 dual career couples of Haryana was taken in which 75 males and 75 females were included in age range of 30 to 45 years. The method of purposive sampling was employed for sample selection.

Instruments

Marital adjustment questionnaire (MAQ) (Dr. Pramod Kumar and Kanchana Rohtangi): The questionnaire consists of 25 highly discriminating ‘yes-no’ type items. The reliability of test was calculated by split half method by applying the Spearman-Brown formula and by test-retest method which was found .70 and .84. The validity of the test was found by comparing with Singh’s marital adjustment inventory.

The Friedman Well-being scale (FWBC): It is developed by Philip H. Friedman (1994). It consists of 20 bipolar adjectives. It usually takes 2-3 minutes to complete. It is used to assess the level of well-being of an individual under different circumstances.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted to know the difference between psychological well-being and marital adjustment of dual career couples. To achieve the objective of the study raw data was analyzed. Descriptive statistics, that is, Mean, Standard deviation were used. t-test was computed to compare the males and females on marital adjustment and psychological well-being.

Table 1. Depicting the values of mean, standard deviations and t value on variable of Marital adjustment and psychological well-being among male and females

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t value
Marital adjustment	Males	75	20.07	2.97	1.670
	Females	75	20.83	2.58	
FSOC(sociability)	Males	75	74.93	22.94	2.054*
	Females	75	81.69	16.89	
FSES(self-esteem)	Males	75	69.84	19.28	.943
	Females	75	72.81	19.31	
FJOV(jovial)	Males	75	69.41	20.17	1.324
	Females	75	73.59	18.50	
FES(emotional stability)	Males	75	64.48	17.17	.164
	Females	75	64.04	15.69	
FHAPP(happiness)	Males	75	74.61	23.21	.658
	Females	75	77.20	23.91	

** $P < 0.01$

* $p < 0.05$

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The objective of the present study is to see the differences in marital adjustment and psychological well-being among males and females. To fulfill the objective t-test was used. The result indicated the value of marital adjustment and subscales of psychological well-being of males and females. The mean and SD value of marital adjustment for males is 20.07 and 2.97 respectively and for females is 20.83 and SD is 2.58. The obtained t value is 1.67 that is not significant. Thus, there exist no gender differences in marital adjustment. Therefore hypothesis 2 is rejected which states that females would score higher on marital adjustment than their male counterparts. The result of present study is supported by the findings of Gupta and Joshi (2009) who reported no significant differences on marital adjustment among dual career couples. Jackson, Miller, Oka and Henry (2015) also found no significant gender differences in marital satisfaction. Further, table 1 revealed the mean and SD value of males and females on subscales of psychological well-being. It showed that no significant gender differences were found on subscales of psychological well-being except FSOC (sociability). The first subscale of psychological well-being is sociability which means relation with other people. It showed that mean and SD value of sociability of males 74.93 and 22.94 respectively and for females is 81.69 and 16.89 respectively. The obtained t value is 2.054 which are significant at 0.05 levels. It revealed that the significance difference was found in males and females on sociability. Result revealed that males and females did not differ on other subscales of psychological well-being. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is also rejected which states that females would score higher on psychological well-being than their male counterparts.

Showing inter-correlations among the variables of Marital adjustment and psychological well-being

Variables	Marital adjustment N=150
FSOC(sociability)	.130
FSES(self-esteem)	.193*
FJOV(jovial)	.247**
FES(emotional stability)	.224**
FHAPP(happiness)	.143
Total psychological well-being	.214**

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

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

Another objective was to see the relationship between marital adjustment and psychological well-being. To fulfill the objective product moment method of correlation was used. The first subscale of psychological well-being is FSOC (sociability) which means ability to relate and connect with other people. It is clear from above table that marital adjustment is positively and significantly correlated with sociability. The second subscale is FSES (self-esteem) which is an individual evaluation of one's own worth and abilities, in other words it is related to self-respect of an individual. Self-esteem is significantly and positively correlated with marital adjustment ($r=.19, p<.05$). The result clearly indicates that high self-esteem leads to high marital adjustment. The third subscale is FJOV (jovial), which is significantly and positively correlated with marital adjustment ($r=.24, p<.01$). The result shows that couples who showed good humor are cheerful or friendly experienced high marital adjustment. Further, the forth subscale is FES (emotional stability) which means the ability to remain calm when faced with stress. It is clear from above table that emotional stability is significantly and positively correlated with marital adjustment ($r=.22, p<.01$). The fifth

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subscale is FHAPP (happiness) which is positively but not significantly correlated with marital adjustment. From the above result it is clear that psychological well-being is positively and significantly correlated with marital adjustment. It can be said that if someone is cheerful or friendly, remain calm and peaceful under stress, connect with other people and have believe in one's own abilities would be able to make better adjustment in married life. Higher is the psychological well-being better will be marital adjustment. Hence, the last hypothesis is accepted which is "There would be positive relationship between the marital adjustment and psychological well-being". The result of the present study is supported by the findings of M Jaisri and Joseph which revealed significant relationship between marital adjustment and psychological well-being. According to Pandey and Anand (2010) marital adjustment was positively correlated with the general health and well-being. The result is also supported by the findings of Shek (1995), which discovered that the association between marital adjustment and well-being, those who displayed more signs of marital maladjustment demonstrated more psychiatric symptoms.

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Acknowledgements

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

Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interests.

How to cite this article: Khatri. S. & Manju (2019). Comparative Study of Marital Adjustment and Psychological Well-Being among Dual Career Couples. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 7(3), 495-500. DIP:18.01.053/20190703, DOI:10.25215/0703.053