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## **Influence of Emotional Intelligence on Marital Adjustment of Working and Non-Working Married Women**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

*A happy married life contributes to the well-being of either of the life partners. The longevity of any relationship is always based on adjustment and so is in the case of marital relationship. Marital adjustment plays a vital role in healthy and happier life of a family and the society that is made of such strong families. Perceiving, understanding and reasoning emotions and regulating or managing emotions are important in marital relationship. The article aims at studying the influence of emotional intelligence on marital adjustment. For this purpose a sample of 100 non-working and 100 working women were selected from Salem city using simple random sampling method. Marital Adjustment Test (Locke and Wallace, 1959) and Emotional Quotient Inventory (Bar-On, 1997) were used to collect the data. The data were analysed using *t* – test, correlation and regression. Results showed emotional intelligence has a significant influence on the marital adjustment of women. There is no significant difference in marital adjustment of working and non-working women. Women of age group 36-45 years showed a better marital adjustment than women of age group, 25-35 years. Women in joint family had higher marital adjustment than women in nuclear family. Women who had love marriage had good marital adjustment compared to women who had arranged marriage. Emotional intelligence was higher among non-working married women.*

**Key words:** *marital adjustment, emotional intelligence, working women, family type.*

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The most important relationships among human beings that involve legal and emotional commitment between man and woman are marriage. According to Saxton (1992), marriage is a legal term to describe certain relationship that considers individuals in order to fulfill their three different types of needs such as material, sexual and psychological. A happy married life contributes to the well-being of either of the life partners. The longevity of any relationship is always based on adjustment and so is in the case of marital relationship. Every individual is unique in himself and this uniqueness becomes complicated when there is a lack of adjustment in their relationship. Marital adjustment plays a vital role in healthy and happier life of a family and the society that is made of such strong families. When expectations of couples are not met it ends up in conflicts. As stated by John Gottaman (2002) couples have high level of satisfaction when there is no problem to make a crisis in a married life. Marital adjustment is the state of pleasure and contentment among couples with regard to all aspects of marital life. Studies show that education and employment of Indian women play a role in improving marital adjustment in them and their husbands (Singh et al., 2006 Ritu Singh). Contradictory to this Jamabo and Ordu (2012) found that there is no significant difference in marital adjustment of working and non-working women. Emotional intelligence is “the ability to monitor and discriminate one's feelings and emotions and also of

other's that helps to guide one's thoughts and actions" (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Inter and intrapersonal communications, stress management and the general temper predicts marital satisfaction (Grieco, 2001). Grieco, (2001) points out that emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction are reciprocally associated with each other and marital satisfaction may bring a sense of happiness and positivity in an individual. Perceiving, understanding and reasoning emotions and regulating or managing emotions are important in marriage (Fitness, 2001). Couples tend to have greater positive relationship when there is greater potential in handling the emotions in at least one of the partners (Brackett, Warner & Bosco, 2005).

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Aim**

To assess the influence of emotional intelligence on marital adjustment of working and non-working married women.

### **Objectives**

1. To assess the marital adjustment of working and non-working married women with regard to age, type of family, type of marriage and employment status.
2. To assess the influence of emotional intelligence on marital adjustment of working and non-working married women.

### **Hypotheses**

1. There is a significant difference in the marital adjustment of working and non-working married women.
2. There is a significant difference in the marital adjustment of married women with respect to their age.
3. There is a significant difference in marital adjustment of married women based on their type of family.
4. There is a significant difference in marital adjustment of women based on their type of marriage.
5. Marital adjustment and emotional intelligence are significantly related to each other.
6. Emotional intelligence has significant influence on marital adjustment of married women.
7. There is a significant difference in emotional intelligence of working and non-working married women.

### **Sample**

The sample for this study comprised of working and non-working married women. A total of 200 samples were taken which includes 100 non-working and 100 working women. Working women consists of teachers and medical professionals. The sample was collected from Salem city, Tamil Nadu, India. Simple random sampling procedure was adopted.

### **Tools Used**

The data was collected through survey method using Marital Adjustment Test (Locke and Wallace, 1959) and Emotional Quotient Inventory (Bar-On, 1997). Marital Adjustment Test is used to measure the level of marital adjustment among married couples. It consists of 15 items. All the questions are scored on different points based on the nature of the question.

Emotional Quotient Inventory highlights the emotional and social strengths and weakness that affects an individual's performance and interaction with others. This tool consists of 66 items. It measures ten different components of emotional intelligence namely, self-regard, interpersonal relationship, impulse control, problem solving, emotional self-awareness, flexibility, reality testing, stress tolerance, assertiveness and empathy.

### Statistics used

t – test, correlation and regression are used to analyse the data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table: 1 Marital adjustment of working and non-working married women**

Married women	N	Mean	SD	't' value
Working	100	114.17	23.444	1.791 <sup>NS</sup>
Non-working	100	107.83	26.522	

NS- not significant at 0.05 level

From the table 1, it is found that the 't' value for marital adjustment of working and non-working women is not significant. Hence hypothesis 1 is rejected. Both the groups have good marital adjustment. They experience pleasure and contentment with most aspects of their life. As rightly said by Wright(1978), this may be because working and non-working women have benefits and costs attached to them.

Irrespective of their employment status married women have many responsibilities. Non-working married women look after every family member and fulfill their basic needs. Married women who are working outside handle their family life and working life simultaneously. Though their responsibilities are twice that of non-working women, they manage their work with the help of domestic helpers and in some cases, husband come forward to help and share the work, which reduces the burden. In support to the present finding Jamabo and Ordu (2012), Pish-ghadam, Balchshipour and Ebrahimi (2013), Sahu and Singh (2014) reported that there was no significant difference in the marital adjustment of working and non-working women.

**Table: 2 Marital adjustment of women with respect to their age.**

Age (in years)	N	Mean	SD	't' value
25 - 35	105	104.92	27.655	3.702*
36 - 45	95	117.72	20.201	

\*Significant at 0.01 level

Table 2 shows difference in marital adjustment of women with respect to their age. It is observed from this table that there is a significant difference in marital adjustment of women with respect to their age. Thus the hypothesis 2 is accepted.

The mean score in the above table shows that women of 36-45 years of age adjust better in their married life than women of 25-35 years of age. Married women get exposed to many kinds of issues in their marital life. As years pass by, they learn to handle the issues better

through their experience. But young married women lack the experience to handle the issues. This may be the reason for low marital adjustment of young married women.

*Table: 3 The Marital adjustment of women based on their type of family.*

Family type	N	Mean	SD	't' value
Nuclear	91	98.32	24.546	7.321*
Joint	109	121.59	20.408	

\*Significant at 0.01 level

From the table 3, it is clear that there is a significant difference in the marital adjustment of women with regard to their type of family. Hence the hypothesis 3 is accepted. Women from joint family have better marital adjustment compared to women from nuclear family. This shows that type of family has an important role in marital adjustment, especially for women. Today, most of the families in urban areas are of nuclear type. Married women who are in nuclear family have lots of responsibilities. They have to handle many issues on their own, when their husbands are busy with their office work. Also study shows that women from nuclear family expressed more interpersonal work stress (Pandey & Shipra, 2000). When there is a misunderstanding between the couple, there is no elder to guide them. Whereas, in a joint family elders are available to help the couples to solve their issues. Moreover the elders look after the young children so that the couples can spend some time together which helps in strengthening the bond between them. This may be the reason for poor marital adjustment of women in nuclear family.

*Table: 4 Marital adjustment of women based on their type of marriage.*

Type of Marriage	N	Mean	SD	't'
Arranged	90	92.48	20.158	12.608*
Love	110	126.15	17.598	

\*Significant at 0.01 level

The above table shows the 't' test for marital adjustment of women based on the type of marriage. It is found that women who had love marriage have good marital adjustment than the women who had arranged marriage. Thus the hypothesis 4 is accepted.

Type of marriage has an important role in marital adjustment. In love marriage the couple knows each other better, they are quite familiar with one another's behavior. Therefore, the couple may compromise and help each other during hardships. Also the husband gives emotional support and helps his wife in adjusting and getting along with the new family.

In the case of arranged marriage, the whole family and her husband is a new experience for a woman. She might not express her true self; she might suppress all her feelings and desires for the sake of the family. She might have to compromise most of the time and when her husband fail to realize and recognize her sacrifice it may end up in conflict or cause a strain in the relationship. These may be the reasons for difference in marital adjustment.

*Table: 5 Correlation between marital adjustment and emotional intelligence.*

Marital Adjustment	Emotional Intelligence
	0.385*

\*Significant at the 0.01 level.

From the table 6, it is clear that there is a positive relationship between marital adjustment and emotional intelligence. Thus the hypothesis 5 stating that “marital adjustment and emotional intelligence of married women are significantly related to each other” is accepted.

Emotional intelligence is the ability to balance emotions, which is the base of any relationship especially the marriage relationship. Mutual understanding is a form of emotional intelligence, which when higher among couples, helps in marital adjustment. This is supported by Vadnais (2005), Foroughi et al (2008), Batool and Khalid (2009) and Dildar et al (2012), who indicated in their study that marital adjustment is strongly and positively correlated with emotional intelligence. Further, Noller and Roberts (2002) stated that true expression, recognition, and evaluation of emotions have meaningful relationship with couples’ reports on marriage contentment and satisfaction.

**Table: 6 Influence of emotional intelligence on marital adjustment of women**

Emotional Intelligence	B	S.E	Beta	‘t’	R square	F
	0.172	0.058	0.204	2.951	0.263	35.207

\*Significant at 0.05 level

From the above table, it is clear that emotional intelligence has a significant influence on marital adjustment of women. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted. Emotional intelligence is the foremost essential for a good married life. Understanding the emotions of the spouse and one’s own emotions is important in intimate relationships. Weisinger (2015) mentions that emotion is a social virus that spread from one to another. It is easy for the partner to infect the other with their present state of emotion. Weisinger (2015) uses the term emotional contagion to refer to this. This is the powerful ability that helps in not only overcoming marital problems, if any, but also in leading a happy married life. Palmer et al (2002), Lavalekar (2007), Saadat et al (2010), Rajabi et al (2011) concluded that emotional intelligence influences marital adjustment, thus supporting the present hypothesis.

**Table: 7 Emotional intelligence among working and non-working women**

Emotional Intelligence		N	Mean	SD	‘t’ value
	Working	100	169.49	27.407	3.699*
	Non-working	100	184.69	30.614	

\*Significant at 0.01 level.

From the mean score it is clear that non-working married women are higher in emotional intelligence than working married women. Non-working women find enough time to spend with their family members, which helps them in understanding their emotions better than working married women. Contrarily, working married women have dual role and are more stressed than non-working married women. Half of their time is spent at working place and hence the time they spend with their family members is lesser than that of non-working married women. They are unable to spend quality time with their family and are hence kept away from knowing their emotions. This may be the reason that working married women have lesser emotional intelligence than non-working married women. Also the working women may have an attitude that everyone at home should care for them and share most part

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of the work at home, must be respected by family members, etc that makes them less sensitive to the emotions of others.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

1. There is no significant difference in marital adjustment of working and non-working women.
2. Women of age group 36-45 years show a better marital adjustment than women of age group, 25-35 years.
3. Women in joint family have higher marital adjustment than women in nuclear family.
4. Women who had love marriage have good marital adjustment compared to women who had arranged marriage.
5. Emotional intelligence is positively correlated with marital adjustment of women.
6. Emotional intelligence has a significant influence on the marital adjustment of women.
7. Emotional intelligence is higher among non-working married women.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

The present study reveals a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and marital adjustment. Further, it also shows that emotional intelligence has a significant influence on marital adjustment of women irrespective of their employment status. When partners are emotionally intelligent, they can regulate the negative emotions, understand the situation better and protect themselves from the impact of the undesirable emotions of the spouse. If at least one of the partners is relaxed in the face of emotion, it will help to take marital life in smooth path. Therefore, it is very essential to enhance skill of identifying one's own and others emotion and regulating it. This will not only contribute to marital satisfaction, but it indirectly provides a good role model for children to develop a healthy emotional relationship later on. Thus it helps in building healthy society.

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