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A Study on Marital Satisfaction, Life Satisfaction and Emotional Expressivity among Young and Middle Adults

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KEYWORDS

Marital satisfaction;
life satisfaction;
emotional
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A B S T R A C T

The study was done on marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and emotional expressivity among married young and middle adults. The present study will help to understand the importance of the marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and emotional expressivity. The study aims to find out the relationship between marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and Emotional expressivity among young adults and middle adults who are married and also to find out if there is any difference in the level of marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and emotional expressivity among young and middle adults and whether is there a gender difference. The tools used were The Locke and Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (MAT) which measures marital satisfaction (Locke and Wallace, 1959), Life satisfaction scale (Diener and Emmons, 1985) and Emotional expressivity scale (Kring *et al.*, 1994). The total sample size for this study was 200, which included married young and middle adults in Chennai city. The respondents were also asked for their personal details like age, gender and years of married life. These details were used as demographic variables in the study. The relationship and differences between the variables and demographic variables was found. The results of the present study indicated the following- marital satisfaction was higher in middle adults when compared to young adults, there was a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and Life satisfaction among young and middle adults, there was a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and emotional expressivity. The study also noted that there is no significant relationship between life satisfaction and emotional expressivity. There is a significant difference in the level of marital satisfaction between young and middle adults. There is a significant difference in the level of life satisfaction between young and middle adults. There is no significant difference in the level of emotional expressivity between young and middle adults. The study shows that, there is no significant difference in the level of marital satisfaction between males and females. Marital counselling can be given to young adults as a group or to individuals so that, marital satisfaction and life satisfaction can be enhanced. This shows that young adults should focus on their marital life and try to adjust with spouse and lead a happy life. Premarital counselling can be helpful for a happy married life.

Introduction

Family is the most important unit of societies. Marriage has been described as the most important and fundamental human relationship because it provides the primary structure for establishing a family relationship and rearing the next generation.

A young adult, according to Erik Erikson's stages of human development, is generally a person in the age range of 20 to 40, whereas, a person in the middle adulthood stage ages from 41 to 64. According to Weiss (2005) marital satisfaction is described as a subjective experience of the individual that effected to the quality of marriages and life at all. Sameas Weiss *et al.*, (1979) imply that quality of marriages is a subjective evaluation of couples about their marriage relationship.

Life satisfaction is defined as a perception of being happy with one's own life and a belief that one's life is on the right track. To date, our understanding of how life satisfaction relates to youth outcomes is limited, however a pilot study on a nationally representative sample of adolescents found that it is negatively related to outcomes such as substance use, depression, getting in fights, and delinquency and positively related to good grades (Lippman *et al.*, 2012).

Emotional expressivity has been defined by Kring *et al.*, (1994) as the degree to which an individual actively expresses emotional experience through verbal or nonverbal behaviors. The present study will help to understand the importance of marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and emotional expressivity. The study aims to find out the relationship between marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and emotional expressivity among young adults and middle adults who

are married and also to find out if there is any difference in the level of marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and emotional expressivity among young and middle adults and whether there a gender difference.

Review of literature

Rostami (2013) found that marital satisfaction, quality of life and spousal support were significantly higher in men than women. Spousal support was significantly associated with marital satisfaction especially in women

Jamie (2006) did a study which indicated that couples with congruent religious commitment reported higher marital satisfaction than couples with large discrepancies in religious commitment.

Habib (2014) explored the relationship of marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence among different professionals. The findings of the study indicated significant relationship

Mahmood (2014) did a research which shows that there is significant negative relation between self-efficacy and marital satisfaction and non-significant negative relation between emotional expressivity and marital satisfaction. The results expressed that there is non-significant negative relation between self-efficacy and emotional expressivity and significant difference on self-efficacy between males and females. Findings of Asif Kamal *et al.*, (2013) show that a strong positive correlation was found between Emotional expressivity and life satisfaction. Females were found to be emotionally more expressive as compared to males while there was no difference in the level of life satisfaction between the two sexes.

Materials and Methods

To find out if there is any relationship between marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and Emotional expressivity among young and middle adults who are married.

Objective of the study

To find the level of marital satisfaction among married young and middle adults

To find the level of life satisfaction among married young and middle adults.

To find the level of emotional expressivity among married young and middle adults.

To find the relationship between marital satisfaction and life satisfaction among married young and middle adults.

To find out the difference in the emotional expressivity between married male and female young and middle adults.

Hypothesis

There will be no significant relationship between marital satisfaction and life satisfaction among married young and middle adults.

There will not be significant relationship between marital satisfaction and emotional expressivity among married young and middle adults.

There will be no significant relationship between Emotional expressivity and life satisfaction among married young and middle adults.

There will not be any significant difference in marital satisfaction among married young and middle young adults.

There will be no significant difference in life satisfaction among married young and middle young adults.

There will be no significant difference in emotional expressivity among married young and middle adults.

There will be no significant difference in marital satisfaction between married males and females.

There will be no significant difference in life satisfaction between married males and females.

There will be no significant difference in emotional expressivity between married males and females.

Research design

Ex-post facto design in specific will be adopted since there is no deliberate manipulation of variables and only relationship of the factors being studied.

Variables of the study

The variables are considered for the present study were marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and emotional expressivity.

Sample description

The total sample size for this study was 200, which included married young and middle adults from Chennai city.

The age of the participants ranged from 20 to 60.

Sampling technique

Purposive sampling design will be chosen for this study.

Tools used for the study

The tools used for the study is as follows:

The Locke and Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (MAT) by Locke and Wallace (1959)

Life Satisfaction Scale by Diener and Emmons (1985) and

Emotional Expressivity Scale by Kring *et al.*, (1994).

Method of investigation

In this study, a purposive sample of 200 married individuals, which included young and middle adults from Chennai city was recruited.

Age ranged from 20 to 60 years. Before starting the data collection, respondents were provided with brief instructions and they were assured that the data will be kept confidential. All doubts were cleared and the investigator made them understand each and every item of the scales.

The individuals were asked to make enquiry about any item which he or she thought was ambiguous. After the data collection, they were again assured that data collected will be used only for research purposes.

The data was collected and analyzed using SPSS.

Pearson's Correlation method was used to find the relationship between marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and emotional expressivity.

't' test was done to find out the difference between marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and emotional expressivity among young and middle adults.

't' test was done to find out the gender differences in marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and emotional expressivity.

Results and Discussion

The present study shows the relationship and differences between marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and emotional expressivity among young and middle adults who are married. In this study it was found that there is a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and life satisfaction among young and middle adults. There can be many causes for it. As marriage is an important part in most of the peoples life, satisfaction in one's marital life might result in satisfaction with life too. In general, a person's marital life would include almost all the events in his or her own life like, including sexual life, parenting their children, achieving, getting sufficient love and affection from the life partner and family members. So thereby if one's marital satisfaction is high then, the person might also get high life satisfaction.

The present study also noted that there is a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and emotional expressivity. Research studies have shown that emotional expressivity is related with emotional intelligence and as far as the present study is concerned, marital satisfaction is related with emotional expressivity.

In general, people who are good in expressing their emotions have good interpersonal relations. Or in other words, people who are able to express their emotions and feeling with other people can obviously be expressive with their life partner, and thereby, if ones emotional expressivity is high, then, it is more likely that, ones marital satisfaction might also be high.

Table.1 Correlations of marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and Emotional expressivity

		MS	LS	EE
MS	Pearson Correlation	1	.391**	.339**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	200	200	200
LS	Pearson Correlation	.391**	1	.056
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.431
	N	200	200	200
EE	Pearson Correlation	.339**	.056	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.431	
	N	200	200	200

*-significant at 0.05 level

Table.2 Mean, standard deviation and t value of marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and emotional expressivity among young and middle adults

Variable	AGE	N	Mean	SD	“t” value
Marital satisfaction	Young adult	117	99.68	24.120	5.863*
	middle adult	84	119.30	22.33	
Life satisfaction	Young adult	117	23.21	3.76	7.511*
	Middle adult	84	27.64	4.601	
Emotional expressivity	Young adult	117	70.99	16.21	.860
	middle adult	84	68.85	18.28	

*-significant at 0.05 level

Table.3 Mean, standard deviation and t value of marital satisfaction, life satisfaction and emotional expressivity among males and females

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	“t” value
Marital satisfaction	Male	100	106.9500	25.05524	.477
	Female	100	108.6600	25.65790	
Life satisfaction	Male	100	24.8900	4.69880	.424
	Female	100	25.1700	4.64292	
Emotional expressivity	Male	100	57.2700	13.20916	15.97*
	Female	100	82.9200	9.13610	

*-significant at 0.05 level

The study also notes that, there is no significant relationship between life satisfaction and emotional expressivity. Life satisfaction is to deal with the self and not others. Life satisfaction is satisfaction with one's life. Which means that, one is satisfied with his/her purpose of life and then gets satisfied with it. Emotional expressivity is how a person is able to express oneself well with others. Emotional expressivity is not necessarily to be related with life satisfaction.

The study shows that, there is a significant difference in the level of marital satisfaction between young and middle adults. The results also indicate that, middle adults have a high mean which indicates that, middle adults have high marital satisfaction than young adults. This might be due to the reason that, young adults might have lesser experience with spouse in marital life than in middle adults. There is a significant difference in the level of life satisfaction between young and middle adults. The table also indicates that middle adults have a high mean which indicates that middle adults have high life satisfaction than young adults. Middle adult would have more experience in his or her own personal as well as professional life than young adults. As years go,

There is no significant difference in the level of emotional expressivity between young and middle adults. This might be due to the reason that, emotional expressivity is based upon one's personality rather than age. One's emotional expressivity basically depends on one's personality, whether one is extroverted or introverted person. Studies have shown that, extroverted person have good emotional expressivity than introverted persons. And there is no difference in emotional expressivity between Young and middle adults according to the present study.

The study shows that, there is no significant difference in the level of marital satisfaction between males and females. Marital satisfaction is one's satisfaction or dissatisfaction in one's marital life. Marital satisfaction might depend on different context to different persons based on their life experiences. So there might not any difference in marital satisfaction among males and females.

There is no significant difference in the level of life satisfaction between males and females. As life satisfaction is based upon satisfaction in one's personal or professional life experiences. So it might be very subjective.

There might not be any differences in the level of life satisfaction among males and females.

There is a significant difference in the level of emotional expressivity between males and females. Moreover, the table indicates that females have a mean score higher than males, which indicates that, Females are more emotionally expressive than males.

Many studies have shown that, females are more emotionally expressive than males. This might be due to the genetic makeup that they have.

Suggestions for further research

Similar studies can be conducted to see the difference in marital satisfaction and life satisfaction between single parents children and children with both parents who are married.

Similar studies can be conducted to see the relationship between marital satisfaction, life satisfaction, emotional expressivity with respect to the length of marriage.

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