

Study On The Effect Of Stress Management And Life Satisfaction On Marital Adjustment Among Couples In Kerala

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to find out the impact of stress management and marital adjustment on Life Satisfaction among couples in Kerala. The existing literature regarding stress management, marital adjustment and life satisfaction is to recognize the need to consider contextual factors. The simple random sampling technique was used to select samples from different areas of Thrissur District in Kerala. A sample of the study comprised of 400 couples (n=800) including 400 male and 400 female participants of age group 20 to 60 years. The sample selected for this study from various parts of Thrissur District. Demographic data sheet, stress management Scale, marital adjustment scale and Life Satisfaction Scale were used for data collection. The result of this study indicates that the hypothesis stress management is positively correlated with Life Satisfaction among couples in Kerala. It is also significant at 1% level of significance. As per the hypothesis marital adjustment is positively correlated with life satisfaction among couples in Kerala. It is also significant at 1% level of significance. There is statistically significant difference between gender and the level of life satisfaction. The level of life satisfaction is heterogeneous among couples. The predictors like, stress management and life satisfaction significantly influence the marital adjustment among couples. It implies that the couples whoever has high level of stress management and life satisfaction; they have high level of marital adjustment. Although the predictor variable like life satisfaction is more useful to predict the marital adjustment among couples in this model than the stress management. The analysis proves that the life satisfaction variable had been quite good to predict the marital adjustment among couples.

Keywords: *Stress management; marital adjustment; Life satisfaction*

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a union and a bonding between man and woman. Marriage is the dependable support on which family is built. Marriage is needful in every man's and woman's social life. A good marital relationship enhances life satisfaction and helps in maintaining positive mental health. Due to globalization and increasing competition in various areas there is a lot of mental pressure affecting the mental health of people. This may also result in lower level of life satisfaction. According to Vries (2006) marriage is more than love. Marriage consists of a life of effort and concern, felicitation and melancholy, illness and health. It consists of being young and becoming old, dealing with small and big problems, coping with internal and external hardships and threats. During the lengthy phase of marital life, the couple lives together in proximity, which unveils all. It soon become clear that big things can matter very little while small things can become awfully big. Often over a small matter a great dispute

arises up. Mistakes and shortcomings or deficiencies are visible in marriage. Married couple who live closely together can harm each other horribly through words expressions and actions (Thompson, 1990). Marital adjustment has long been a trendy topic in studies of the family, most likely because the idea is supposed to be narrowly associated to the stability of any marriage. Marital adjustment is defined as the condition in which there is usually a feeling of pleasure and contentment in husband and wife and with each other. (Hashmi, Khurshid, and Hassan, (2007). Various studies were conducted on marriage and marital adjustment. Studies constantly proved that age at marriage is affect quality of the marriage itself, the number of investigations conducted at different times has Journal of Education and Practice confirmed that early marriage increases marital instability (Monahan,1953; Burchinal,1965; Glick & Norton, 1971; Bumpass and Sweet,1972; Weed, 1974; Schoen, 1975; Lee,1977). Life satisfaction can be explained as a feeling of goodness and maybe decided in terms of mood, satisfaction with dealings with others and with self achievements, self-concept, and self supposed capability to deal with everyday life (Glossary of Terms, 2003). Life Satisfaction is the manner a person feels how his or her life has been and how they perceive where it is going ahead. It is a way to measure well-being. Life satisfaction comes from inside a person himself/herself based on the persons own morals and values and what the person holds essential things. For some people may be their family, and for others it may be people and their love, and for some others it is wealth or other material things; any way, it is different from every person's point of view, same as life satisfaction looks different from every point of view. There are many factors contributing to success or failure in marriages. Some of these factors are aggression, financial uncertainties, intelligence, religious and personal maturity, level of understanding, independence of thoughts, education, awareness, health, skills to manage family life, stress and strain affects, lack of experience, patience and individual interests. Thus, this paper focuses to analyze the effect of stress management and marital adjustment on Life Satisfaction among couples in Kerala.

1.2 Rationale of the study

There is a great need to know the relationship of stress management, marital adjustment and life satisfaction in Kerala culture in present scenario. This study will help to know the marital adjustment and life satisfaction and the effect of stress management on life satisfaction among couples in Kerala. History tells us that marriage was always and everywhere be under discussion. Every religion, every philosopher and pragmatic philosophy has its own point of view. There is no doubt that every type of marriage has some particular factors which effect it such as personal maturity, level of understanding, independence of thoughts, intelligence, education, awareness, health, financial responsibilities, skills to manage family life, stress and strain affects, lack of experience, lack of patience, religion, and individual interests. As marriages are necessary for humans, marital adjustment and life satisfaction is equally important. Successful martial life gives satisfaction of each person. Every person wishes to make his or her martial life successful. The current study was planned bearing in mind to find out the level of stress management, marital adjustment and life satisfactions in Kerala society. This study gives us information about causes of marital adjustment and life satisfaction and the level of stress management and its effect on life satisfaction.

1.3 Review of Related Literature

Rotz, (2011) conducted a research on why have divorce rates fallen? The role of women's age at marriage. In this article, he used four different experimental methods, to show that age at marriage is the major close reason of the decline in divorce for married people. He derived the facts suggesting that the exact, contributory relationship between a woman's age at marriage and her future possibility of divorce cannot be significantly weaker than suggested by uncorrected estimates.

Vaishnavranja, (2010) conducted a research on Presentation on early marriage. The current paper was an effort to get insights on determinants and psychosocial effects of early marriage on the women of rural areas. He took 300 women in his samples that married in their early age

and have experience of married life up to 5 to 15 years. It is also derived from the regression analysis that the bad effects of early marriage in earlier ages have more terrible on girl child. Overall dissatisfaction level is high with the respondents who get married at the early age. Lehrer (2006) conducted a study on Age at Marriage and Marital Instability: Revisiting the Becker Landes-Michael Hypothesis. The hypothesis stated that marriage in early age has a high risk of failure and break up. Up till now it has been suggested that after attaining a mature age, the relationship between age at marriage and marital instability might become positive, the reason is that as unmarried women become mature mentally and physically, they can choose their partners realistically and in a better way. The result indicated that the relationship between age at marriage and marital instability is strongly negative up to the late twenties, and curve goes down after this age.

Akhani et al. (1999) conducted a research on marital adjustment and life satisfaction among the women of early and late marriage. Their research also wanted to explore the relationship between marital adjustment on life satisfaction. The sample of their study was one hundred married women. The findings of their study proved their hypothesis, that women's age at marriage hold significance in the marital adjustment. The women who marry with an advance age have better marital adjustment than women of early marriage. The research also showed that the financial position of the family played an important part in deciding the level of marital adjustment as the women of high earnings shows more life satisfaction than the women of low earnings.

David et al. (1987) conducted a study on the effects of early marriage on marital dissolution. The focus of this study was an analysis of a path model which includes the estimated effects of background of early marriage, early marriage and education on the possibility of separation. A result using the General Social Surveys support research that indicates that early marriage is the most significant variable effecting divorce. Further they also concluded and measure through education a small influence of the early marriage.

1.4 Statement of the problem

The problem under study is stated as impact of stress management and Life Satisfaction on marital adjustment among couples in Kerala

1.5. Objectives

1.5.1 To examine the level of stress management, marital adjustment and life satisfaction among couples in Kerala.

1.5.2 To analyze the impact of stress management and marital adjustment on life satisfaction among couples in Kerala.

1.6 Hypotheses

1.6.1 H1: Stress management, marital adjustment and life satisfaction are positively correlated among couples

1.6.2 H1: There is no homogeneity in the level of Stress management, marital adjustment and life satisfaction among couples

1.6.3 H1: Psychological correlates like stress management and life satisfaction jointly predict on marital adjustment

1.7 Research Design

1.7.1 Nature of the study

This study is descriptive in nature. Descriptive research is mainly used to gain information regarding the current status of the phenomenon and to describe "what is already exists" with respect to variables or conditions in a situation.

1.7.2 Sources of Data

Mainly primary source of data used for the study.

1.7.3 Sample design

To study the whole population in order to arrive at conclusion would be impractical. So a representative sample of 800 respondents consists of 400 male spouses and 400 female spouses were selected at random.

1.8 Statistical techniques.

The collected data were analyzed with the help of both relevant descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The statistical tools like Pearson’s correlation, regression analysis and chi square test used.

1.9 Limitations of the study

1.9.1 The study is limited to only Thrissur District in Kerala.

Part II

Results and Discussions

The study was primarily carried out to examine whether there’s an effect of stress management on marital adjustment and life satisfaction. 400 couples were selected as a part of the study. The researcher provided information to the participants regarding the objective of the research, scales and the principle of confidentiality. The stress management scale, Marital Adjustment scale and life satisfaction Scale were administered on each of the participants. The result collected was quantitatively analyzed. Here the researcher made an attempt to analyze the level of psychological correlates of marital adjustment among couples by using the chi square test of homogeneity in various dimensions of psychological correlates of marital adjustment among 400 males and 400 females’ spouses selected from Kerala under study.

Pearson Correlation Scores of Marital Adjustment and Stress Management

Table 2.1 Correlations				
		Marital Adjustment	Stress Management	Life Satisfaction
Marital Adjustment	Pearson Correlation	1	0.044	.368**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.217	0
	N	800	800	800
Stress Management	Pearson Correlation	0.044	1	.100**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.217		0.005
	N	800	800	800
Life Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.368**	.100**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0.005	
	N	800	800	800
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

The table 2.1 shows the correlation coefficient (r) =.044, indicating poor relationship, between Marital Adjustment and Stress Management among couples and that it is not statistically significant ($p = .217 > .05$). Therefore the result of this study indicates that the hypothesis Stress management is positively correlated with marital adjustment among couples in Kerala, it is failed to reject null hypothesis.

The correlation coefficient (r) =.100, indicating poor relationship, between Stress Management and Life Satisfaction among couples and that it is statistically significant ($p = .01 < .05$). Therefore the result of this study indicates that the hypothesis stress management is positively correlated with Life Satisfaction among couples in Kerala. It is also significant at 1% level of significance. The correlation coefficient (r) =.368, indicating poor relationship, between life satisfaction and marital adjustment among couples and that it is statistically

significant ($p = .01 < .05$). Therefore the result of this study indicates that the hypothesis marital adjustment is positively correlated with life satisfaction among couples in Kerala. It is also significant at 1% level of significance.

Table 2.2 Chi square scores of Level of Marital Adjustment, stress management and life satisfaction among Couples			
Pearson Chi-Square		df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Marital adjustment	4.06	5	0.541
Stress Management	5.385	6	0.495
Life Satisfaction	16.2	5	0.006

Source: SPSS output

From the table 2.2, it can be seen that the results of the "Pearson Chi-Square" marital adjustment ($\chi^2 = 4.060$, $p = .541$) and the chi square value of stress management is ($\chi^2 = 5.385$, $p = .495$) this tells us that there is no statistically significant difference between gender and the level marital adjustment. The level of marital adjustment and stress management is homogeneous among couples. While in the case of life satisfaction the Chi-Square ($\chi^2 = 16.2$, $p = .006$). The p value indicates that there is statistically significant difference between gender and the level of life satisfaction. The level of life satisfaction is heterogeneous among couples.

Table 2.3 Model Summary^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.368 ^a	.135	.133	6.04343
a. Predictors: (Constant), Stress Management, and life satisfaction				
b. Dependent Variable: Marital Adjustment				

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4550.777	2	2275.388	62.300	.000^b
	Residual	29108.822	797	36.523		
	Total	33659.599	799			
a. Dependent Variable Marital Adjustment						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Stress Management, and life satisfaction						

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	22.615	2.141		10.563	.000
	Stress Management	.003	.013	.007	.210	.834
	life satisfaction	.135	.012	.367	11.084	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Marital Adjustment						

The regression analysis findings indicate that 13.5 % of the variance (adjusted R square) of marital adjustment has been significantly explained by the two predictors i.e., stress management and life satisfaction. Thus the results in this study support alternative hypothesis, predictors i.e., stress management and life satisfaction significantly influence the marital adjustment among couples. It implies that the couples whoever has high level of stress management and life satisfaction; they have high level of marital adjustment. Therefore the hypothesis is true and it is accepted. The result of regression shows that the model is significant ($p < 0.01$). The F-ratio in the ANOVA (Table 2.3) tests whether the overall regression model is a good fit for the data. The table shows that the independent variables statistically significantly predict the dependent variable, $F(2, 797) = 62.3, p(.000) < .05$ (i.e., the regression model is a good fit of the data).

The statistical significance of each of the independent variables tests whether the unstandardized (or standardized) coefficients are equal to 0 (zero) in the population (i.e. for each of the coefficients, $H_0: \beta = 0$ versus $H_a: \beta \neq 0$ is conducted). If $p < .05$, the coefficients are statistically significantly different to 0 (zero). The usefulness of these tests of significance is to investigate if each explanatory variable needs to be in the model, given that the others are already there. The coefficients table provides us with the necessary information to predict the Psychological correlates on marital adjustment

The coefficient indicates the significance of individual independent variables. In this study, the t-value and corresponding p-values of individual independent variables are given in the "t" and "Sig." columns respectively, the tests tell us that the independent variables like life satisfaction has the p value (.000) which is less than 0.05. This means that the predictor variable like life satisfaction is more useful to predict the marital adjustment among couples in this model than the stress management.

The result of this hypothesis further imply that life satisfaction is the highest contributing predictor variable (beta value of .367) followed by stress management (beta value of .007). This proves that the life satisfaction variable had been quite good to predict the marital adjustment among couples.

Part III

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to examine whether there is an effect of stress management on marital adjustment and life satisfaction among couples in Kerala. From the results obtained in the present study, with the help of statistical treatment and interpretation it is concluded that stress management has no effect on marital adjustment but life satisfaction variable had been quite good to predict the marital adjustment among couples.

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