

# Marital Satisfaction and Emotional Intelligence among Different Professionals

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**Abstract**— the current study explored the relationship of marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence among different professionals. The sample comprised of N= 200 participants (n= 100 men and n= 100 women). The study sample was further divided into two categories of professionals were selected doctors, (n=50 men and n=50 women) and lecturers (n=50 men and n=50 women) from Faisalabad and Lahore. The age rang of the sample was 25 to 45 years with 5 to 10 year marriage duration. Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) by Schutte (1998) and Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) by Spanier, (1976) were administered to measure the variables of emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction. Pearson product moment correlation and independent sample t-test was used for statistical analysis. The findings of the study indicated significant relationship ( $r = .165^*$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) between marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence. Results also supported that working women ( $M = 1.3348$ ,  $SD = 5.870$ ) have higher emotional intelligence as compare to working men ( $M = 1.2458$ ,  $SD = 10.753$ ). The findings of the study will be helpful for improving marital satisfaction. It can also be helpful in marital counseling and education counseling.

**Key words**— Marital adjustment, Emotional Intelligence, Marital satisfaction, Doctors, Lecturers.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The present research was designed to scrutinize marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence among working men and women. This follow a line of investigation helped to find out the role of emotional intelligence in a well satisfied matrimonial life. Aspire of this investigation was to look into the bond between marital satisfaction and the various elements of emotional intelligence among doctors and lecturers. Furthermore, it was also compared marital adjustment in both, men and women. In Pakistan usually people adapt medical and teaching professions as it is considered that both of these professions are suitable not only for males but females as well. The professions of lecturers and doctors not only necessitate fortitude and concentration but also have tough working hours. Due to their professional duties doctors and lecturers can't pay proper attention to their conjugal duties and in turn their family life suffers. But if they are emotionally intelligent, they can cope well with their professional as well as their domestic life. If they are not emotionally intelligent they will be incapable to handle their familial life and it can upshot into distressed matrimonial life. In the country like Pakistan, where collectivistic culture existed "family" is the basic unit; a disturbed family life will lead to a disturbed society.

During the last two decades an increase in the divorce rate in Pakistan is observed. The main reasons are: lack of sacrifice, forced marriages, greed, joint family system, difference in social status and one of the main reason is highly career oriented women. In Lahore city alone more than 100 divorces are registered in family courts daily. The divorce rate is increasing not only in the upper class of society but also in lower and middle classes. From February 2005 to January 2008 approximately 75,000 divorce cases had been registered. From February 2008 to May 2011, 1, 24141 divorce cases were registered. Around 2, 59064 separations have taken place in the provincial metropolis over the last decade. In 2010, 40,410 separation cases were registered in the city's family courts and 13,500" divorces have been filed so far in 2011. According to Dr Javed Abbas Mirza "Working women who are financially strong are less willing to save their marriages and can quickly opt for divorce. When a woman is financially strong, she doesn't feel the need to compromise" Psychiatrist Irfan Muneer said the divorce rate is higher among

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educated families. He said laws have been made which sustain women seeking divorce and the whole practice has been made easier. Muneer said Pakistan is a male-dominated society and men want their wives to stay back home, look after their children and not to think about their careers. "This situation becomes worse when both sides refuse to compromise and show egotistical attitude. Lack of tolerance and unwillingness to compromise is playing a vital role in increasing number of divorces in Pakistan," (Rao, 2011).

Exploring the role of emotions in marital adjustment may endow with constructive information on marital relations. Managing emotions would helpful to play an significant role in the feelings of people about their spouse (Cooley, 2006). It has been observed that approximately half of all first weddings end in separation (Bradbury, Fincham & Beach, 2000) and that the level of satisfaction in traditional marriages has been moribund constantly since the seventies (Rogers & Amato, 1997). "Emotional intelligence is an array of non cognitive capabilities, competencies and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures" (Bar-On, 1997, p.14). Boyatzis and Sala (2004) define EI as "a set of competencies or abilities to recognize and use emotional information about oneself and others that leads to or causes effective and superior performance" (p. 172). Goleman (1995) defines five major qualities of emotional quotient which are as follows; Self-awareness, mood management, self-motivation, impulse controls an Interpersonal Emotional Quotient. Emotional Intelligence is defined as the ability to perceive, understand and manage the emotions. Four different factors of emotional intelligence include the perception of emotion, the ability to reason using emotions, the ability to understand emotion and the ability to manage emotions. Emotional intelligence is a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Marital satisfaction has long been a popular topic in studies of the family, probably because the concept is believed to be closely related to the stability of a given marriage. Well-adjusted marriages are expected to last for a long time, while poorly adjusted ones end in divorce. Simple as it seems, the notion of marital adjustment is difficult to conceptualize and difficult to measure through empirical research. After more than half a century of conceptualization about and research on marital adjustment, the best that can be said may be that there is disagreement among scholars about the concept, the term, and its value. In fact, several scientists have proposed abandoning entirely the concept of marital adjustment and its etymological relatives. It is very difficult to define the marital relationships because it varies from person to person, culture to culture and religion to religion (Tanwani, 1997). According to Locke and Wallace (1959, p.251), "marital adjustment is an adoption between husband and wife to the point where there is companionship, agreement on basic values of affectional intimacy, accommodation and on certain other unidentified factors". Marital satisfaction is defined as the state in which there is an overall feeling in husband and wife of happiness and satisfaction with their marriage and with each other (Sinha & Mukerjee, 1990). According to Spanier and Cole (1976) marital adjustment is a process, the outcome of which is determined by the degree of (a) troublesome marital differences (b) inter spousal tension and personal anxiety (c) marital satisfaction (d) dyadic cohesion (e) consensus on matters of importance to marital functioning. Burgess, Lock and Thomas (1963) said that "a victorious marriage is a combination in which the feelings and acts of husband and wife are in union of the major issues such as management family finances". Marlow and Sproles (1984) investigated that failure to attain an exact standard of living or some individualized goals can have severe psychological outcomes for the effected members. Financial problems can raise question on adjustment of marital life. Komarovasky (1977) investigated that financial crises can affect the marital life. Couples with low social economic status constantly suffer from stress and anxiety. This financial stress may become a hurdle in better marital adjustment between spouses.

One predictor that may have particular significant to marital satisfaction is gender roles. Currently, scholars have point out the effect of sex (i.e., male and female) and gender roles (i.e., maleness and femaleness) have been mostly unobserved in the investigation of marriage over time, even though facts in existence literature that points to difference in marital satisfaction for men and women (Jhonson & Lebow, 2000). Other research has also substantiated that marriage excessively benefits men, with husbands reporting higher levels of marital satisfaction and well being than their wives (Baslow, 1992; Bernard 1975; Bird & Fremont, 1991; Heyn, 1997; McRae & Brody, 1989; Webb & Bollman, 1998). According to Feeney, Noller, and Roberts (1998) emotions and marriage are inextricably intertwined. In fact in close relationships intensity of emotional reactions can be judged (Bowlby, 1973). Researches strongly indicated better marital satisfaction linked with high level of spouses' positive emotional expressivity (Carstensen et al., 1995; Feeney, 2002; Feeney, Noller, & Callan, 1994; Gill, 1999; Halberstadt, 1995). Findings of observational studies point out that contented spouses are more constructive in their relations with their spouses and convey more conformity, humor, consent, helpful, and empathy than spouses who do not rate themselves as satisfied. Researches with self-report instruments show that in females higher positive emotional expressions are allied with better marital satisfaction (Halberstadt, 1995). Collectively, these researches noticed that positive emotional expressions may take part in influential couples' marital satisfaction.

Emotional intelligence in marriage is one of the keys to a life-long, associated, and satisfying connection. In short, emotional intelligence in marital life is displayed and practiced when both a wife and a husband are egerly conscious of their individual emotions, they handle

those emotions in a healthy way, and then they are deliberately alert and attentive to the emotions of their spouse. Research has devastatingly demonstrated that one of the qualities common in mates who report a high degree of marital satisfaction is that they purely consider emotionally connected to their spouse. An additional way to illustrate this is that they experience that their partner legitimately cares about them and is normally kind in their relations. It is not always about sharing on a "deep, personal level." Emotionally intelligent couples are conscious of what is going on in their mate's world and demonstrates care for that world. They are open and answer to things their mate may want from them: a kind word, a listening ear, a gentle touch, a sensual and sexual encounter, or warm reassurance. Even in clash, couples who exhibit emotional intelligence in marriage are able to keep on emotionally linked. They are smart enough and disciplined enough to keep away from hurting their relational understanding which occurs when couples exhibit dislike and spitefulness to each other (Gardner, n.d).

## 2.LITERATURE REVIEW

A study was conducted in the Gujrat (Pakistan) to check out the relationship between marital adjustment and emotional intelligence (EI) among couples. Results also indicated that there is no effect of age and gender on marital adjustment. It also revealed that family income has impact on marital life and adjustment (Dildar, Bashir, Shoib, Sultan & Saeed, 2012).

Another study focused on emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction in India. From this research it seems clear that there is positive association between both emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction. This study also highlights the factors of emotionality that manipulate marital satisfaction (Levalekar, Kulkarni, & Jagtap, 2010).

Soleymani and Akram (2009) investigated the relationship between marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence among students of higher studies in Bojnord. The findings of study revealed positive correlation between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction. The research also indicated positive correlation between components and marital satisfaction and EM (attention clearance emotional reconstruction). The results also indicated that emotional intelligence is significantly higher in women.

Another study was done to investigate the effects of emotional intelligence on marital adjustment of couples in Nigeria. Findings indicated that emotional management, social relationship skills and emotional sensitivity skills have significant effect in marital adjustment. On the bases of the conclusion it has been suggested that in premarital and marital counseling couples should introduce the competencies of emotional intelligence (Ortese & Tor-Anyiin, 2008).

Bricker (2008) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction. The results showed that there was significant relationship between EI and certain aspects of marital satisfaction. It was found that in most circumstances, the level of male EI was responsible for couple's marital satisfaction. Further results indicate that the greater the gap between each partners level of EI, the greater their level of marital dissatisfaction.

Lavalekar (2007) examined and compared the marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence of people between ages 25-65. The findings conclude a considerable gender difference on different areas of emotional intelligence, for instance; openness to criticism, self management and empathy. A significant gender difference is also observed on two areas of marital satisfaction, sexual relations and sharing household responsibilities, that can be traced to the socio-cultural impact. The research findings helped in understanding the correlation of gender with core qualities of one's emotional intelligence that can affect the matrimonial relationship.

The present research was planned to inspect the role of positive and negative emotional expressivity in the marital

relationship. Regression analyses indicated that positive emotional expressivity had partial influence on marital functioning. Negative expressivity, on the other hand, had a strong collision on marital care, divergence, and ambivalence. Post-hoc analyses exposed considerable differences between pairings in which the husband was high in negative expressivity, irrespective of wives' negative emotional expressivity, and pairings in which spouses were low in negative emotional expressivity (Rauer & Volling, 2005).

Cordova, Gee and Warren (2005) had investigated the intimacy between marital adjustment and emotional skillfulness. Ninety-two married couples have been selected as participants. It has been observed that these emotions are interlinked.

Schutte, et al, (2001) hypothesized that high scores on emotional intelligence indicated better marital adjustments as manifested scores on marital adjustment. Findings of the study revealed that high score on emotional intelligence, significant indication for higher marital adjustment.

**2.1 Hypothesis of the study**

Keeping in view the above mentioned objective following hypotheses are formulated.

- A. There would be a positive relationship between marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence.
- B. Working women would have higher level of emotional intelligence as compared to working men.

**3. METHODOLOGY**

**3.1 Participants**

The sample of the current research consisted of (N= 200) working men and women from different professions. The sample was further divided into (n= 50 male doctors and 50 female doctors; n= 50 male lecturers and 50 female lecturers). The age range of the study sample was 25 to 45 years. The duration of their marital life was 5 to 10 years.

**3.2 Research design**

The comparative group design & correlational group design was used in current study.

**3.3 Sampling strategy**

Convenient sampling technique was used in current study for data collection.

**3.4 Inclusion and Exclusion criteria**

Doctors and lecturers whose age ranging between 25 to 45 years with 5 to 10 year marriage duration will be included in the sample. Illiterate persons and people from other professions will be excluded from sample. Doctors and lecturers below 25 years and above 45 years would not be included in the sample of current study.

**3.5 Operational definition**

Marital satisfaction in the current study will be operationally defined as the scores obtained through Dyadic Adjustment scale (SPANIER 1976). Emotional intelligence in the current study will be operationally defined as the scores obtained from emotional intelligence scale (SCHUTTE *et al.* 1998).

**3.6 Instruments**

Following instruments used in the current study.

**3.7 Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS)**

Emotional intelligence scale (EIS) developed by Schutte et al, (1998) will be used in this research. The emotional intelligence scale includes 33 items. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. 1 as "strongly disagree" 2 as "somewhat disagree", 3 as "neither agree nor disagree", 4 as "somewhat agree" and 5 as "strongly agree". The scale was found to be correlated with theoretically related constructs such as Toronto Alexithymia Scale (r = .65), and the attention subscale of the Trait Meta Mood Scale (r = .63). A Cronbach's alpha of .78. The scale also showed evidence of validity as scores on the scale was shown to be related to eight of nine measures predicted to be related to Emotional Intelligence.

**3.8 Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS)**

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), developed by SPANIER (1976) will be used to measure marital satisfaction. The scale was composed of four subscales: (a) dyadic consensus, (measures agreement on various topics such as religion, goals, and household tasks); (b) dyadic satisfaction, (contains questions around interpersonal behavior); (c) dyadic cohesion, (covers shared activities); and (d) affectional expression, which briefly addresses physical interactions. This scale has 32 items, using 30 Likert scales and two dichotomous questions. It can be taken with paper and pencil or electronically in five to ten minutes and is easy to score (Multi-Health Systems 2009a). The scores of the two partners can be compared or looked at individually. The test can be used to monitor therapy, evaluate the need for therapy, or illuminate differences between partners. The DAS has reported good reliability and validity. With a test-retest coefficient of .96, consistency is good for the DAS (Spanier, 1989). It had a reliability coefficient of .714; the 95% confidence interval does put it in the position of borderline acceptability (GRAHAM *et al.* 2006).

**3.9 procedures**

In order to fulfill the requirements of the current research, Sample was selected through convenient sampling from Government hospitals and Government colleges of Faisalabad and Lahore city. Then informed consent was designed according to ethics of research. Through permission letter from MS of hospitals and principals data was collected. The ethical standards of research considered, and brief description about the research given to the participants and insured that information will be kept confidential. The demographic information about variables such as age, gender, and occupation gathered through demographic sheet attached with Emotional intelligence scale (EIS) by Schutte (1998) and Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) by Spanier, (1976). Extraneous variables also tried to control during the study.

**3.10 Statistical analysis**

The Pearson's product moment coefficient of correlation and t-test through SPSS window version 15.00 used for statistical analysis.

**4. RESULTS**

The study aimed to investigate marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence among different professionals.

There would positive correlation between marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence among professionals.

Table 1.

	Emotional intelligence	P
Marital satisfaction	.165*	.020

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

This hypothesis was tested by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to find out the relationship between marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence. The above table shows that strong positive relationship was found between marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence among as  $p < *0.05$ .

Table 2.

It is hypothesized that working women would have higher level of emotional intelligence as compared to working men.

Variable	Gender	N	M	SD	df	T	P
Emotional intelligence	Men	100	1.2458	10.75	198	-7.558	.000**
	Women	100	1.3348	5.87			

$p < 0.05^*$ ,  $0.01^{**}$ ,  $0.1^{***}$

Results indicate significant difference at  $p < 0.05$  between men and women on Emotional Intelligence Scale (EI).

## 5. DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to explore the marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence among different professionals (men and women). Mahanian et al. (2006) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction in female teachers, that there is a considerable relationship between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction. Marital satisfaction has a positive significant association with the emotional intelligence items, social skills, self-awareness, self controlling and empathy. There is association between emotional intelligence and professional achievement and also between marital satisfaction and professional victory. About 13 % of marital changes are indicated via emotional intelligence.

Schutte, et al, (2001) hypothesized that high scores on emotional intelligence indicated better marital adjustments as manifested scores on marital adjustment. Findings of the study revealed that high score on emotional intelligence, significant indication for higher marital adjustment. Cordova, Gee and Warren (2005) had investigated the intimacy between marital adjustment and emotional skillfulness. It has been observed that these emotions are interlinked.

Hypothesis# 1: There would be positive relationship between marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to assess the hypothesis. Result supports the hypothesis and indicated significant correlation ( $r = .165^*$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) between marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence. Batool and Khalid (2012) studied emotional intelligence as predictor of marital quality among Pakistani couples. The findings of the study showed that emotional intelligence was positively correlated with marital quality and spouses with higher emotional intelligence showed better marital quality. Another study investigated the relation between marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence. Very strong correlation was observed in marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence among well adjusted couples (Tirgari, Asgharnejad, Bayanzadeh, & Abiden, 2006).

Hypothesis 2: Working women would have higher level of emotional intelligence as compared to working men.”

The hypothesis is supported by results. The obtained results are in line with Soleymani and Akram (2009) investigated the relationship between marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence among students of higher studies in Bojnord. The results also indicated that emotional intelligence is significantly higher among women. Researches by different researchers indicated that women have higher emotional intelligence as compared to men (King, 1999; Sutarso, 1999; Wing & Love, 2001; Singh, 2002).

## 6. Conclusions and recommendations

The current study explored the relationship of marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence among different professionals. The findings of the study indicated significant relationship between marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence. Results also supported that working women have higher emotional intelligence as compare to working men. The findings of the study rejected the hypothesis that working men have better marital satisfaction as compared to working women, no significance difference found between both genders on marital satisfaction. The sample size should be large because if sample is large then, it will be more representative and the results can be generalized to the whole Pakistani population. So that the present study can serve as a beginning for further research in this area.

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