



RESEARCH ARTICLE

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON MENTAL HEALTH AND MARITAL ADJUSTMENT AMONG
WORKING AND NON-WORKING WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

The cardinal object of the present study was to investigate the mental health status and marital adjustment of the working and non-working women. The present study consisted sample of 60 women subjects (30 working and 30 non-working women), selected through random sampling technique from Srinagar city of Garhwal, (Uttarakhand). Data was collected with the help of Mental Health Inventory developed by Dr. A. K. Sharivastava and Dr. Jagdish and Marital Adjustment inventory constructed by P. Kumar and K. Roshatgi. For data analysis and hypothesis testing Mean, SD, and t-test was applied. Results revealed that there is a significant difference between working and non-working women with respect to their mental health and marital adjustment.

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INTRODUCTION

Indian women have been gradually coming out of traditional roles and entering into the male dominated areas. In recent years the role and status of the women have been changed tremendously. With increasing female education and more liberty for their rights and privileges, women's attitude towards their stereotyped role is changing. Their participation in education and work place has also led to their increased socio-familial roles. Women who work outside the home are required to make many socio-familial adjustments that may contribute more stress and anxiety. The problem of stress in women, particularly working women, is an important aspect on the process of social and emotional changes. Women in India today have more opportunities to pursue their higher education and more and more women have started taking up the jobs outside their homes. Women are existing under cultural norms and values so the working women have to make an adjustment with the family members are expected to make such adjustments. So this in turn leads to a number of stress and strain among working women. WHO defines health as a state of 'complete physical, mental and social well-being, and merely the absence of disease or infirmity'. Mental health has been reported as an important factor influencing an individual's various behaviours, activities, happiness and performance. Mental pressure is a vital cause of the mental

health problems which arise due to various conditions. If the mental condition is good, a woman can take various responsibilities of a family and her understand the complications, try to solve them, plan for future and adjustment with others by becoming mentally strong. Women and depression is holding a relationship of much interest over the last two decades. As more and more women enter the work force, they are increasingly exposed not only of the some work environment as men, but also to pressure created by multiple roles and conflicting expectations (Nelson and Burke 2000; Chang 2000). These differences occur in most countries around the world (Nolen-Hoeksema and Girgus, 1994; Whilelm and Roy, 2003; Ge and Conger, 2003).

Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. In this positive sense, mental health is the foundation for individual well-being and the effective functioning of a community. According to World Health Organization (WHO) mental health includes "subjective well-being, perceived self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, intergenerational dependence, and self-actualization of one's intellectual and emotional potential, among others." Different psychologists are trying to defined mental health by different way. According to Sullivan, a healthy person is one who has syntaxes relationship with others and who reacts to people as they really are, not as symbol of past relationship. Thus, emphasis is on interpersonal

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relationship. Alder defined a healthy personality as one which experiences a sense of identification against infantile feeling of inferiority and helplessness. Mental health can be defined as the ability to make adequate social and emotional adjustments to the environment, on the plane of reality. In other words it is the ability to face and accept the realities of life (Bhatia, 1982). Mental health is that behavior, perception and feeling which determines a person's overall level of personal effectiveness, success, happiness and excellence of functioning. It depends on the development and retention of goals that are neither too high nor too low to permit realistic successful maintenance of belief in one's self as worthy, effective human being and marital adjustment is the state in which there is an overall feeling in husband and wife of happiness and satisfaction with their marriage and with each other.

In a book entitled mental hygiene in public health P. V. Lewkan has written that mentally healthy individual is one who is herself satisfied, lives peacefully with his neighbors, makes healthy citizens of his children and even after performing these fundamental duties has enough energy left to do something of benefit to society? Possessing mental health, an individual can adjust properly to his environment, and can make the best effort for his own, his family's and his society's progress and betterment. The chief characteristic of mental health is adjustment. The greater the degree of successful adjustment the greater will be the mental health of the individual. Lesser mental health will lead to less adjustment and greater conflict. With regard to marital adjustment we may say that it is the state in which there is an overall feeling in husband and wife of happiness and satisfaction with their marriage. Important junctures in everyone's life (especially women) are birth, marriage, occupation and death. Talking about marriage as an institution, we can say that it changes the life of any individual, especially women, dramatically. They have to go through plenty of changes. Women after marriage have to carry the burden of dual responsibilities. One is to take care of the biological parents and in addition to that they also have to equally take care of their parents-in-law. Women have to go through a lot of mental struggle in order to be a balancing force and solving all the domestic problems with extreme maturity.

Marital adjustment is 'the state in which there is an overall feeling in husband and wife of happiness and satisfaction with their marriage and with each other (Thomas, 1977). Issues of work and family have always been important, but social changes in the institutions of both work and the family have interacted to increase their salience for adults in many societies. Marriage is a social security for all the individuals, i.e. society through marriage system provides security of needs and cares thereby its existence and prosperity is secured. Marriage is for pleasure, happiness and peace of mind on account of satisfaction through interactions with others, trust, understanding and fulfilling social obligations and enriching personality development (Goel, 2013). Marital adjustment is a process which is created during couples' life because it is necessary for taste conformity, person 'strains recognition, behavioral rules creation and relational models formation. Thus, marital adjustment is an evolutionary process between a couple (Aminjafari, 2012). Marital adjustment has been related to personality, job & home stresses, mental illness, depression, education, sex role attitude, happiness and success in life. Marital adjustment has been related to personality, job & home stresses, mental illness, depression, education, sex role attitude,

happiness and success in life (Hashmi *et al*, 2007). The present study is an attempt to investigate marital adjustment among working women. Working women at present are more prone to marital adjustment problems because they have to work in two environments, one is the work environment and the other is home environment.

In India Most people marry with bundles of expectations, some of them are realistic but most of them are unrealistic to the core. This kind of situation makes marriage a very complex affair. 'Marital adjustment' as a phrase itself is questionable because adjustment is supposed to be a temporary thing whereas marriage is a life time commitment. One should not have to even think of adjusting as it only aggravates the problems. Marriage as a decision calls for extreme maturity. If taken under severe pressure, it may lead to disastrous situations especially for women. It actually works and grows as undetected cancer that kills slowly, softly but surely. Perhaps half of the adults suffering from severe stress blame the deteriorating relationships on their spouse. Looking at the growing rate of divorces, court cases for alimony, physical abuses and single parents; it does seem as if handling a relationship can be a tricky and often taxing issue. The possible causes can be endless. More often than not, stress arising from marital relationships is manifested in chronic disorders such as depression, insomnia and hypertension. Since a relationship depends on the nature of the persons involved, it helps to seek the middle path when the inherent individual differences surface. It often helps to change one's attitude, go for counseling or talk openly with your spouse about problems facing your relationship.

Marriage is by far the most important personal relationship for any person and has been described as the most intimate, delicate and far-reaching relationship between man and woman. The stability and continuity of a marriage is important not just to the members of the marital dyad, but to their family and community as a whole. Traditionally, in Indian culture, people expected their marriages to be arranged by their elder extended kin who continued to play a significant role in the couple's lives. Marriage has been discussed in terms of the interdependence between two individuals (Lewin, 1948) and what happens to one individual is likely to influence the other. As a function of the interdependence in relationship, the nature of the relationship may undergo transformation to accommodate the changes in the partner's health and behavioural status (Kerns & Turk, 1985). Marriage adjustment seems complex than it may appear. Basically, in marriage, two persons adjust to each other's sensory, motor, emotional and intellectual capacities. On the personality level they must adjust together to their total environment, including such matters as a new household, children, provision and preparation of food, relatives, friends, relations and work (Fonseca, 1966). There is a list of six areas of marital adjustment, which is defined by the psychologist, such as, religion, social life, mutual friends, in laws, money and sex. Another psychologist defines ten areas of marital adjustment, i.e. values, couple growth, communication, conflict resolution, affection, roles, cooperation, sex, money and parenthood. A study on marriage and marital adjustment in USA presents social activities and recreation, training and disciplining of children, religion, in law relationship, financial matters, sexual relationship, communication, mutual trust and companionship as the areas of marital adjustment.

According to O.P. Mishra and S.K. Srivastava in marriage husband and wife should sacrifice their egoistic attitude, to avoid mutual conflicts, feel mutual satisfaction, respect the each other interest and fulfill the expectations and aspiration related to marital life, all these will work in maintaining the good marital adjustment according to him the six dimensions of marital adjustment are: 1) Feeling for spouse 2) Harmonious relations 3) Communication 4) mutual understanding 5) sexual relations 6) other factors related to the marital life. Previous research on the relationship between wife employment and marital adjustment has produced conflicting results: some investigations report a positive relationship between wife employment and marital adjustment others suggest a negative relationship.

Nathawat and Mathur did a study in India about marital adjustment and subjective well-being in Indian-educated housewives and working women. Their results indicated that working women had better marital adjustment and subjective well-being. Working women reported high scores on general health, life satisfaction and self-esteem measures & lower scores on hopelessness, insecurity and anxiety whereas the housewives had lower scores on negative affect than the working women.

Methodology and Design

Problem: - A Comparative Study on Mental Health and Marital Adjustment among Working and Non-Working Women.

Objectives:

1. To study the mental health of working and non-working women.
2. To study the marital adjustment of working and non-working women.

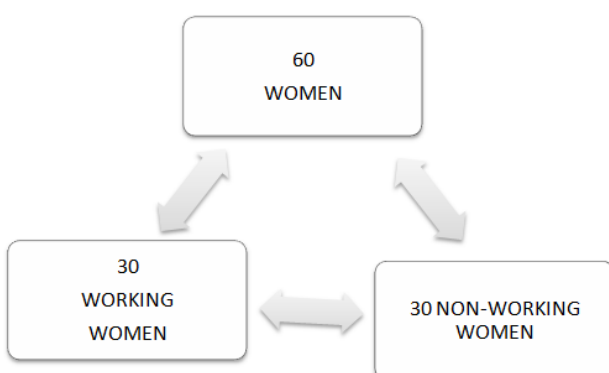
Hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference between working and non-working women on mental health.
2. There is no significant difference between working and non-working women on marital adjustment.

Sampling:

Present study consisting 60 women's divided into two groups working and non-working women.

Sample



Variables:

In present study there was two experimental variables mental health and marital adjustment.

Measurement Tools:

The following tools were used the data collection.

1. Mental health inventory (MHI) constructed by Dr. Shrivastav & Dr. Jagdish.
2. Marital Adjustment Questionnaire developed by Dr. Pramod Kumar & Dr. Kanchana Rohatgi. (1999).
- 3.

Statistical Analysis:

In this study t-test was used to analyze the data as a statistical technique.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. The mental health between working and non-working women

| Variables | N | Mean | SD | t-value | Level of Significance |
|-------------------|----|--------|-------|---------|-----------------------|
| Working Women | 30 | 190.27 | 15.45 | 2.18 | 0.05** |
| Non-Working Women | 30 | 185.75 | 12.36 | | |

Significance level 0.05**

The above outcome of the study indicates that there is a difference between the working and non-working women. Working women mean was found 190.27 and SD 15.45 whereas non-working women mean is 185.75 and SD 12.36. It is clear that the mental health level of non-working women is low as compared to working women. On applying t-test the numeric value that we get is 2.18 which are found significant at 0.05 level. There is significant difference between working and non-working women for mental health. So these hypotheses are rejected. On the basis of this result we can say that because of heaps of mental pressure with regard to bringing up the children maintaining pleasant relationship within lows and their relatives and above all having good compatibility with husband, extreme isolation are some factors insofar as mental health from the result that non-working women mental health is not good compared to working women. The working women had better mental health when compared to non-working women. The demographic factors such as age, education, income and number of children had a positive and significant relationship with working women and family size had negative but significant relationship with mental health of the working women.

Table 2. The marital adjustment between working and non-working women

| Variables | N | Mean | S.D | t-value | Level of significance |
|-------------------|----|-------|------|---------|-----------------------|
| Working Women | 30 | 24.34 | 3.97 | 2.46 | 0.05** |
| Non-Working Women | 30 | 20.48 | 1.92 | | |

Significance level 0.05**

The outcome of the present study shows (Table 2) that there is a difference between the working and non-working women in term of marital adjustment. The mean of marital adjustment of

working women found 24.34 and SD 3.97 whereas non-working women marital adjustment means 20.48 and SD 1.92. It indicates that marital adjustment level of working women is high compared to non-working women. On applying t-test the numeric value that we get is 2.46 which are significant at 0.05 levels. There is significant difference between working and non-working women in marital adjustment. So these hypotheses are rejected. The result of the present investigation supports the earlier findings of the study conducted by Nathawat and Mathur (1993); Rogers and May (2003) which indicates that the working women are more satisfied and adjusted in their marital life. However, other contradictory findings have reported poor adjustment of working women. For example, some other researchers are of this view that the life of working women has been viewed, as problematic period of one's life as compared to non-working women.

Conclusion

There is a significance difference between working and non-working women in mental health and working and non-working women marital adjustment. The hypothesis is rejected. So we are found that working women better mental health and marital adjustment compare to non-working women. In the last it can be said that a woman who is able to maintain her mental calm in all the situations can really be successful in all the phases of life. Problems with regard to modern society have multiplied courtesy which, she has to go through a lot of mental stress irrespective of whether she is a working or a non-working woman.

Limitations and implications

- The size of the sample was small which could be increased.
- There was a significant difference mental health and marital adjustment which was found among the working and non-working women.
- This shows a better mental health and marital adjustment in working women compared to non-working.

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