



RESEARCH ARTICLE

A STUDY ON EMPTY NEST SYNDROME AMONG MIDDLE AGED MEN AND WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

This study was premeditated to study the interactional effect of emotional intelligence, dependence proneness and gender in empty nest syndrome among middle aged men and women. A sample of 480 middle age men and women (240 male and 240 female) were randomly drawn from twin city of Bhillai and Durg. A survey method through questionnaire was used for data collection. Empty Nest syndrome of subjects assessed with the help of self made questionnaire of empty nest syndrome which was standardised before survey, Emotional Intelligence Inventory (E.I.I by Bar On's 1997) adopted by Mishra (2000) and Dependence Proneness scale constructed and standardized by Sinha, (1975) was used. After ensuring the homogeneity of variance the scores of empty nest syndrome was subjected to 2 x 2 factorial design of ANOVA treatment to work out the main effects of the three factors viz. gender, emotional intelligence and dependence proneness. The interactional effect of emotional intelligence and dependence proneness on empty nest scale empty (F=0.875) which is also found to be insignificant at 0.05 confidence interval ($p < 0.05$) therefore our first two factor interactional hypothesis that the subjects with high emotional intelligence and low dependence proneness would score higher in empty nest scale than the subjects with low emotional intelligence and high dependence proneness has been rejected. The interactional effect of gender and emotional intelligence on empty nest scale (F=25.446**) which is significant at 0.01 confidence interval (** $P > 0.05$) therefore our second main hypothesis that middle aged male with high emotional intelligence would score lower in empty nest scale than low emotional intelligence middle aged female has accepted. The interactional effect of emotional intelligence and dependence proneness on empty nest syndrome (F=0.057) which is found to be insignificant at 0.05 confidence interval ($p > 0.05$) therefore our third interactional hypothesis that the middle aged male with high dependence proneness will score significantly lower in empty nest syndrome than the middle aged female with low dependence proneness has been rejected.

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INTRODUCTION

Experimental studies on "Emotional intelligence, Dependence proneness and effect of gender in empty nest syndrome" in Indian framework have not yet been conducted. Attentiveness about Empty Nest Syndrome is very exceptional some individual barely heard about this topic. So, the purpose of present study is to examine the role of emotional intelligence, dependence proneness and effect of gender in empty nest syndrome. "Empty nest refers to a home that has contained a family of one or more children, who now have left home". Empty-nest syndrome is a result of emptiness in an individual's life. This could be due to loss of spouse, loss of routine work, retirement and grown children becoming independent.

Empty Nest Syndrome is the emotional response of a parent when their child/children leave home to get on on a new life. This is usually due to college or university commitments but can also be caused by gap year travel plans and other opportunities that require independence and accountability for self. The marriage of a child can also create the same feelings. If the bond with your child has always been mainly close a parent will certainly experience pangs of uneasiness once the young adult is ready to run away from the home/nest. Until now a parent's most important focus has been centred on the comfort and rearing of the child. Now that they are ready to leave home parental support may appear to become redundant. It is this feeling of loss and sadness that creates an emotional response in the parent and this can sometimes be more acute, or severe, than expected. Empty nest refers to a home that has contained a family of one or more children, who now have left home. Barber's (1989) definition of the term "empty nest refers to the years a couple spend together between the launching of their last child and the death of one of the spouses.

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According to Mayer and Salovey (1990), "Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to monitor one's own and others feelings and emotions to discriminate among them and to use information to guide one's thinking and action". It is one of the recent and major developments in the area of intelligence. The management of emotions has given rise the term "Emotional intelligence". It can be understood as a feeling side of intelligence. The inclusion of emotion and intelligence as a positive ability under the caption of Emotional Intelligence (EI) was proposed by Salovey and Mayer (1990). It was described as a person's ability to understand his or her own emotions and the emotions of others and to act appropriately based on this understanding. Recognition and emotion have always been focused perturbations like fear, anxiety, depression and alexithymia on in philosophy and later in psychological research. Pablilius stated: "rule over your Freud used free association and dream feelings and do not let your feelings rule over you". For interpretation in his treatments and helped patients restate a very long period of time, emotions were regarded as their thoughts and desires by providing ambience free non-logical modes which were imperfect and confused of the judgment and appraisal of wisdom. Some research even indicates that emotion release is not this insight towards behavior is not only intellectual, valuable without recognition processing. Dependence proneness is a kind of response disposition. Dependency is one of the basic models of interpersonal relationship. However if dependency instead of being instrumental becomes invested with positive effect so much. So that the person tends to lean on others in situations where dependency may not be functional 'he show dependence proneness. The corresponding behaviour pertaining to dependence proneness are looking others for order, seeking favours of persons having a higher status undue conformity to standards of behaviour, avoiding responsibility, etc

Literature review

Sartori *et al.* (2009) Studied on the empty nest syndrome is frequently mentioned in the literature as a period of change in the couples' lives, after children leaving home.

Result: the empty nest syndrome period occurs along with several changes such as retirement and menopause which can exacerbate feelings of depression and low self-esteem. Iman and Aghamiri, (2011). Studied on a path analysis of the social and psychological factors influencing the psychological well being of empty nest mothers in sari city Iran and found that more dependence on children is co related with the higher psychological well being of mothers. Kimberly Putz (2012). Studied on the family life cycle and empty nest. The focus of this paper will be on the transition to empty nest for the marital couple and leaving the home for the emerging adults. This paper explores family life cycles, provides an overview of Adler's view of marriage, and discusses the roles family members hold and the impact on family life cycle transitions. This paper also examines the combined stress of approaching mid-life while also experiencing the empty nest. Ling Gao *et al.* (2013). Studied on community health education of empty nest elderly and found that to study the demands of community health education on the empty nest elderly and analyse the related factors.

Results: The results showed that the ability of self-care was worse and needed more nursing or caring from others in the empty nest elderly; the empty nest elderly, in comparison with the non-empty-nest elderly, had lower physical and mental scores.

Conclusions: Empty nest elderly generally needed the different degree of community health education demands. The utilization rates of community health education were low. Khaledian, Parva *et al.* (2013). Studied on "The effectiveness of logo therapy on the rise of hopefulness in Empty Nest Syndrome" The rise of life-span affects the quality of life and the individual's ability for an independent life and underlines the need of others' attention and support for the individual. Findings: the findings show that the Logo therapy is effective on increasing life expectancy in empty-nest syndrome. Nagy and Jennifer, (2013). Studied on Applying the relational turbulence model to the empty nest transition: Source of relationship change, relational uncertainty and interference from parents. Our findings suggest that the relational turbulence model may be a useful tool for understanding the relationship challenges faced by couples during late-life transitions. Mohmmad Khaledian (2013). Studied on the effectiveness of group cognitive behaviour therapy on the rise of hope fullness in empty nest syndrome. The rise of life-span affects the quality of life and the individual's ability for an independent life and underlines the need of others' attention and support for the individual. Therefore a suitable plan for encountering with the situation in the empty nest seems indispensable. Results: the findings show that the Group Cognitive Behavior Therapy is effective on increasing life expectancy in empty-nest syndrome. Leila Mirahmadi (2014). Studied on Investigation of the relationship between empty nest syndrome and happiness among the couples of sharekord city. Results show that there is a negative relationship between happiness and empty nest syndrome ($p < 0.05$, but no other significant relationship was noticed, except for gender, and between happiness, empty nest syndrome and demographic characteristics) $P > 0.05$). Men and Women experience empty nest syndrome differently and it effects their adjustment pattern differently. Mid life usually referring to the years 45-65 is a time of many transitions and has been determined to be very important in the psychological development of both men and women.

Objective

- To find out the interactional effect of emotional intelligence (E.I) in empty nest syndrome among middle aged men and women.
- To find out the interactional effect of dependence proneness (D.P) in empty nest syndrome among middle aged men and women.
- To find out the interactional effect of Gender (male and female) in empty nest syndrome.

Hypothesis

- The subjects with high emotional intelligence and low dependence proneness would score higher on Empty nest scale score then the subjects with low emotional intelligence and high dependence proneness.
- The middle aged male with high emotional intelligence would score lower in empty nest syndrome than low emotional intelligence middle aged female.
- The middle aged male with high dependence proneness will score significantly lower in empty nest syndrome than the middle aged female with low dependence proneness.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Following the stratified random sampling technique 480 middle aged men and women will be drawn from the twin city of Bhilai and Durg of the state Chhattisgarh. Before the randomization certain extraneous variables such as types of family (joint and nuclear), caste and religious affinity will be identified and controlled.

Tools

- Empty Nest Syndrome Questionnaire was constructed and standardised during research work. Item analysis reliability and validity of questionnaire had worked out. The inventory consist of 53 items which is in five point likert format ranging from 1 to 5 the scoring is different for different items .
- The Hindi version of Emotional Intelligence Inventory (E.I.I by Bar On's 1997) adopted by Mishra (2000) under Indian cultural set up will be used in the present study. The inventory yielded five significant factor analysis viz, (1) Self awareness, (2) self regulation, (3) Self motivation,(4) Empaty and (5) Social skill. The inventory consists of 21 items. In the five categories ranging from the Always 5,Almost 4, Generally 3, Seldom 2, Never 1. All these items are given a score of encircle items scores for responses. The sum of these values gives the emotional intelligence score for the subjects. The total scores varies from 1-21.The inventory is fairly reliable and valid.
- Dependence Proneness scale constructed and standardized by Sinha, (1975) will be used to assess the dependence preseness of the subjects. The scale is purports to measure the inclinations (a)to seek supports, advice, and/or order from others(b)to confiding others uncritically,(c)desired to be encouraged helped and /or protected by others. Negatively, they included (d)lacking initiative and independent judgement, and (e)displacing responsibility for unfavourable outcomes. The scale is in a Likert format in which the respondents are ask to indicate the applicability of each item on a five point scale ranging from quit true five (5) to not at all true one (1) with undecided three (3) in the middle.

The scale consist of 20 items. 7 out of 20 items (-1, 2, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14) are negatively keyed .The inter relation of the item and the similarity analysis by reciprocal pairs (McQuitty, 1967) have been calculated. Item cluster and types are given below.

- Type 1: Affection-Affiliation-Items
- Type 2: Lack of Internal Control
- Type 3: Evading Responsibility
- Type 4: Conformity

The Reliability of the Scale

The split half reliability coefficients of the DP scale have ranged from poor to excellent depending on how the scale is used. If it is used in a group or a class room situation, the coefficient has generally been around 0, 67 (Sinha, 1968.a). If administered individually, the coefficient in one study (Pandey, 1971) has been reported to be 0.94.Therefore it is advisable to use the scale individually.

The Validity of the Scale

The scale has been found valid with a validity co-efficient of 0.55 (Ashalakshmi, 1970).

Procedure

The data was collected in by personal visit (survey) to each participants. The participants were given the empty nest, emotional intelligence and dependence proneness scale. The instruction of the test were made clear to them .After the scale was administered on them and the response sheet was collected. The collected data were described and analyzed in the light of formulated objective.

RESULTS

Hypothesis-1

Interactional effect of emotional intelligence and dependence proneness on empty nest syndrome (N=141)

Emotional intelligence/ Dependence proneness	Low		High	
	Low	High	Low	High
Mean	129.702	137.240	154.822	171.791
SD	32.592	18.695	29.043	27.153
F (1,133)	0.875			

From analysed of variance it can be seen that the F value of interactional effect of emotional intelligence and dependence proneness on empty nest scale is (0.875) which is insignificant at 0.05 level with df (1,133).It indicates that the middle aged men and women with high emotional intelligence and low dependence proneness would score higher on empty nest scale score than the subjects with low emotional intelligence and high dependence proneness middle age men and women therefore the first differential hypothesis has been rejected. Therefore it is concluded that the middle aged men and women with high emotional intelligence and low dependence proneness would not scoreless in empty nest scale than the subjects with low emotional intelligence and high dependence proneness.

Hypothesis-2

The corresponding interaction effects of gender and emotional intelligence on empty nest syndrome (N=141)

Gender/ Emotional Intelligence	Male		Female	
	Low	High	Low	High
Mean	119.863	162.079	162.571	159.065
SD	18.013	27.110	27.224	32.265
F (1,133)	25.446**			

** $p > 0.01$

The F value of interactional effect of gender and emotional intelligence on empty nest scale is (25.446**) which is significant at 0.01 level with df (1,133). It indicates that the middle aged male with high emotional intelligence would score lower in empty nest syndrome than the low emotional intelligence middle aged female middle age men and women with low dependence proneness therefore second interactional hypothesis has been accepted. Therefore it is concluded that The middle aged male with high emotional intelligence would score lower in empty nest syndrome than low emotional intelligence middle aged female.

Hypothesis-3

The corresponding interaction effect of gender and dependence proneness on empty nest syndrome (N=141)

Gender/ Dependence proneness	Male		Female	
	Low	High	Low	High
Mean	128.490	149.400	157.372	175.333
SD	30.472	26.807	29.605	29.576
F (1,133)	0.057			

The F value of value of interactional effect of gender and dependence proneness on empty nest syndrome is(0.057) which is significant at .005 level with df (1,133).It indicates that the middle aged male with high dependence proneness will score significantly lower in empty nest syndrome than the middle aged female with low dependence proneness therefore third interactional hypothesis has been rejected .Therefore it is concluded that middle aged male with high dependence proneness will not score significantly lower in empty nest syndrome than the middle aged female with low dependence proneness .

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- The subjects with high emotional intelligence and low dependence proneness would not score higher on Empty nest scale score then the subjects with low emotional intelligence and high dependence proneness.
- The middle aged male with high emotional intelligence would score lower in empty nest syndrome than low emotional intelligence middle aged female.
- The middle aged male with high dependence proneness will not score significantly lower in empty nest syndrome than the middle aged female with low dependence proneness.

The first finding of present study is that the subjects with high emotional intelligence and low dependence proneness would not score higher on Empty nest scale score then the subjects with low emotional intelligence and high dependence proneness. Consistent to this Mohammad Khaledian (2013) reported that those who are having higher emotional intelligence and low dependence proneness are not have less empty nest syndrome, Emotional intelligence enables an individual to correctly exhibit suitable amount of different emotions such as rage, fear, love, happiness, etc. in his/her behavior proportional to the situations and time Moreover, it enables them to know about others' emotions and react accordingly .The second finding of this study is that the middle aged male with high emotional intelligence would score lower in empty nest syndrome than low emotional intelligence middle aged female. Consistent to this Raup and Myers (1989) and Gonzalas (1990) reported that females show higher level of empty nest syndrome than males The middle aged male with high emotional intelligence would score lower in empty nest syndrome than low emotional intelligence middle aged female. The third finding of this study is that the middle aged male with high dependence proneness will not score significantly lower in empty nest syndrome than the middle aged female with low dependence proneness. Consistent to this Nagy and Jennifer, (2013), Iman Aghamiri, 2011, Reported. Consistent to this Raup and Myers(1989) and Gonzalas (1990) reported that The middle aged male with high dependence proneness

will not score significantly lower in empty nest syndrome than the middle aged female with low dependence proneness.

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I, Miss Vijaylaxmi Singh do hereby declare the dissertation entitled "A study on empty nest syndrome among middle aged men and women" is my humble and sincere work for the degree of P.hd in home-science under the supervision of Dr. Smt. Babita Dubey Assistant Professor, Department of Home-Science Dr. W.W. Patankar Govt. P.G College, Durg (C.G). The work is entirely based on my own interpretation of primary and secondary sources.

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