

STRESS APPRAISAL, EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND MARITAL ADJUSTMENT AMONG MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

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ABSTRACT

The current research was to examine the relationship between Stress Appraisal, Emotional Intelligence and Marital Adjustment among Mental Health Professionals and to explore stress appraisal and emotional intelligence impact on Marital Adjustment among Mental Health Professionals. Correlational research design was used. A total of one hundred and fifty participants were collected through purposive sampling strategy. Stress Appraisal Measure, Emotional Intelligence Scale and Marital Adjustment Test were used to measure variables under study. Correlational analysis showed significant positive association between Stress Appraisal and Marital Adjustment, and highly significant positive association between Emotional Intelligence and Marital Adjustment among Mental Health Professionals. Findings also showed significant prediction between Stress Appraisal, Emotional Intelligence and Marital Adjustment among Mental Health Professionals. Results indicated that mental health professionals who have positive stress appraisal and have high emotional intelligence which leads them towards high marital adjustment.

Keywords: Stress appraisal, emotional intelligence, marital adjustment, mental health professionals.

INTRODUCTION

Stress appraisal was a variable which was known to affect marital adjustment (Bodenmann & Cina, 2006). Appraisal explained the thoughts and behaviors utilized by individuals to cope internal and external stresses which exceed their psychological properties (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In addition, it was also known individuals were effected by their spouse's way of dealing stress and emotional intelligence (Kraemer et al., 2011). For instance, a stressed spouse might be bring his or her worries home, which was possible to have a negative influence on the other companion (Bodenmann, 2005). So, marital relationships offer an exclusive opportunity for researchers to study stress appraisal within the background of a close relationship where clashes rise and must be controlled.

The term "Emotional Intelligence" (EI) was originally created by Salovey and Mayer (1990) and was conceptualized to include a group of psychological abilities, such as, emotional intelligence types included appraisal and expression of emotion, regulation of emotion and utilization of emotion. Emotional Intelligence had a great association with marital adjustment. For long time, it was believed that success at the workplace and in other psychosocial domain of life depends on the level of intelligence. However, to deal effectively with some specific psychosocial situations of real life, individuals require some other psychological resources other than general intelligence. One such resourcefulness was termed as emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995).

Marital adjustment was a life journey though in the initial times of marriage one had to give serious concern. Researcher views, "understanding the quality of the partner was a persistent process in marriage, because even if two people know each other before or at the time of marriage, there was a chance that people change during the life phase (Lasswell, 1982). Marital adjustment shown maturity in relationship in which partners understand each other. If they can't understand each other and did not shown cooperation, their marital adjustment could be effect. Marital adjustment was, "the condition in which there was an overall feeling between husband and wife, of happiness and satisfaction with their marriage and with each other" (Sinha & Mukerjee, 1990). Therefore, marital adjustment was a relationship between partners considered by shared concern, care, understanding and acceptance. Sexual compatibility and common pleasure were significant aspects provided to the achievement of utmost marital relationship, job of partner and shape families in a variety of ways.

METHOD

Research Design

Correlational research design used in present study.

PARTICIPANTS

The research participants comprised of 150 Mental Health Professionals. The sample size was determined by "G Power Analysis" and drawn from different hospitals of Lahore, Pakistan. The inclusion criteria were Mental Health Professionals who live with their husband. Professional experience of less than 1 year in mental health field was exclusion criteria for present research.

MEASURES

STRESS APPRAISAL MEASURE

Stress Appraisal Measure (SAM) was originally developed by Wong (1990). This scale had 37 items. Stress Appraisal Measure (SAM), each item was scaled in a 5-point Likert-type ranging from 1(disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this instrument was .71.

SHUTTE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE SCALE

Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale was developed (Schutte, 1998). This instrument had 33 items. This scale had 4 subscales: Perception of Emotion, Managing Own Emotions, Managing Others Emotions and Utilization of Emotion. Every item of scale was measured on 5 point Likert-type ranging from 1(disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this instrument ranged from .70 to .85, indicating a high reliability.

MARITAL ADJUSTMENT TEST

Marital Adjustment Test (MAT) was originally developed by Locke and Wallace (1959). This scale had 15-items. Cronbach's alpha reliability of this scale was 0.63 to 0.74.

PROCEDURE

After getting approval from Departmental Academic Research Centre (DARC) Riphah Institute of Clinical & Professional Psychology, Riphah International University Lahore and BASR (Board of Advances Studies and Research) permission of the measuring instrument used in the study was taken from original authors. Permission was sought from the medical superintendent of hospitals. Medical Superintendent and head of psychiatry department from these hospitals were presented an informational letter in which the purpose of data collection and that the information regarding the study about impact of Stress Appraisal, Emotional

Intelligence and Marital Adjustment was briefly explained. Each participant was provided with the information sheet for detail information regarding the research and a consent form to make sure that the participants were willingly participating in the research. They were informed about the ethical consideration of the study. After that pilot study and main study was conducted.

RESULTS

The data was analyzed using Statistical Packages for Social Science, version 21 (SPSS-21).

Table 1: Demographic description of research participants (N= 150)

<i>Variables</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>(%)</i>
Education		
FA/F.Sc	20	13.3
BA/B.Sc.	25	16.7
MA/M.Sc.	50	33.3
MS/M.Phil.	50	33.3
Ph.D.	5	3.3
Occupation		
Psychologist	50	33.3
Psychiatrist	50	33.3
Psychiatry Nurses	50	33.3
Husband's Education		
FA/F.Sc	13	8.7
BA/B.Sc.	32	21.3
MA/M.Sc.	39	26.0
MS/M.Phil.	27	18.0
Ph.D.	9	6.0
Uneducated	30	20.0
Husband Occupation		
Retired	7	4.7
Job	137	91.3
Jobless	6	4.0
Family Background		
Rural	58	38.7
Urban	92	61.3
Family System		
Nuclear	86	57.3
Joint	64	42.7

Note: f= frequency, %= percentage

Table 2: Mean, SD and Alpha Coefficient Scores on SAM, EI, MAT (N= 150)

Variables	K	M	SD	Range		α
				Min	Max	
SAM	28	84.58	13.36	34	117	.80
EI	33	130.09	16.36	82	155	.92
MAT	15	54.10	9.83	21	67	.82

Note: *k*= Number of Items, *M* = Mean, *SD*=Standard Deviation, *Min Score* = Minimum Score, *Max Score* = Maximum Score, α = Reliability Co-efficient, SAM= Stress Appraisal Measure, EI= Emotional Intelligence, MAT= Marital Adjustment Test.

Table 3

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis between Study Variables in Mental Health Professionals (N=150)

Variables	1	2	3
1. Stress Appraisal	-	.10	.20*
2. Emotional Intelligence	-	-	.54**
3. Marital Adjustment	-	-	-

** $P < 0.01$, * $P < 0.05$

Table 4

Predictors of Marital Adjustment (N=150)

Variables	Model 1B	Marital Adjustment	
		β	Model 2 95% CI
Constant	60.59		(47.90, 73.29)
Stress Appraisal	.10*	.15*	(.01, .19)
EI	-.28***	-.52***	(-.35, -.20)
R ²		.31	
F		2	
ΔR^2			.30
ΔF			33.92

Note: * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

a. Dependent Variable: Marital Adjustment

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Stress Appraisal, EI= Emotional Intelligence.

DISCUSSION

Results of the present study showed significant positive association between stress appraisal and marital adjustment among mental health professionals. A research was conducted to examine the association between self-esteem, specific coping strategies and marital adjustment. Findings showed significant positive association between self-esteem, specific coping strategies and marital adjustment in both men and women (Belanger et al., 2014).

Results of the present study showed highly significant negative relationship between emotional intelligence and marital adjustment among mental health professionals. A study was conducted by Kumar and Sharma (2012) to observe the relationship between emotional intelligence and marital adjustment in women. Result showed working and non-working emotional intelligence was found to be significantly negative related with the marital adjustment of working women.

Results of the present study showed significant prediction of stress appraisal, emotional intelligence on marital adjustment among mental health professionals. An indigenous investigation was conducted to assess the association between emotional intelligence and marital adjustment among professionals of different organizations including doctors, engineers and lecturers. Results revealed emotional intelligence and marital adjustment were significantly negatively correlated. Moreover, males showed high marital adjustment than females and females were emotionally intelligent than males (Arshad, Abbas & Mahmood, 2015). A family systems framework was used to examine associations between stressors/hassles, problem-focused coping, and marital adjustment in 67 families. Results showed that fathers who employed more problem-focused coping strategies were more positive about their marriages. For wives (but not husbands), a cross-spousal partner effect was found; women reported higher marital adjustment when their husbands employed more problem-focused coping strategies (Stoneman & Payne, 2016).

CONCLUSION

Significant positive association existed between stress appraisal and marital adjustment, and highly significant positive association between emotional intelligence and marital adjustment. Stress appraisal and emotional intelligence significantly predicted marital adjustment among mental health professionals.

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