



Original Article

Marital coping style and satisfaction among love-married working and non-working women: Study analysis

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Abstract

Background

Marriage can be defined as a general commitment or close relationship between husband and wife. This connection between husband and wife relates to balance, love, etc. Starting a family also denotes social and family advancement. Marriage facilitates the formation of a new relationship between men and women, and this institution is regarded as the most significant in our society, culture, and religion. Generally, harmony, love, affection, respect, and mutual understanding may contribute to a happy married life.

Methods

The study included one hundred and twenty working and non-working married women who love married and were chosen using a random sample process. They belonged to a variety of educational levels and socioeconomic backgrounds. The age group ranged from 25 to 55 and belonged to urban areas. Married women were employed in the public sector or private jobs, and homemakers were non-working married ladies.

Results

Working and non-working married women's marital coping strategies differ considerably in support seeking, stonewalling, and avoidance. There is no discernible link between marital coping style and life satisfaction among married women who work or do not work. The results show no discernible difference between married working women and married non-working women in terms of self-blame,

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hostility or aggression, and positive attitude. Compared to working women, non-working women favour using the stonewalling coping strategy to escape problems.

Conclusion

Married working women prefer support-seeking and avoidance marital coping styles compared to non-working married women. Non-working women prefer stonewalling coping styles compared to married women who work. The present study indicates that marital coping style and life satisfaction have no significant relationship. Future studies should assess the effectiveness and implication of positive approach-based coping style-based intervention studies in this population.

Introduction

Gender differences may occur in coping style. Males and females may use different types of coping styles for different kinds of situations.^[1] Women may feel more stress compared to their male counterparts, and they may use an emotion-focused coping style than men.^[2] Many women move for jobs to fulfill their basic household needs. Participation of the women labor force is increasing day by day. New changes and development happen.^[3] Coping is behavior that guards against psychological damage from negative social experiences. This behavior is crucial because it mediates societies' effects on their constituents. The protective role of coping behavior can be used in three different ways: by removing or changing the settings that lead to issues, by seeing experiences in a way that neutralizes their problematic nature, and by limiting the emotional effects of problems. The effectiveness of several specific coping strategies that represent these three roles was assessed. According to the findings, coping strategies individuals use are most successful when addressing issues related to marriage and child-rearing, two intimate interpersonal role areas, and least successful when addressing the

more impersonal issues found in the workplace. There is an unequal distribution of efficient coping strategies in society, with men, educated people, and wealthy people using these strategies more frequently.^[4] People must deal with frequent stresses in a long-term, close relationship like marriage in a way that appears to be different from how they handle unexpectedly catastrophic situations. Several concerns regarding how married couples handle and adapt to long-term physical disease exist. As the primary caretaker for the sick partner and a close family member who requires assistance in managing the stress brought on by the illness, spouses play a dual role in the coping process.^[5] According to the study's findings, married women who are employed encounter greater challenges in life than married women who are not employed. It is concluded that working married women cannot significantly contribute to their family's well-being in various respects. Working in two circumstances caused them to become distracted. They are unable to offer their marriage the required attention.^[6] Marital adjustment is at its peak when partners have fewer disagreements and better knowledge of their problems, feelings, and emotions.^[7] The responses to coping were more successful in alleviating difficulties in marital and child-rearing roles than in the additional core part, where characteristics such as social support and traits played a bigger influence.^[8] The model explains and defines coping as the partner coping with the issue transmitting her worries to the husband to establish equilibrium.^[9,10] Problem resolution, non-verbally used coping, and emotion processing have all been linked to marriage happiness, marital interaction, and marital intimacy.^[11] Dyadic coping is essential for both partners' marital happiness.^[12] In one study, social support was shown to be favourable and substantially related to marital adjustment but negatively linked with depression, anxiety, and stress.^[13] People are more content when they believe they have not been fulfilled.^[14]

Methods

Sample Design

In the present study, a comparative research study design was used.

Aims of the study

1. To investigate whether marital coping style and life satisfaction of working and non-working married women are significantly different.
2. To investigate the link between life satisfaction and marital coping style among married women.

Hypotheses

1. There would be no considerable difference regarding support seeking marital coping style, avoidance coping style and stonewalling coping style between groups of married women.
2. There would be no substantial difference regarding self blame coping style, positive approach coping style, aggression and life satisfaction between groups of married women.
3. There would be no significant relation between marital coping style and life satisfaction among married women.

Study participants

The sample included one hundred and twenty employed and unemployed women from urban regions who had a love marriage and were randomly chosen. They were from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds and educational levels. The ages ranged from 25 to 55, and married women were employed in public or private sector jobs. Homemakers were non-working ladies, and women who had arranged marriages and maintained home businesses were eliminated from the study, and only women with at least one child and a love

marriage were included. A sample was taken from several urban regions in Haryana, India.

Data collection

The researcher described the study to married working and non-working women. All participants provided written consent to participate and were given general directions for completing the questionnaires. Proper seating arrangements were made for participants. All participants received questionnaires, the response method was well described, and any issues were handled. Then, participants completed questionnaires were gathered for statistical analysis of the acquired data. Participants' privacy was protected. Participants were free to leave the study at any time. Respondents' involvement was entirely voluntary. Informed consent was taken from all study participants and approval from the Ethics Committee, Faculty of Behavioral Sciences, SGT University Gurugram, Haryana (SGTU/FBSC/ECC/2021/19).

Instruments used

The demographic sheet was used for collecting demographic details like educational qualification, sex, monthly family income, marriage status, age, employment status, no. of children in family, blood group, occupation, and residential status. Dr. Shweta Singh's Marital Coping measure is designed to assess married women's coping style. Scale items are rated from 1 to 5, and the marital coping measure has test-retest reliability coefficients of 0.87 and 0.91 for males and females, respectively (significant at the 0.01 level).^[6] It is a self-management scale with 34 elements in a booklet. The six aspects are self-support, self-blame, avoidance, anger, stonewalling, and a constructive attitude. Dr. Promila Singh and George Joseph's Life Satisfaction Scale is used to assess life satisfaction and assesses life satisfaction on five dimensions. For academics or professionals, this scale is simple

to use, comprising 35 elements. Each item includes five response options. Both Hindi and English versions of the scale are available. Items can be assessed by adding individual replies and evaluating them against the manual’s standards. It has a test-retest reliability of 0.91 and a validity of 0.83 when compared to the life satisfaction scale of Alam and Srivastava (1971); it also has content and face validity because professionals rated each item.^[15]

Analysis

Data was entered in an excel sheet and then analyzed in SPSS Software. Mean, Standard deviation, t-test and Pearson’s correlation analysis were conducted. Then, results were interpreted.

Results

The demographic characteristics of participants are shown in Table 1. Mean, S.D, and standard error are shown in Table 2. The marital coping style and satisfaction of working and jobless married women were investigated using t-test. There were notable variances, and working married women had a higher mean score (mean=3.1682, standard deviation=.91081) than non-working married women (mean=2.6571, standard deviation=.87255). The extent of the mean differences (mean difference=.15317 to .86902), 95% support seeking marital coping style dimension. As a result, the null hypothesis did not approve. There were notable variations in the scores ($t(118) = 1.569$ $p = .119$), with working married women having a higher mean score (mean=2.7815, standard deviation =1.23699) than non-working married women (mean=2.4000, standard deviation=1.14275). The amplitude of the mean differences (mean difference=-.09994 to .86300), 95% avoidance coping style component was significant. So, the null hypothesis did not approve. Additionally,

there were substantial variations in the scores ($t(85.963) = -1.450$ $p = .103$), with non-working married women having a higher mean score (mean= 3.0857, standard deviation=.81787) than working married women (Mean=2.7824, Standard deviation=1.11922). The amplitude of the mean difference (.81787 to .13824), 95% stone walling coping style dimension, was noteworthy. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected. In terms of self-blame coping style dimension, positive approach coping style dimension, aggressiveness coping style dimension, and life satisfaction, there is no significant difference between working and non-working married women. As a result, the null hypothesis is approved or accepted (see Table 3).

Table 1: Demographic characteristics

Demographic characteristics	n	%
Socioeconomic status	120	99.2
Low	40	33.1
Middle	40	33.1
High	40	33.1
Education	120	99.2
Graduate	60	49.6
Undergraduate	60	49.6
Working status	120	99.2
Working	85	70.2
Non working	35	28.9
Family system	120	99.2
Nuclear	53	43.8
Joint	66	54.5

Table 2: Group statistics

	Working status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Life Satisfaction	working	85	18.95	6.794	.737
	non working	35	19.06	7.054	1.192
Positive Approach	working	85	2.9647	.94424	.10242
	non working	35	2.9429	.93755	.15847
Support seeking	working	85	3.1682	.91081	.09879
	non working	35	2.6571	.87255	.14749
Avoidance	working	85	2.7815	1.23699	.13417
	non working	35	2.4000	1.14275	.19316
Stone walling	working	85	2.7824	1.11922	.12140
	non working	35	3.0857	.81787	.13824
Self blame	working	85	2.8000	1.14226	.12390
	non working	35	3.0571	.76477	.12927
Aggression	working	85	2.7600	1.25197	.13580
	non working	35	2.4571	1.12047	.18939

Table 3 : Differences in marital coping style and satisfaction

	F value	value of significance or inferable	t	degree of freedom	level of significance or inferable	mean difference or variation	error difference or variation	95% confidence difference	
								lower	upper
Life Satisfaction	.001	.980	-0.76	118	.940	-.104	1.380	-2.837	2.628
			-0.74	61.316	.941	-.104	1.402	-2.907	2.698
Positive Approach	.060	.807	.115	118	.908	.02185	.18925	-.35293	.39662
			.116	63.826	.908	.02185	.18869	-.35512	.39882
Support seeking	.000	.994	2.828	118	.006	.51109	.18075	.15317	.86902
			2.879	65.978	.005	.51109	.17752	.15667	.86552
Avoidance	.188	.665	1.569	118	.119	.38153	.24313	-.09994	.86300
			1.622	68.289	.109	.38153	.23519	-.08774	.85080
Stone walling	7.222	.008	-1.450	118	.150	-.30336	.20915	-.71753	.11081
			-1.649	85.963	.103	-.30336	.18398	-.66910	.06238
Self blame	9.785	.002	-1.222	118	.224	-.25714	.21039	-.67376	.15948
			-1.436	93.291	.154	-.25714	.17906	-.61270	.09841
Aggression	.563	.454	1.241	118	.217	.30286	.24413	-.18058	.78630
			1.300	70.411	.198	.30286	.23305	-.16189	.76761

Pearson product correlation of marital coping style and satisfaction was found that there is no considerable correlation between marital coping style and life satisfaction. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted (see Table 4).

Table 4: Correlations of marital coping style and satisfaction

<i>Correlations</i>							
	Satisfaction	Positive Approach	Support seeking	Avoidance	Stone walling	Self blame	Aggression
Life Satisfaction	1	.133	.061	-.008	-.144	-.111	-.017
		.146	.505	.927	.116	.226	.852
	120.0	120.0	120.0	120.0	120.0	120.0	120.0
Positive Approach	.133	1	.011	.039	-.160	-.227*	.120
	.146		.909	.670	.082	.013	.191
	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Support seeking	.061	.011	1	.054	-.187*	.054	.039
	.505	.909		.555	.041	.555	.672
	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Avoidance	-.008	.039	.054	1	.124	.187*	.070
	.927	.670	.555		.177	.041	.448
	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Stone walling	-.144	-.160	-.187*	.124	1	.345**	-.121
	.116	.082	.041	.177		.000	.190
	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Self blame	-.111	-.227*	.054	.187*	.345**	1	.125
	.226	.013	.555	.041	.000		.173
	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Aggression	-.017	.120	.039	.070	-.121	.125	1
	.852	.191	.672	.448	.190	.173	
	120	120	120	120	120	120	120

*p< .05, ** p< .001

Discussion

Less published literature compared marital coping styles and satisfaction among married working and non-working women. Research on life satisfaction among women was undertaken, and the findings indicated a considerable variation in life contentment among women.^[17] Another study was conducted on life satisfaction among women, and findings suggested that overall life

satisfaction increases with an increase in income.^[18] A previous study revealed that the life satisfaction of female teachers was found to be higher.^[19] The findings are similar to a study on marital coping styles employed by working and non-working women, which suggested no significant difference in the marital coping styles employed by working and non-working women. Our current study centered on marital coping style and life contentment and discovered a notable

variation in the dimensions of marital coping style of support seeking, avoidance, and stonewalling between working and non-working love-married women. The mean score and SD of working married women are higher than those of non-working married women concerning support seeking and avoidance marital coping style dimensions. And the mean score and SD of non-working married women are higher than those of working married women concerning stonewalling dimensions. The findings indicated no considerable variation in self-blame, positive approach, hostility or aggression, and satisfaction between employed and unemployed married women. Married working women prefer to use a support-seeking and avoidance coping style. Married working women manage their time for their families as well. The participation of women in the workforce has increased their workload. So, they may prefer to use a support-seeking coping style. Support seeking includes pursuing support from siblings, close friends, and family members to receive advice regarding the coping technique to be utilized to deal with problems and minimize the workload, burden, and stress. Women face many stressors. Job and family balance, disputes, role rivalry, tough duty demands, employment insecurity, juggling workload, role vagueness, pay secrecy, equal rights policy, family timetable and programs, money distress, upgrading in career, skills, and knowledge So, married women prefer to use an avoidance coping style in order to cope with stress, burden, and pressure. It is a human tendency that individuals generally avoid more stressful situations. Non-working married women prefer to use the stonewalling coping style to deal with situations compared to working married women. Stonewalling is an emotion-focused coping strategy in which an individual avoids the negative emotional experience caused by a marital relationship by completely shutting out the husband or intimate partner. Usually, it is done by individuals to deal with troubled and

aggressive situations with stone-cold silence. Avoidance is a problem-focused coping style in which individuals avoid any type of physical and conversational interaction or contact with their intimate partner or husband in order to stay away from fights. In this coping style, the individual tries to fade away all problems with the passage of time. In a support-seeking coping style, an individual seeks support from others like relatives, close friends, family members, etc. By using peaceful interactions and conversations, marital problems or issues are solved.

Strengths and limitations

This study explores the marital coping style and life satisfaction among love-married working and non-working married women. Understanding marital coping styles and life satisfaction among married women is very important to reduce stress.

Limitations of this study are:

- ♦ Sample size might be enlarged.
- ♦ Study might be carried out on other gender.

Conclusion

Married working women prefer to use support-seeking and avoidance marital coping style compared to non working married women because working women have dual responsibility of office work and household work. Due to the extra burden of office and house work working women may prefer to use support-seeking and avoidance coping style. Non-working women prefer to use stonewalling coping style as compared to working married women. Marital coping style and satisfaction also have no significant relationship. Future studies should assess the effectiveness and implication of positive approach coping style-based intervention studies in this population. This study indicates the necessity of marital counselling among married women.

The findings may be utilized to create mental health promotion programs that will have a long-term influence on well-being. This research supports the significance of marital coping strategies in managing marital stress.

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Conflict of interest: None

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