

Affection Expression and Consensus in Marital Relation as Determinants of Life Satisfaction among Wives

Riffat Sadiq

Department of Psychology, University of Gujrat,
Hafiz Hayat Campus, Jalapur Jattan Road, Pakistan

Abstract: The main objective of the present study was to investigate the function of affection expression and dyadic consensus in determining life satisfaction among wives. It was assumed that affection expression and dyadic consensus in marital relation will significantly determine life satisfaction among wives. In order to investigate that, total 150 wives dwelling in district Mandibhaudin were approached through snowball sampling technique. The minimum duration of their marriage was 3 years. Their ages ranged from 21 to 45 years with minimum educational of higher secondary. Demographic Information Form (DIF), two Subscales (Affection Expression and Dyadic Consensus) of Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) and The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) were administered on the sample of present study. Linear Regression analysis illustrates that both affection expression and dyadic consensus in marital relation significantly determine life satisfaction among wives. Present findings have implications in marital and family therapy.

Key words: Affection Expression • Dyadic Consensus • Life Satisfaction • Wives • Marital Relation

INTRODUCTION

Life satisfaction is referred to as a conscious, cognitive and global judgment of one's own life [1]. It is the reflection of well-being with regards to the happiness and morale [2]. Usually, People set their standards and criteria to determine their level of satisfaction in life [1]. Scientific studies highlighted various factors in determining one's life satisfaction. Both nature (Personality) and nurture (Environment) contribute to satisfaction with life [3]. Openness, business climate and post communism, the number of chambers in parliament, Christian majority and infant mortality have influential impact on life satisfaction [4]. Life satisfaction also depends on how people appraise a situation [5]. Life satisfaction has association with social support [6] and with marriage too [7].

Gender difference studies in relation to life satisfaction signified greater satisfaction with life among females than males [8]. Life satisfaction has connection with gender equality based on value, pay, education and reproductive choice among women [9]. Life satisfaction declines with age but improves with the increment in personal and family income among women [10]. Level of

satisfaction is also stalwartly associated with physical health in women living in rural areas [11]. Women's psychological state proved to have alliance with life satisfaction as well. In a study, it was found that women harboring hostile feelings for other women seemed to report less satisfaction with their live [9]. Spirituality is another influential factor for life satisfaction among midlife women irrespective of their age, income and education [12]. Life satisfaction has significant relationship with leisure experiences, employment and marital satisfaction [13] and with social activities and circle of friends [14]. Women's life satisfaction reported to be declined due to the transition in marriage and loss of spouse [15]. Marital adjustment predominantly influences life satisfaction among women [16].

Various factors contribute in creating the sense of satisfaction with life. Less satisfaction with life, in turn, put detrimental effects on emotional well-being of women besides producing tensions in their family relations. Lower life satisfaction increases hopelessness, frustration and makes a person socially dysfunction. Married woman in Pakistani society has multiple responsibilities to be paid. If she is not satisfied with her life, it is difficult for her to build a stable home. For these reasons, it is vital to

investigate those factors which determine level of their life satisfaction. Affection expression and dyadic consensus are two influential factors in this regard. Keeping this in view, following hypotheses have been postulated;

- Affection expression in marital relation will significantly determine life satisfaction among wives.
- Dyadic Consensus in marital relation will significantly determine life satisfaction among wives

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data for the present study was collected during the period of November 2013 to February 2014 from Mandibhaudin, district of Punjab Province of Pakistan. About one hundred and fifty (N=150) wives were included in the project applying snowball sampling technique (participants recruited through social network). All the participants were falling in the age range of 21 to 45 years and were full time house makers. They were educated up to higher secondary level, whereas minimum duration of their marriage was 3 years. They hailed from middle class families, either living in joint or nuclear family system.

Demographic Information Form (DIF) was used to have data concerning demographic characteristics of the participants such as; age, educational level, duration of marriage, family system, number of family members and children, residential area, etc.

Affection Expression and Dyadic Consensus are the subscales of Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) developed by Spanier[17]. There are 4 items for Affection Expression and 13 items for Dyadic Consensus.

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) by Diener and associates [1] was administered to examine satisfaction with life among present sample. There are total 5 items of this scale.

At first step during the meeting conducted in one to one setting, the purpose of research project was ethically briefed to all participants who voluntarily took part in the present study. Confidentiality of their personal information was ensured and privacy was maintained till the completion of all questionnaires. All participants were asked to report their demographic characteristics on Demographic Information Form. Then, Subscales of Affection Expression and Dyadic Consensus and Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) were given to them to be filled up appropriately. In order to analyze the data, Linear Regression was employed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Liner Regression Model demonstrated the variable of affection expression significantly predicting life satisfaction among participants of the current study. The value of R (.365) indicated moderate but significant relationship of Affection Expression with Life Satisfaction Whereas R square ($R^2=.133$) indicated about 13 % of variance in dependent variable (Life Satisfaction) due to independent variable. The value of adjusted R ($\Delta R^2=.127$) reveal 12% of total variance accounted for predictor variable.

Results (Table: 1b) also have demonstrated the significant impact of Affection Expression on Life Satisfaction ($F(1,148) = 22.759, p = 0.000$).

Table 1a: Summary of Linear Regression with Affection Expression as determinant of Life Satisfaction among wives

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate
1.	.365	.133	.127	5.78245

Table 1b: Analysis of Variance for Linear Regression with Affection Expression as determinant of Life Satisfaction among wives

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
1. Regression	761.458	1	761.458	22.759	.000
Residual	4951.716	148	33.458		
Total	5713.173	149			

a. Predictor: Affection Expression

Table 1c: Coefficients for Linear Regression with Affection Expression as determinant of Life Satisfaction among wives

Model	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	SE	β	t	Sig
1. Constant	17.140	1.623		10.561	.000
Affection Expression	.898	.188	.356	4.771	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Life Satisfaction

Table 2a: Summary of Linear Regression with Dyadic Consensus as determinant of Life Satisfaction among wives

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate
2.	.683	.467	.463	4.53714

Table 2b: Analysis of Variance for Linear Regression with Affection Expression as determinant of Life Satisfaction among wives

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
2. Regression	2666.496	1	2666.496	129.532	.000
Residual	3046.678	148	20.586		
Total	5713.173	149			

b. Predictor: Dyadic Consensus

Table 2c : Coefficients for Linear Regression with Dyadic Consensus as determinant of Life Satisfaction among wives

Model	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	SE	β	t	Sig
2. Constant	5.833	1.685		3.461	.001
Dyadic Consensus	.382	.034	.683	11.381	.000

b. Dependent Variable: Life Satisfaction

Table (1c) reveal that Affection Expression is positively and significantly predicting Life Satisfaction among wives ($\beta = .356$, $t(148) = 4.771$, $p < .000$).

The second independent variable also found to be predicting dependent variable in the present study. Results of Table (2a) show significant and strong relationship between Dyadic Consensus and Life Satisfaction ($R = .683$). The value of R square ($R^2 = .467$) showed 46 % variance in dependent variable due to independent variable. On the other hand adjusted R ($\Delta R^2 = .463$) also indicated total variance of 46 % accounted for independent variable (Dyadic Consensus).

It is also revealed (Table: 2b) that Dyadic Consensus has significant predictive impact on the variable of Life Satisfaction ($F(1,148) = 129.532$, $p < .000$).

Table (2c) depicts that Dyadic Consensus has positively and significantly predicted Life Satisfaction ($\beta = .683$, $t(148) = 11.381$, $p < .000$) among wives.

Marriage refers to a formally-written, verbal and traditional long-term agreement between two persons towards the production of children and other supplies [18]. In marriage, both partners have some expectations from each other in form of financial support, sharing of love and cooperation. Traditionally, marital relation is considered as foremost relation in South Asian societies. Specifically, in the culture of Pakistan, marriage is treated as ever-lasting relation for an individual, for both man and woman. That is the core reason of associating feelings of satisfaction in life to the extent one is adjusted in her or his marital life. Discussing present findings in the light of traditional perspective of marriage seem to be convincing that both independent variables, affection expression and dyadic consensus in marital relations, have paramount importance in determining life satisfaction in wives.

Affection expression refers to the extent partner has satisfaction with affection and sex in the marital relation; whereas dyadic consensus refers to the extent both partners have agreement over important matters [19]. Although, gender difference was not investigated in the present study but it is pertinent to mention here that women are more sensitive, emotional expressive and more interpersonally focused. Studies focused on gender difference in relation to marital behavior highlighted that women are more emotionally expressive and confronting as compare to men. On the other hand, men become more defensive and withdrawn in the conflicting situation [20]. Women in Pakistan are emotionally dependent on their significant relations, especially, on husbands. In this society, their husband's home is their eternal place and most of the women feel insecure and incomplete being living without their husbands. Being emotionally, socially and economically dependent on spouse, women expect more love or affection in their marital life. Love attitude and sexual self-esteem found to be playing distal role in marital satisfaction among women [21]. Mutual feelings of love and kindness are imperative for marital relation [22]. Therefore, when they feel having sufficient expression of affection and sex needs in their marital relation, their level of satisfaction in whole life gets increased. It is also supported with prior evidences obtained by Grout and Clark in 2001, as cited by other researchers [23] that fulfillment of needs in marital relationships such as sexual needs are associated with satisfaction with life.

Similarly, women desire to have agreement with husbands on variety of matters including finances, recreational activities, visiting friends and relatives, household responsibilities etc. When there is consensus

with husbands on important matters, wives exhibit content with their life. If there is disagreement between husbands and wives, it leads to conflict which diminishes the quality of marital life. Marital quality is important for women to be satisfied with life [24]. In fact, marital relation is everything for most of the women in Pakistani culture, for this reason, in case of having conflicts and disagreement with husbands, their level of satisfaction with entire life gets reduced. Dissemination of family finance, fulfilling household responsibilities and dealing with in-laws are some of the significant areas which require consensus between husband and wife. In Pakistani society, usually conflicts within family occur over the matter of money, household tasks and handling in-laws [25]. Conflicts between husband and wife may poison the marital life. Having feelings of being understood and loved by partner are the source of marital satisfaction. Intimacy (feelings of closeness, solidarity and connection) has positive link with marital satisfaction [26]. This sense of good marriage is fundamental part of satisfied life [27]. As also was found in the present analysis that affection expression and dyadic consensus, two significant factors of marital adjustment, are building blocks of life satisfaction in married women.

CONCLUSION

Findings of present study paved the way to understand the imperative role of dyadic consensus and affection expression in creating the sense of satisfaction with entire life. Strong bond between husband and wife in terms of consensus over significant matters and expression of love and sex is integral to life satisfaction in wives. The entire life seems to be useless if there is disturbance in marital relation. For women, besides other significant factors such as; income, pay, education gender discrimination, their feelings of being loved by partner and having consensus with husbands are also equally important in increasing overall life satisfaction.

In this way, it can be concluded that marriage is not confined to have a formal written agreement between two persons for the production of children and other resources but it is more related to maintain the quality of marriage in terms of love and consensus with partner so that sense of satisfaction with whole life can never be diminished.

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