

PERCEIVED ADJUSTMENT PATTERN BETWEEN HOUSEWIVES AND MARRIED WORKING WOMEN

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Abstract

Amongst all adjustments, marital adjustment is an important one, as marriage, in reality, is a way of living. The success of marriage depends upon the adjustment on the part of both the partners involved. But marital adjustment on a wife's part is mainly triggered by the issue that whether she is a housewife or a working woman. With the rise in the number of dual career families, the adjustment and marital relationship are major challenges for the married working women in those families. However, housewives also face challenges of adjustment in their marital relationship. The objectives of this study are (a) to study the perceived adjustment pattern of housewives and married working women in the areas of home, health, social, emotional and occupational, (b) to study the perceived adjustment pattern of housewives with less than 5 years of married life and housewives with more than 5 years of married life, and (c) to study the perceived adjustment pattern of married working women with less than 5 years of married life and married working women with more than 5 years of married life. Bell's Adjustment Inventory, a 160 items inventory assessing the individual's adjustment pattern in 5 situations such as - home, health, social, emotion and occupation, has been administered to 60 married women. Results reveals that perceived adjustment pattern significantly differs between housewives and married working women and the review elaborated the previous knowledge contribution and this study has attempted to provide an insight on future research directions.

Keywords: Study, Housewives, Women

One thing that is certain in life is change. If the change is permanent, then we should know how to accept it. And, the easiest way of accepting the change is to get adjusted to it. Right from birth until death, one is subject to several adjustments. And amongst all adjustment, marital adjustment or adjustment to married life is an important one. Marriage, in reality, is a way of living, and living in marriage is an adjustment. It is not always full of roses. Success in marriage depends upon the adjustment on the part of both the partners involved, but marital adjustment on wife's part is mainly triggered by the fact that whether she is a housewife or a married working woman. All married women, irrespective of working or non-working, adjusts for their personal benefits and mental satisfaction, in order to gain mental peace, and sometimes the radical personal adjustments are often stressful on their relationships. Marriage involves change and a change always produces stress. Accepting the change as the way it is will help to adjust in marriage. So, just like all relationships, marriage, too, requires adjustment. Marital adjustment has long been a popular topic among the researchers from various areas of social sciences, probably because of the concept that marital adjustment is closely related to the stability of a marriage. The lives of married women are inextricably intertwined with their family and their jobs. The goals of their development cannot be achieved without inputs and resources from studies on women and their adjustment pattern. Thus, various researches have been conducted on the difference of adjustment pattern between housewives and married working women.

Marital adjustment can be defined as the state in which there is an over-all feeling in husband and wife of happiness and satisfaction with their marriage and with each other. It refers

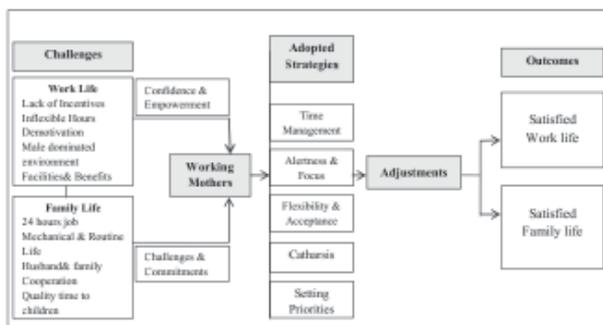
to the adjustment which every individual comes across after his/her marriage. Marital adjustment is again divided into various sub-areas which are- religion, social life, recreational activities, mutual friends, in-laws relationship, money/financial matters, sexual relationship, values, couple growth, communication, conflict resolution, affection, roles, cooperation, parenthood, mutual trust, training and disciplining of children, and companionship. A research conducted on marital adjustment as a moderator for genetic and environmental influences on parenting show the results that indicate that as marital adjustment declines, evocative effects on parenting increase, while the role of shared family experiences decline. However, the impact of marital adjustment on child-based genetic and child-specific non shared environmental contributions to parenting differed for mothers and fathers. This study identifies a previously unexpected mechanism through which family subsystems influence each other (Jennifer A. Ulbricht, Jody M. Ganiban, M. M. Tanya, Mark Feinberg, David Reiss, Jenae M. Neiderhiser, 2013).

A housewife is a married woman whose job is to stay at home and care for the house, her husband and the children. Her principal occupation is to manage her own household, usually without having paid employment. The housewives increments the family tree, are engaged in countless activities for the ultimate welfare of the family and provide valuable contributions to their society at a large. Sometimes housewives are portrayed as ladies of luxury who spend their time on hobbies and leisure and even purchase domestic services. However, their unified status as joint householders is the nucleus from within which they operate in society. But their social circle is very limited, which leads to isolation in host

culture. A study on Comparative Analysis of Depression among Housewives and Working Women in Bilal (Colony of Kornagi area, Karachi) reveals that household average income of housewives was more than that of working women but still the level of depression was much higher in the housewives. The housewives were found to have more average number of children as compare to working women, which was one of the causes of depression because they have the burden of handling more babies alone. Less educational qualification of housewives as compared to that of working women was another reason for depression because education gives vision and better understanding of life. Thus, there was a significant difference in the level of depression of working women and housewives as the level of of depression among the housewives was twice as that of working women (Riaz H. Soomro, Dr. Fozia Riaz, Shahid Naved, Dr. Fida Hussain Soomro, 2012). In another study on Marital Adjustment of Working and Non-Working Women - A Comparative Study indicates that the non-working women are better at marital adjustment (Jyoti Tiwari and Prabha Bisht, 2012).

A married working woman is a woman who is married and pursues a career to make a living and for personal advancement. They want to break out of the confines of being a homemaker, determined to win independence by way of their own skills and strengths, believing personal economic stability as the best way to earn their freedom. However, they have to balance in between office work and domestic work. The married working women have to face numerous challenges both from their families and from their jobs. Studies showed that women’s experience of conflict between the work and family (household work) was more problematic for the employed women than the unemployed women. The employed women felt more responsible for family commitments and home tasks (Becker and Monen, 2002 and Peake and Harris, 2002). However, research works also revealed that flexible opportunities provided at place of work or work-life balance policies of organizations assist the working women to unite the domain of the profession and family (Lewis and Humbert, 2010).

The following Table shows the Process of Work - Family Life Adjustments of Working Mothers :



(Taken from Work-Family Life Adjustments : Experiences of Working Mothers at LESCO, by Aneeqa Suhail Ahmad, University of Punjab, under Prof. Dr. Muhammad Anwar.)

Duration of married life is and important factor that contributes to marital adjustment. Studies have shown that newly married military housewives showed higher degree of marital adjustment as they experienced less stress and they use positive coping strategies than negative coping strategies, which has positive influence on another situation of stress and marital adjustment in them (2009). However, a Comparative Study on Marital Adjustment of Working and Non-Working Women reveals that marital adjustment was better in the later years of marriage as compared with early years (Jyoti Tiwari and Prabha Bisht, 2012). Similarly, another study on the Areas that require Adjustments in Marriage concludes that the early period of marriage requires a lot of adjustment between the couple - the areas are - Sex, Pattern of Authority, Working Mother, Financial Problems, In-laws and Extended Families (Min-Chol Kang, 2010). Again, on the other hand, in a study on the life course factors and racial influences on homemaker or career woman, reveals that career women with a longer span of married life, are much more likely to seek and welcome help from their husbands and caregivers in raising their children. They welcome new experiences and adopt by being innovative and flexible in order to find new ways to pursue both work and family life (Janet Zollinger Giele, 2008).

Thus, women are integral part of the society and marriage is the destiny that is traditionally offered to women by the society. And, women play dual roles, one as paid worker (married working women) and the other as unpaid worker (housewives). The similarity between these two groups is that both of them has to adjust to the demands of the environment. Meeting these challenges of adjustment places a great deal of pressure on them, almost each and every day, in their areas of involvement. Thus, adjustment, a very challenging and demanding process, is everything that a woman does throughout her life.

Objectives

- 1) To study the perceive the adjustment pattern of housewives and married working women in the areas of home, health, social, emotion and occupation;
- 2) To study the perceive adjustment pattern of housewives with less than 5 years of married life and of housewives with more than 5 years of married life in the areas of home, health, social, emotion and occupation;
- 3) To study the perceive adjustment pattern of married working women with less than 5 years of married life and of married working women with more than 5 years of



married life in the areas of home, health, social, emotion and occupation.

Method

Participants: A group of 60 married women (30 housewives and 30 married working women), between age group of 25 to 40 years with minimum educational qualification of being Graduate in case of both groups, were taken as sample in the present study. The group of married working women were having minimum 1 year duration of job. In the group of housewives, 15 women were with less than 5 years of married life and 15 women were with more than 5 years of married life. Similarly, in the group of married working women, 15 women were with less than 5 years of married life and 15 women were with more than 5 years of married life. All the married women falls within minimum 1 year to maximum 10 years of married life.

Instruments: 1) General Information Schedule - It contains items like name, age, address, phone number, educational qualification, duration of marriage, duration of occupation, type of family, number of children and the monthly income of the family; 2) Bell's Adjustment Inventory - This inventory was developed by Hugh M. Bell. It is a test of personality to assess the individual's adjustment in variety of situations, such as- (a) home, (b) health, (c) social, (d) emotion, and (e) occupation. It is a 160 item inventory of personality traits for the purpose of obtaining a better understanding of the examinee. It can be administered individually and also in groups. It contains 160 items in total, that is, 32 items in each area. It is a self reporting questionnaire in "Yes", "No" and "?" format to measure the total level of adjustment. One point is given to every "Yes" and zero is given to every "No" or "?" response. The maximum score for each area is 32 and the lowest score for each area is 0. the scores obtained in each area were added together to determine the the total level of adjustment.

Statistical Analysis: The present study includes the following statistical analysis: 1) Frequencies; 2) Percentage; 3) Mean; 4) t-test.

Result and Discussion

All of the objectives of this present study has been carefully examined. The results reveals that the adjustment pattern of housewives and married working women are significantly different from each other. The computed t-values of the score obtained by the housewives and the married working women exceeds the critical value at the level of significance in the areas of home, health and emotion, which indicates the adjustment

of both the groups differs significantly in the areas of home, health and emotion. On the other hand, the computed t-values between the two groups in the areas of social and occupation, which is quite smaller than the critical values at the level of significance, reveals that the differences in the adjustment pattern of both the groups in these two areas is insignificant and may be due to chance factors. In the obtained mean value shows that married working women are better adjusted than the housewives in the areas of health, emotion, social and occupation, whereas, the housewives are better adjusted than the married working women in the area of home.

Table 1 - Comparison between housewives and married working in terms of their adjustment pattern and Mean Score.

Areas of O Adjustment	Housewives			Married Working Women			t-value
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	
Home	30	10.46	3.39	30	12.50	4.27	2.05**
Health	30	14.20	2.89	30	12.10	4.25	2.23**
Social	30	12.70	3.84	30	12	4.69	0.63*
Emotional	30	19.63	3.20	30	17.33	3.28	2.74**
Occupational	30	15.60	4.80	30	13.20	4.62	1.98*

*Difference is insignificant. **p<0.05. High scores indicates lower level of adjustment and vice-versa.

Comparison between housewives on the basis of duration of married life reveals that the adjustment patterns of both the groups of housewives differs significantly in the areas of home and emotional, as the computed t-values between the groups of housewives in these two areas exceeds the critical value at the level of significance. Comparison between married working women on the basis of duration of married life reveals that the adjustment pattern between the two groups of working women differs significantly in the areas of home and occupation, as the computed t-values between the two groups of working women in these two areas exceeds the critical value at the level of significance.

When compared between housewives and married working women with less than 5 years of married life in terms of their adjustment pattern, it has been found that the adjustment pattern between these two groups differs significantly in the areas of home and emotional, as the computed t-values between these two groups in these two areas exceeds the critical value at the level of significance. Similarly, when compared between housewives and married working women with more than 5 years of married life in terms of their adjustment pattern, it has been found that the adjustment pattern between these two groups differs significantly in the area of occupation, the computed t-value between these two groups in this area exceeds the critical value at the level of significance.

Table 2 - Comparison between Housewives and Married Working Women in terms of their Adjustment Pattern alongwith their Duration (less than 5 years or more than 5 years) of their married life.

Areas of Adjustment	Sample size	Housewives with less than 5 years of married life		Housewives with more than 5 years of married life		Working women with less than 5 years of married life		Working woman with more than 5 years of married life		t-value (1)	t-value (2)	t-value(3)	t-value(4)
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
Home	15	12.86	3.44	8.06	3.35	15.73	4.14	9.26	4.39	3.87**	4.15**	2.06**	0.84*
Health	15	14.66	3.33	13.72	2.38	12.66	3.92	11.53	4.54	0.88*	0.73*	1.50*	1.66*
Social	15	13.53	4.16	11.86	3.48	12.93	4.97	11.06	4.40	1.19*	1.09*	0.36*	0.55*
Emotional	15	21.13	2.28	18.13	3.91	17.86	3.20	16.80	3.35	2.56**	0.89**	3.22**	1*
Occupational	15	16	4.43	15.20	5.15	15.93	3.99	10.46	5.17	0.45*	3.24*	0.04*	2.51**

*Difference is insignificant.

*p<0.05.

High scores indicate low level of adjustment and vice-versa.

t-value (1)=computed t-values between the housewives with less than 5 years of married life and housewives with more than 5 years of married life.

t-value (2)=computed t-values between the working women with less than 5 years of married life and working women with more than 5 years of married life.

t-value (3)=computed t-values between the housewives with less than 5 years of married life and working women with less than 5 years of married life.

t-value (4)=computed t-values between the housewives with more than 5 years of married life and working women with more than 5 years of married life.

Conclusion

It has been found that every woman is unlike each other. Some are independent and free-spirited, while some has always learnt to follow the norms set by the society. However, they discover themselves anew in every spheres of their life. They prove that no one is a born fighter, but every woman has the power to derive strength from deep within. Each of them delve deep into their hearts and discover traits no one knew they possessed, and in the process they realize that they are often victimized in almost every spheres of life, and this is where they need to adjust. When they need support, there is often no one to lend their hands of cooperation and understanding. Thus, some continues with their life and its adjustments, with the false expectation of cooperation and understanding, while some go on with their life, without expecting and adjusting all alone. Thus, living in marriage is an adjustment. All married women, irrespective of working or non-working, adjusts for their personal benefits and mental satisfaction, in order to gain mental peace, and sometimes the radical personal adjustments are often stressful on their relationships.

In that sense, this study is significant to highlight the requirements of empirical studies on how the perceived adjustment pattern differs between housewives and married working women and the review elaborated the previous

knowledge contribution and this study has attempted to provide an insight on future research directions.

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