

The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Communication in Marital Satisfaction

Aghil Nasim¹, Dr Neelam Pandey²

¹Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Sciences, Amity University

²Associate Professor, Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Sciences, Amity University

Abstract: *Marriage is an intricate and ever-changing connection that necessitates steadfast attentiveness and open interchange to uphold its value. Effective bond satisfaction is a crucial aspect of any thriving partnership, which is impinged upon by numerous factors. The present study examines the role of emotional intelligence and communication in marital satisfaction. Data was collected through both online and offline mode from a total of 140 participants including 65 male and 65 female. To measure the emotional intelligence of the couple The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) was employed and in order to measure communication The Interpersonal Communication Scale (ICS) was used. The Couples' Satisfaction Index (CSI-16) was utilized to measure the marital satisfaction of the couples. Pearson Correlation was used to analyze the correlation of emotional, communication and marital satisfaction. Regression analysis was also employed to examine whether emotional intelligence and communication can predict or affect marital satisfaction. The result of the correlation analysis suggested that emotional intelligence and communication have a significant positive correlation with marital satisfaction. The result of regression analysis conducted demonstrated that both emotional intelligence and communication affect and can predict marital satisfaction.*

Keywords: Marital Satisfaction, Communication, Emotional Intelligence, Couple Relationships

1. Introduction

Marriage is a beautiful journey in which two people will share their joys, challenges, and lives with one another. In order for this relationship to flourish and thrive, it requires constant effort, attention, and understanding. A marital tie-up is the union of two human beings who pledge to remain in each other's presence throughout their lives. There is a profound emotional connection between the couple that goes beyond the formalities of marriage, a bond that goes beyond legality and social obligations. This relationship serves as a foundation for the building of a family and a life of fulfilment for both partners, providing them with support, intimacy, and companionship. Emotional intelligence and communication stand out as two paramount components linked with conjugal contentment. Emotional intelligence refers to one's ability to recognize, grasp, and direct one's emotions in addition to those around them. Psychologists Peter Salovey (1958) and John D. Mayer (1953) proposed the concept of Emotional Intelligence as the ability to process emotional information and use it for reasoning and other cognitive activities. Communication pertains to the procedure of disseminating pertinent information, notions as well as apprehensions between more than one individual. The concept of marital satisfaction is a multifaceted construct that encompasses a variety of dimensions, including intimacy, communication, trust, sexual satisfaction, and the overall quality of the relationship. Marital satisfaction can be defined as the attitude an individual has toward his or her own marital relationship (M.E. King; 2016). There has been extensive research in the field of psychology about the impact of marital satisfaction on individuals' mental health and quality of life as well as their physical health. In order to promote healthy marital relationships and enhance the well-being of individuals, it is imperative that we have an understanding of the factors that affect marital satisfaction.

Emotional intelligence serves as an imperative factor for both recognizing and comprehending one's own emotions along with those belonging to their partner whilst steering them in the right direction via excellent management skills. In contrast, communication constitutes a foundation that allows for the exchange of information, feelings, and thoughts between partners involved in any given relationship. By mastering effective communication techniques - couples guarantee themselves experiences characteristic of healthy relationships built with wholesome counterparts and attached firmly against destruction. The present study examines the role of emotional intelligence and communication in marital satisfaction.

2. Method

Participants

Participants of the study consisted of 140 married couples from different cities in India (male; 65, female; 65) who had been married for a minimum of five years. Data was collected through both online and offline survey sampling techniques without determining age as a criterion. It was designed to ensure that the study findings were representative of the population of interest and that participants had the necessary experiences and perspectives to contribute to the study.

Measures

The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)

The Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) is a self-report questionnaire designed to measure emotional intelligence. The test was developed by Schutte and colleagues in 1998 and consists of 33 items assessing four dimensions of emotional intelligence: perception, utilization, management, and self-management. The emotional intelligence scale developed by Schutte and her colleagues, has a reliability rating of 0.90. Petrides and

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Furnham (2000) report a mediocre correlation between the SSRI and self-assessed EI, the Big Five EI scale (0.51), and life satisfaction (Petrides and Furnham, 2000). A correlation of less than 0.20 was found between SSRIs and well-being criteria.¹

The Interpersonal Communication Scale²

The Interpersonal Communication Scale was developed by Jared Campbell (2013) to measure an individual's Face-to-Face communication ability. There are both internal and external factors that contribute to face-to-face communication. This questionnaire consists of seven items designed to measure communication. A 7-item Likert scale is used to grade responses to the questionnaire. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was determined for the ICS Scale overall score (.729) and both subscales (External Perception =.632 and Internal Disseverance =.581) for the validity test.

The Couples Satisfaction Index (CSI-16)

Couple Satisfaction Index (CSI)³ is an instrument widely used to measure the level of satisfaction couples have with their relationship. An index of 32 items is used to measure the Couple Satisfaction Index (CSI). Various items are included in the scale with varying response scales and formats. Additionally, the authors suggest that the scale may be safely reduced to 16 or even 4 items based upon the needs of a researcher. For the purposes of the current study, CSI-16 has been used to assess the marital satisfaction of the couple. The Cronbach's alpha values for the CSI-16 ranged from 0.62 to 0.90 in several papers (Bruner et al., 2015; Funk & Rogge, 2007; Hoagland & Levant, 2015; Resch & Alderson, 2014; Witherow et al., 2016). CSI-16 was evaluated by the developers (Funk & Rogge, 2007) with respect to the Dyadic Assessment Scales (32-item, 7-item, and 4-item versions), the Marital Adjustment Test, the Quality of Marriage Index, the Semantic Differential, the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale, and the Relationship Assessment Scale. Correlation coefficients ranged from 0.85 to 0.98 for all measures reported by the authors.⁴

3. Procedure

This study employed a correlational research design to examine the relationship between the three variables of the study, namely emotional intelligence, communication, and marital satisfaction. Data was collected both online and offline using questionnaires distributed to the target population. In addition to electronic questionnaires, printed copies were provided to respondents. All instructions were contained in a questionnaire that the participants were required to follow while responding to the statements. It was assured to them that the data would be used for research purposes and would remain highly confidential. Additionally, participants were asked for their consent. They

¹Schutte, N.S., Malouff, J.M., Hall, L.E., Haggerty, D.J., Cooper, J.T., Golden, C.J., et al. (1998). Development and validation of a measure of emotional intelligence. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 25, 167-177.

²Campbell, Jared. (2013). Interpersonal Communication Scale.

³Rogge, Ronald. (2007). The Couples Satisfaction Index: CSI-32. 10.13140/RG.2.1.1052.5842.

⁴<https://www.eif.org.uk/files/resources/measure-report-ipr-csi-16.pdf>

were instructed to take their time and answer honestly. Direct communication was used to clarify any doubts; however, e-mail was sent to participants in cases where they requested additional time to complete the examination in order to clarify any doubts they may have. Investigators personally supervised the collection of data. For analysis, the questionnaires were scored according to the scoring key and the total score for each was determined.

4. Analysis of Results

Table 1 (Descriptive Statistics)

Variables	SSEIT Scores	ICS Scores	CSI-16 Scores
SSEIT Scores	1	0.827	0.445
ICS Scores	0.827	1	0.443
CSI-16 Scores	0.445	0.443	1

Descriptive statistics were analysed on the scores of The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) (\bar{X} = 119.31, Σ = 17.778, N = 140), Interpersonal Communication Scale (\bar{X} = 34.35, Σ = 7.756, N = 140), and Couples' Satisfaction Index (\bar{X} = 59.86, Σ = 15.647, N = 140), (See Table 1).

Table 2 (Correlation)

Scales	Mean	Std Deviation	N
SSEIT	119.31	17.778	140
ICS	34.35	7.756	140
CSI-16	59.86	15.647	140

Pearson Correlation and Regression were employed using SPSS 29 to examine the significance of emotional intelligence and communication in marital satisfaction. The correlation analysis showed that there is a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction ($r = 0.445$, $p < .001$) and a significant positive correlation between communication and marital satisfaction ($r = 0.443$, $p < .001$), (See Table 2). Hence the hypotheses of the study, H_1 : 'There will be a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction' and H_2 : 'There will be a significant correlation between communication and marital satisfaction' is accepted.

Table 3 (Regression Summary)

R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Std error of the estimate
.465	.216	.204	13.957

Table 4 (ANOVA)

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	7344.626	2	3672.313	18.853	<.001
Residual	26685.796	137	194.787		
Total	34030.421	139			

The regression analysis conducted to examine whether emotional intelligence and communication predicted marital satisfaction suggested a moderate positive correlation ($R = 0.465$, $R^2 = 0.216$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.204$), (See Table 3). As indicated by the R value of 0.465, there is a moderate positive correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variables. Based on the R-squared value of 0.216, approximately 21.6% of the variation in the dependent variable can be accounted for by the independent

variables included in the model. This implies that there may be other factors contributing to variation in the dependent variable that are not considered in the model. According to the adjusted R-squared value of 0.204, adding more independent variables to the model may not significantly improve the overall fit. According to the regression results, the dependent variable exhibits a moderate positive correlation with the independent variables, and the independent variables can explain approximately 21.6% of the variation in the dependent variable. Thus, the hypothesis of the study H₃: 'There will be a significant effect of emotional intelligence and communication on marital satisfaction' is accepted. Therefore, the result of this study indicates that emotional intelligence and communication have a significant positive correlation with marital satisfaction as well as the independent variables; emotional intelligence and communication can be used to predict marital satisfaction as a dependent variable. In the following chapter, additional discussion will be conducted.

5. Discussion

The present study was conducted on the role of emotional intelligence and communication on marital satisfaction. Data was collected through both online and offline mode from a total of 140 participants including 65 male and 65 female. To measure the emotional intelligence of the couple The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) was employed and in order to measure communication The Interpersonal Communication Scale (ICS) was used. The Couples' Satisfaction Index (CSI-16) was utilized to measure the marital satisfaction of the couples. Pearson Correlation was used to analyze the correlation of emotional, communication and marital satisfaction. Regression analysis was also employed to examine whether emotional intelligence and communication can predict or affect marital satisfaction.

The result of the correlation analysis suggested that emotional intelligence and communication have a significant positive correlation with marital satisfaction. T.C. Anghel, (2016) conducted a study on Emotional Intelligence and Marital Satisfaction, in which emotional intelligence is discussed as a factor that influences marital satisfaction. The aim of this study was to identify characteristics that define emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction, as well as their relationship. The results demonstrated significant correlations between marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence subcomponents such as balancing personal and interpersonal emotions. There were statistically significant differences between women and men involved in stable relationships in terms of their ability to balance their emotions. Even though in the present study there no significant difference between men and women in emotional intelligence, this study indicates significant correlations between marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence. Vazhappilly, and Reyes, (2016)⁵ conducted a study was conducted to examine the relationship between couples'

communication and marital satisfaction, as well as the possible predictive influence of communication on marital satisfaction among couples. There was a significant positive relationship between couples' communication and marital satisfaction in a study conducted among 82 married couples. As the results of this study supports the findings of our study it could be understood that couples' communication plays an important role in building and maintaining a happy and fulfilling marriage. The result of regression analysis conducted demonstrated that both emotional intelligence and communication affect and can predict marital satisfaction. The findings indicate that there is a moderate positive correlation which suggest that a decrease in emotional intelligence or communication can decrease the level of marital satisfaction. Several research support this finding and suggest that emotional intelligence and communication are important factors in predicting marital satisfaction.

The present study focused only on the role of emotional intelligence and communication in predicting marital satisfaction, but there are several other factors that play significant role in predicting marital satisfaction. While examining the samples collected for the study it can be seen that there are people who are dissatisfied with their marital relationship even with the presence of high level of emotional intelligence and good communication, this indicates the contribution of other factors towards marital satisfaction. N. Ayub and S. Iqbal (2012) conducted a study titled the Factors Predicting Marital Satisfaction. This study aims to identify the factors that predict marital satisfaction as well as gender differences in marital satisfaction. According to the study, communication is one of the most important factors that contribute to marital satisfaction, along with education of the partner, sexual satisfaction, dual earning, understanding, and in-law relationships. Women are less likely than men to be able to predict marital satisfaction, according to the study. The dominant factors influencing men's marital satisfaction include their partner's education, dual earning, understanding, self-perception, compromise, and their in-laws' relationship. Women were more satisfied with their marriages when they were able to communicate, earn two incomes, understand their husbands' relationships with their in-laws, and compromise with them. Z. Tavakol et al., (2017) conducted a study titled A Review of the Factors Associated with Marital Satisfaction. This study was conducted to examine factors that influence marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The study reviewed 80 papers that met the criteria for inclusion. Following the review of papers, the following factors have been identified as having substantial influence on marital satisfaction: demographic characteristics, personality characteristics, attachment style, relationship, communication and intimacy, couples' families, forgiveness and sacrifice, religion, emotional intelligence, personal health, and sexual relations (sex).

The findings of the present study shed light on the significant role of emotional intelligence and communication in marital satisfaction. The development of emotional intelligence can facilitate couples' understanding and management of their emotions, resulting in better communication and a reduction of conflict. The ability to communicate effectively, on the other hand, plays a key role in resolving issues and avoiding misunderstandings. As

⁵Vazhappilly, Joshy & Reyes, Marc Eric. (2016). Couples' Communication as a Predictor of Marital Satisfaction Among Selected Filipino Couples. *Psychological Studies*. 61. 10.1007/s12646-016-0375-5.

demonstrated in the study individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence and communication exhibited higher levels of marital satisfaction. Factors other than emotional intelligence and communication also play significant role in marital satisfaction which may lead to dissatisfaction in marital relationships even with presence of higher levels of emotional intelligence and communication.

The implications of this research are significant since it stresses the importance of emotional intelligence and communication in maintaining a satisfying and healthy marriage. As a result of this study, future research can explore different factors that affect marital satisfaction and develop interventions that will aid couples in improving their emotional intelligence and communication skills.

In summary, this study supports the conclusion that emotional intelligence and communication are crucial for marital satisfaction. Couples can enhance their relationships and achieve greater happiness and fulfilment in their marriages by recognizing and addressing these factors.

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