

Development and Standardization of Marital Adjustment Questionnaire

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Abstract: The aim of the present study is to construct and standardize the Marital Adjustment Questionnaire. This questionnaire consists of 50 statements and 9 dimensions. The purposive sample technique was used for the pilot study. The sample consists of 100 people who are married and having children are selected from the Tiruppur and Coimbatore districts. The tool is standardized with the Reliability values obtained from Cronbach's Alpha and Split Half Part I and Split Half part II, the Validity of the tool is also established through content validation by Expert rating. The pilot study revealed that the instrument is highly reliable.

Keywords: Marital Adjustment

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I. INTRODUCTION

Marriage imposes certain responsibilities and duties in one hand and the respect for the rights of individuality on the other hand for both husband and wife. Both are required to support each other and their children. Marital adjustment is necessary in child rearing and as the parent is first person to socialize their child. The child gets the first lesson of cooperation, tolerance, self-confidence from the family. If there is no adjustment, the relationship may not last longer and leads to divorce, which is been increasing since past few decades. Soutik Biswas in September 2016 has published an article regarding the topic, 'What divorce and separation tell us about modern India' in BBC news as, In India, Gujarat reports the maximum number of divorce cases among bigger states with a population of more than 10 million, followed by Assam, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Jammu and Kashmir. It not only affects the wellbeing of the couple but also their family and mainly their children.

This questionnaire might fulfill the purpose by obtaining the essential information regarding in which area the person struggles to adjust / well-adjusted in their marital life and also overall marital adjustment. From identifying this, we can also get the reason behind every difficulty in the adjustment of the individual's marital life and then formulate the plans for improving their marital life quality and well being.

Landis and Landis (1977) suggests that, adjustability is necessary in the following specific areas in marriage life, (1) Sexual relations ; (2) money matters ; (3) religion ; (4) social activities and recreation ; (5) in-law relationship ; (6) associating with friends individually or as a couple ; and (7) children's training and discipline.

McKinney (1961) citing various studies, has enumerated the following factors found to be important in most marriages, (1) Financial attitudes (2) Similarity in personal characteristics (3) Happy family background(4) Similarity in education and cultural background (5) Adequate sex direction and normal romantic interests (6) Similarity of emotional experiences (7) Sex education (8) Premedical examination and counselling (9) Normal premarital testing of compatibility (10) Arguments and alienating affections (11) Stable environment.

On the basis of different studies, Lehner and Kube (1964) have grouped the factors influencing marital adjustment into five areas such as,(1) Personality characteristics (2) Cultural backgrounds (3) Social participation (4) Response patterns (5) Sex factors.

Although different psychologists identify different areas that need adjustment, some common areas identified by psychologists would be, religion, social life, mutual friends and recreation, in laws, money, sex, children and parenting, personality developmental issues, family roles, and values. Conflicts are foreseen in all these above-mentioned areas in marital relationships. Most of the problems in marriages can be classified into three categories, they are, unequal growth patterns among couples, family and cultural background, sex role stereotyping. Similarly, we can see three ways of conflict solving in marriages: Compromise, accommodating and hostility.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Carpenter, D. J in 2018 conducted a study on the topic "16PF Couples Counseling Report: Predictors of Marital Satisfaction, Personality Similarity, and Relationship Adjustment of Males in Marital Therapy". The

aim is to utilize the 16 Personality Factor Couple's Counseling Report variables of overall Personality Similarity, Marital Satisfaction, and Relationship Adjustment of Males in Marital Therapy. A total of 150 people were selected for the study as sample. Results indicate that the relationship Adjustment and Personality Similarity were individually significantly and positively correlated with Overall Marital Satisfaction.

Riina, E., and Feinberg, M. in 2012 conducted a research on relationship between parents' childrearing involvement and adjustment by (a) differentiating between types of childrearing activities (task focused vs. relationship focused), (b) examining patterns of differences in these links for mothers versus fathers, and (c) testing whether gender-role attitudes regarding family labor moderated these associations. The sample size of 169 mothers and fathers reported on perceptions of their involvement in relationship-focused and task-focused childrearing, gender role attitudes, and their adjustment (parenting efficacy, depression, parenting stress, and role overload). Results indicated that fathers benefited from greater overall childrearing involvement, whereas higher relationship-focused care was linked to more negative adjustment for mothers. Gender role attitudes moderated these links for fathers, such that traditional fathers who were more involved in childrearing reported better parental adjustment.

Haring, M., Hewitt, P., and Flett, G. in 2003 conducted a study to examine the relationship among perfectionism, marital coping, and marital functioning in a community. The sample size was composed of 76 couples. A theoretical model was tested in which maladaptive coping mediates the relationship between trait perfectionism and poorer marital functioning. As predicted, one of the interpersonal dimensions of perfectionism, socially prescribed perfectionism, was associated with maladaptive marital coping and poorer marital adjustment for both the self and the partner, even after controlling for depression and neuroticism. Finally, the use of negative coping strategies mediated the relationship between socially prescribed perfectionism and poorer marital functioning for both the self and the partner. Overall, this study highlights the importance of spouse-specific forms of perfectionism in marital adjustment.

III. METHODOLOGY

Pilot study:

Close ended structured questionnaire: The section was prepared with the intent that the nine categories of marital adjustment which includes, Psychological, Social, Health, Economical/Financial, Familial relationship, Sexual life, Parenting, House hold activities, Conflict Resolution are accurately covered for the assessment of Marital Adjustment.

Procedure: The present study was conducted in four phases. They are as follows:

Phase 1: Item generation and Focus Group Discussion:

Initially the dimensions as well as its items to be included in each dimension were generated for Marital Adjustment Questionnaire. For the instrument development, items were pooled through available tools, articles, review of literature. After item generation, the questionnaire was put forward to 'Focus Group Discussion' which comprised of distinguished experts those who were having knowledge and experience in marital life and professionals from psychology, mental health field and social work.

Phase 2: Instrument validation:

Step I: Content validation and Expert Rating

Validity reveals the merits of the measurement. In this phase, the constructed instrument was given for expert rating to 10 professionals, in order to arrive at a set of items to be included in the test. Expert rating will be solicited for content appropriateness, relatedness to the topic, difficulty levels on a scale of 0-10, addition or deletion of the items and also instruction for the administration. The experts granted that the items in the scale provided adequate coverage of the concept to do the work.

Step 2: Item modification:

After two continuous expert validations, the questionnaire was finalized with certain modifications with the statement drafting and dimension framing, no items were deleted, which finally included 50 items and 9 dimensions and was ready for data collection.

Phase 3: Data collection:

The sampling method used was 'Purposive Sampling' technique. The particular population i.e., the individuals those who are married, whose spouse is alive and having children in the age range below 45 years was taken as the samples because some of the items includes the situation regarding dealing with spouse and children, it would be accurate to select this group as the target population. Considering these criteria, the framed questions were administered to 100 samples comprising of both males and females, those who are meeting the inclusion and exclusion criteria as follows.

Inclusion criteria:

- Age range below 45 years, those who are married and having children.
- Both the gender male and female.
- Both working and non-working people.
- Those who can comprehend the English language.

Exclusion criteria:

- Individuals who are not married.
- Individuals whose spouse is dead.
- Those who does not have children.
- Those who are not signing the informed consent form.

Phase 4: Data Analysis:

The obtained data was coded for IBM SPSS 20 analysis. Cronbach's Alpha and Split half method was performed to check the internal consistency/reliability. Further, content validity was also established for the developed instrument.

ABOUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE:

This questionnaire consists of 10 items for Socio-demographic data and 50 statements to assess the Marital Adjustment of the individual. This questionnaire has 9 dimensions which are the main areas of adjustment in the marital life.

Dimensions:

The 9 dimensions that are assessed through this questionnaire are,

1. Psychological Adjustment - which includes statement no. 1 to 10
2. Social Adjustment - which includes statement no. 11 to 15
3. Health Adjustment - which includes statement no. 16 to 20
4. Economical/Financial Adjustment - which includes statement no. 21 to 25
5. Familial relationship Adjustment - which includes statement no. 26 to 30
6. Sexual life Adjustment - which includes statement no. 31 to 35
7. Parenting Adjustment - which includes statement no. 36 to 40
8. House hold activities Adjustment - which includes statement no. 41 to 45
9. Conflict Resolution Adjustment - which includes statement no. 46 to 50

Operational Definitions of the dimensions:

A. Psychological adjustment: The readiness and willingness in adjusting with spouse's desires, needs, interests, emotions, habits, perception, attitudes and lifestyle.

B. Social adjustment: Ability to accept and adjust with spouse's family background, religious and cultural norms and friendship circle.

C. Health adjustment: Willingness to adjust with the spouse's health conditions with responsibility and commitment.

D. Financial adjustment: The ability to be flexible while handling financial matters in the family.

E. Family Relationship: The willingness to adjust with family members in terms of considering their opinions, needs and values.

F. Sexual adjustment: Adjustment made by the individual for Sexual engagement in their marriage life with their spouse.

G. Adjustment with Parenting: The ability to be adjusted and involve in taking care of children with tolerance and managing with the children's behaviors.

H. Adjustment in House hold activities: Cooperation, sharing and companionship in terms of dealing with the house hold activities/works.

I. Adjustment in Conflict Resolution: The ability to be flexible, focusing on solution, valuing others opinion and readiness in giving up when the conflict / problem arises.

Scoring Procedure:

Marital Adjustment Questionnaire has been constructed and standardized which is consisting 50 statements to assess the Marital Adjustment of the individual. This questionnaire has 9 dimensions which are the main areas of adjustment in the marital life. Each statement is given with alternative options such as Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely and Never. There are both Positive and Negative statements in the questionnaire. The scoring for the statements 2, 20, 27, 33, 39, 40, 41, 47, 48 are, score of '1' for 'Never', score of '2' for 'Rarely',

score of '3' for 'Sometimes', score of '4' for 'Often', score of '5' for 'Always' and the Reverse scoring for the rest of the statements.

IV. FINDINGS

TABLE AND DISCUSSION:

TABLE 1: SHOWS THE MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION AND RELIABILITY FOR THE DIMENSIONS OF THE TOOL:

| DIMENSIONS | NO. OF ITEMS | MEAN | STANDARD DEVIATION | CRONBACH'S ALPHA |
|----------------------------------|--------------|------|--------------------|------------------|
| Psychological Adjustment | 10 | 2.36 | 0.48 | .792 |
| Social Adjustment | 5 | 2.73 | 0.44 | .606 |
| Health Adjustment | 5 | 2.74 | 0.46 | .658 |
| Economic Adjustment | 5 | 2.40 | 0.53 | .659 |
| Familial Relationship Adjustment | 5 | 2.27 | 0.54 | .649 |
| Sexual Adjustment | 5 | 2.86 | 0.34 | .671 |
| Parenting Adjustment | 5 | 2.58 | 0.49 | .636 |
| Household Activities | 5 | 2.43 | 0.59 | .730 |
| Conflict Resolution Adjustment | 5 | 2.35 | 0.58 | .684 |

Table 1 shows the Mean and standard deviation for the dimensions of the tool. From the table it is evident that the mean for the dimension score ranges from 2.27 to 2.86 which shows that the individuals has mostly chosen the responses 'Often', 'Sometimes' and 'Rarely'. It also shows the Reliability for all the dimensions of the Marital Adjustment Questionnaire, in which the value of Cronbach's Alpha is 0.792 for Psychological Adjustment, 0.606 for Social Adjustment, 0.658 for Health Adjustment, 0.659 for Economical Adjustment, 0.649 for Familial Relationship Adjustment, 0.671 for Sexual Adjustment, 0.636 for Parenting Adjustment, 0.730 for Household Activities Adjustment and 0.684 for Conflict Resolution Adjustment.

TABLE 2: SHOWS OVERALL INTERNAL CONSISTENCY / RELIABILITY OF THE GENERATED INSTRUMENT:

| S.NO | CATEGORY | RELIABILITY (INTERNAL CONSISTENCY) |
|------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. | Cronbach's Alpha | .896 |
| 2. | Split half (Part - I) | .816 |
| 3. | Split half (Part - II) | .800 |

Table 2 shows the Reliability for all the items of the Marital Adjustment Questionnaire. The reliability of the tool was measured by Cronbach's Alpha method and split-half method. Cronbach's Alpha is used to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire. By the split half method, split a test into two halves, usually the odd-numbered items and the even numbered items, and then correlate the scores obtained by each person on one half with those obtained by each person on the other. This procedure yields the split-half reliability which enables to determine the halves of a test measures the same characteristics. The reliability coefficient of correlation for Cronbach's Alpha is 0.896, Split half for Part I is 0.816 and Split half for part II is 0.800 which indicates that the instrument is highly reliable.

TABLE 3: SHOWS THE MARITAL ADJUSTMENT QUESTIONNAIRE WHICH IS DEVELOPED AND STANDARDIZED

| S.NO | STATEMENT | ALWAYS | OFTEN | SOMETIMES | RARELY | NEVER |
|------|--|--------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
| 1. | I prefer to fulfill my desires over my spouse's desires. | | | | | |
| 2. | I satisfy my spouse's need. | | | | | |
| 3. | I feel that, emotional expressions of my spouse do not match with mine which bothers me. | | | | | |
| 4. | I feel that, my spouse is not affectionate on me whenever I expect. | | | | | |
| 5. | I feel difficult to tolerate with the | | | | | |

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|-----|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| | temperament of my spouse. | | | | | |
| 6. | I feel that, the lifestyle of my spouse is different from mine which makes me uncomfortable. | | | | | |
| 7. | Habits of my spouse should be changed to meet my expectations. | | | | | |
| 8. | I feel bad about the way of communication style of my spouse. | | | | | |
| 9. | We perceive things differently which leads to a heated argument. | | | | | |
| 10. | Attitude of my spouse makes me feel uneasy. | | | | | |
| 11. | I and my spouse have mutual friends which itself creates problem between us. | | | | | |
| 12. | I do not like when my spouse talks about his/her outside friendship with me. | | | | | |
| 13. | Religious practice and beliefs of my spouse is difficult for me to follow. | | | | | |
| 14. | I feel that the values held by my spouse's family are not acceptable to me. | | | | | |
| 15. | My spouse should accept the traditional / cultural norms that I follow. | | | | | |
| 16. | I feel that the values held by my spouse's family are not acceptable to me. | | | | | |
| 17. | It is difficult for me to adjust with the health conditions of my spouse when he/she falls sick. | | | | | |
| 18. | Health conditions of my spouse interrupt my routine when he/she falls ill. | | | | | |
| 19. | If my spouse falls ill, I feel disgusted when I supposed to take personal nursing care for her/him. | | | | | |
| 20. | I take care of my spouse when he/she falls sick by sacrificing my other works. | | | | | |
| 21. | I take care of my spouse when he/she falls sick by sacrificing my other works. | | | | | |
| 22. | My spouse should not dominate me while handling financial matters, which bothers me | | | | | |
| 23. | The way of handling financial matters in marital life contradicts with the way I used to live before getting married which is difficult for me. | | | | | |
| 24. | I will not spend much from my savings which I earned when my spouse also earns. | | | | | |
| 25. | Whenever we go out, I expect my spouse to pay the bill even If I have my own income. | | | | | |
| 26. | It bothers me when my in-laws ask me to do things which I do not know. | | | | | |
| 27. | I never mind it when my in-laws expect my spouse to do favorable things to them. | | | | | |
| 28. | I refuse to do whatever my in-laws expect me to do. | | | | | |
| 29. | It is difficult for me to tolerate when my in-laws interfere in our personal life. | | | | | |
| 30. | I feel like not considering my in-laws opinion while making important decision just because it will not suit to my opinion. | | | | | |
| 31. | I refuse to involve in sexual life with my spouse because of the feeling that it might modify my physical appearance. | | | | | |
| 32. | I feel that, planning for child birth is forced by me or by spouse without mutual agreement | | | | | |
| 33. | I enjoy intimacy with my spouse. | | | | | |
| 34. | I feel that, I'm not much interested in sexual life which creates problem between us. | | | | | |
| 35. | I feel that, I should not get compromised | | | | | |

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|-----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | with my spouse regarding our sexual life. | | | | | |
| 36. | It is difficult for me to spare time to take care of our baby. | | | | | |
| 37. | I feel that, only I am taking care of our children's education which is like a burden carried by me alone. | | | | | |
| 38. | I prefer to leave my children in day care center/hostel. | | | | | |
| 39. | I feel that, I should modify my job in order to take care of my children at any cause. | | | | | |
| 40. | I actively take care of my children even if I feel tired. | | | | | |
| 41. | I share the household work with my spouse. | | | | | |
| 42. | I feel that, responsibility of house hold work is like a burden. | | | | | |
| 43. | If my spouse does not cooperate with our household work, I feel like even I do not want to do it. | | | | | |
| 44. | The way my spouse handles the house hold works irritates me. | | | | | |
| 45. | I do not like it when my spouse interferes me in handling house hold activities. | | | | | |
| 46. | Whenever argument arises, I want my voice to be high than my spouse's voice. | | | | | |
| 47. | I am okay with giving up the argument with my spouse to settle down the argument. | | | | | |
| 48. | I consider and value my spouse's opinion and wishes in order to come with mutual agreement. | | | | | |
| 49. | I feel that, I have the authority to rule over our problem and keep my spouse submissive. | | | | | |
| 50. | I expect my spouse to initiate compromise with me during the time of conflict and I stay back at my point. | | | | | |

V. CONCLUSION

The Marital Adjustment Questionnaire which has been constructed and standardized was found to be Reliable, based on the obtained values of Cronbach's Alpha and Split Half Part I and Split Half Part II. The validity of the tool is established through Content validation by Expert rating. Hence, this tool will be very useful for the investigator, psychologists, social worker to assess the marital adjustment of the individual. It can be utilized for the future researches.

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