

CONTRIBUTION OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN RESOLUTION OF MARITAL CONFLICT IN PAKISTANI SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

In today's world, where we are facing many conflicts due to various factors linked to the social conditions, marital conflict is usually observed in Pakistan. Marriage is a bond of mutual trust, which lays the foundation stone of family. Family play crucial role in Pakistan, where all the decisions are led by its head. Unfortunately, with the changes taking place in the world due to societal pressures, fragmentation among marriage couples is mostly seen rather family unification. It is believed that all the conflicts can be resolved internally within family with mutual resolution; but in marital conflict, the problem of obtaining mutual consent requires longitudinal approach. In Pakistan, marital disagreement often arises due to lack of mutual understanding and trust between partners, which, at most of the cases led to divorce. Marital clash also rises due to family issues, which can easily be resolved through mutual discussions. With the increasing number of separation and divorce each year, it is important to know, how emotional intelligence can contribute in maintaining positive relation, and how it come overcome marital conflicts. This study finds the contribution of emotional intelligence in resolving marital conflict. The population for the study consists of all the married couples. The sample consists of all the couples, married since the past 5 years or over. Total sample of 80 married men/women were selected through random sample method from Karachi. Questionnaire was developed with the help of experts, which was later filled by the respondents. The results show that emotional intelligence and education play important role in resolving marital conflict. The results also share that few of the respondents faced abuse in their lives. Details results and discussion are included at the end of the paper.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Resolution, Marital Conflict

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INTRODUCTION

Family is the basis of society, which influence our behavior. Its power lies in the bond among the members of the family. Various factors such as culture and economic status play vital role in maintaining healthy family relationship (Alesina & Giuliano, 2007).

The beginning of the family is based on marital life. The major determinant of good relation of a couple is based on children, financial status, mutual understanding, qualification, choice of spouse and nature of marriage (Allendorf & Dirgha, 2012). Marital satisfaction among both the actors requires dedication and sincerity. It also demands for esteem in each other decisions.

The structure of the family varies, where most of the people now prefer living in nuclear rather joint family system. There is a dramatic change, which has taken place in the society, which has led to social collapse. One of the most common problem rises among partner is conflict.

Marital conflict is defined as rise of misunderstanding and disagreement over issues among both the partners. According to Buehler et al. (1998) it is that situation, when there is a high degree of disagreement among the partners which results in unaccepted social gestures such as disrespect and hostile interaction while Cummings (1998) view marital conflict as a interaction on the basis of difference in views and opinions.

It is the most common problem, which affect the whole family system. It ranges from argument over issue, abuse of various forms, marital dissatisfaction, extramarital affairs, etc, which increase the chances of divorce and violence (Bradbury, Fincham & Beach, 2000). A longitudinal study about marital conflict found that the nature of conflict depends on the skills of conflict resolution (Troupe, 2008). One of the researcher share that negative couple interaction bring troublesome issues. It also gives rise to mental, physical, and family health. Sometimes, marital conflict raises violence, which is a breach of trust and have negative impact on other family members. It is also believed that it led to socio-psychological issues and depression in some cases (Ngozi, Peter, & Stella, 2013).

Various researches have highlighted causes of marital issues. The most common cause is misunderstanding. Children are mostly affected by marital conflicts. Negative parenting behavior brings psychological issues among children. It also raises maladjustment (Hansen, Joshi & Dex, 2010).

Education is considered as one of the important variables to reduce conflict in marital life. When the couple is educated, they mostly move for conflict resolution rather abuse. However, the researchers are now more focused on the importance of Emotional intelligence (EI), which promote the concept of quality of life (Geher and Renstrom, 2004). In today's time, emotional intelligence is given more preference in upholding strong family ties. Various authors have drafted definition of emotional intelligence. This term was first introduced in psychology; however the term has broadened and is now not limited to one field. It is defined as power of perceivance through emotions and ability to take rationale decision on the basis of emotional abilities (Joshi & Thingujam, 2009). It also helps to increase relationship performance.

Emotions tend to change by time. It is the most infrequent activity, where people could be biased in their decisions, but emotional intelligence heightened the mental capabilities and it has a power to control ourselves besides motivating us (Salovey, Brackett, & Mayer, 2004). It helps to scrutinize situation and deal with it more effectively.

One of the studies took place to find the importance of emotional intelligence and adjustment between the partners. The results show that emotional intelligence is correlated to marital life. It brings openness in sharing ideas and is more adjusted with extraversion (Joshi & Thingujam, 2009). Another study was conducted to find the link of emotional intelligence with relationship. The results show that low emotional intelligence resulted in low level of support towards positive relationship (Brackett, Warner & Bosco, 2005).

Pakistan is a diverse country where the nature of marital conflict depends on the cultural and social structure of family. In this male dominant society, female are less likely to participate in any kind of decision making. Various cases are reported by newspapers, where on the extreme level, murder, acid burning or severe abuse was resulted in marital conflicts. Mostly, cases are

not notified due to fear of societal pressure, but with awareness and education, people are now raising their voice against violence against women.

In Pakistan, very limited studies were conducted to find about relationship of marriage with emotional intelligence. In one of the study, the results show that there is a greater relationship between both, but at the same time, self awareness, optimistic thinking also play important role (Batoool and Khalid, 2009). This study is the chain of the previous local study to find, how emotional intelligence can contribute (either positive or negative) in marital conflict.

POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The population for the study consists of all the married couples in Pakistan. The sample consists of all the married couple, married since the past 5 years or over. Through random sampling method, sample size of 80 was selected from Karachi, Pakistan. This sample was further divided into two social statuses: 40 middle class and 40 rich married couples.

INSTRUMENT

Questionnaire was designed by the researcher. The first part of the questionnaire was to find general information whereas the second part was to find the attitude of partners. The data is analyzed using tables.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Showing Gender of Respondents

S. No.	Gender	Number
1.	Male	37
2.	Female	43
	Total	80

Majority of the participants are female in this study.

Table 2: Showing the Social Status of Respondents

S. No.	Social Status	Number
1.	Rich	40
2.	Middle Class	40
	Total	80

Equal numbers of respondents are taken (rich and middle class) for this study.

Table 3: Showing Education Level of Respondents

S. No.	Education Level	Number
1.	Matriculation	11
2.	Intermediate	16
3.	Graduation	44
4.	Post Graduation	09
	Total	80

Majority of the respondents are graduated, who participated in this study.

Table 4: Showing Family System of Respondents

S. No.	Family System	Number
1.	Nuclear Family	63
2.	Joint Family	17
	Total	80

Majority of the participants are living in a nuclear family but only few respondents are living in a joint family system.

Table 5: Showing Years of Marriage

S. No.	Years of Marriage	Number
1.	1-5	62
2.	6-10	18
	Total	80

Majority of the respondents are married since last 1-5 years.

Table 6: Showing Nature of Marital Conflict

S. No.	Nature	Number
1.	Physical Abuse	07
2.	Verbal Abuse	21
	None	52
	Total	80

Majority of the respondents experienced no violence in their lives.

Table 7: Showing the Responses for Questions

Questions	SA	A	N	D	SD
I believe in marital adjustment	37	22	13	08	0
I prefer conflict resolution	34	28	07	06	05
I have good regards for my partner	38	20	15	04	03
My partner is intelligent	41	22	10	06	01
My partner is emotionally intelligent	31	21	15	11	02
Emotional Intelligence play important role in marital conflict resolution	44	18	11	07	00
My partner has decision making skills	22	13	24	16	05

I have experienced marital conflict in my life	05	14	12	18	31
I was never beaten by my partner	10	19	38	03	10
Education is important for solving marital conflicts	49	13	08	10	00

RESULTS

Majority of the respondents believe that it is good to have marital adjustment to maintain healthy marital relations. Majority of the respondents preferred conflict resolution. Majority of the respondents have good relations with their partners. Majority of the respondents said that their partners are emotionally intelligent. Majority said that emotional intelligence play important role in resolving marital conflicts. Majority are neutral in saying that their partner's have decision making skills. Majority never faced any conflict in their marital life. Majority are neutral in replying that they were never beaten by their partner. Majority of the respondents said that education is important to resolve conflict among married couples.

DISCUSSION

Quality of life is the key to success these days. This idea is supported by various psychologist and researchers. One of the most important pillars of family is husband and wife. Their mutual understanding can bring prosperity and healthy social and emotional development among the other family members.

Marriage is an institution necessary for the propagation and fulfillment of life goals. It is the beginning of new journey, where partners support each other and begin their new family life. Various authors have highlighted the importance of family relationship and well-being (Fahey, Keilthy & Polek, 2012 and McKeown, Pratschke & Haase, 2003).

Unfortunately, due to work stress and various other factors, it is observed that marital conflict is at peak across the world. Conflicts are inevitable and every relation has some degree of conflicts (Ashford, LeCroy, & Lortie, 2006). Marital conflict is common across the world. It is more common in the developing countries (Hammerton, 2002). It is generally found that conflicts arise among partners over various issues. When these conflicts are resolved intellectually, it

strengthens relations and maintains longevity of relationships; but if the issues are not resolved, it may lead to severe consequences such as separation or divorce.

Emotional intelligence is important area of maintaining healthy marital life. It is one of the most important areas, which support rule for adjustment in life. It is defined as abilities to manage emotions and to take wise decision in life by maintaining interpersonal relationship effectively. It is also defined as an emotional ability to motivate ourselves (Goleman, 2009). Another author defines emotional intelligence as that skill, which embodies to express our emotions and which portrays our pattern of interactions for the purpose of building social and emotional relationships with others (Blell, 2011).

The field of research gives significant attention to the contribution of emotional intelligence in this regard. It is now regarded as more important than intelligent quotient. Emotional intelligence provides practical guidance to others for taking rational decisions.

When conflicts in marital life are not managed well, it can have negative implications for the relationship and for the relational partners (Fincham & Beach, 1999). Marital conflict also has negative outcomes for children (Booth & Amato, 2001; Jekielek, 1998). From the present study it was found that the respondents give high regard to emotional intelligence. This idea was well presented by Dale (2005). He said that the level of emotional intelligence has correlation with the level of satisfaction in marital relation. Another researcher also said that both are correlated if other factors such as social attractiveness, extraversion, amicability, and delicacy are controlled (Joshi & Thingujam, 2009).

Gender is one of the important variables for positive relationship. One of the investigations was conducted to find the relationship of EI with intimate relationship among couples. Gender played crucial role and have positive relationship (Pokorski & Kuchciewicz, 2012). Another study took place in the west to assess relationship of gender and its quality with emotional intelligence. The findings say that females have more emotional intelligence than male and that their decisions mostly reap positive outcomes (Brackett & Warner, 2005); however emotional

intelligence and marital satisfaction were not linked to the variables of gender and age in one of the study (Hasani, Mokhtaree, Sayadi, Nazer, Mosavi, 2012).

Majority of the respondents also supported this idea that education is very important to develop understanding among the partners. One of the local studies was conducted to find how education supports the relationship of couple. The research shows that those people, who are least educated, are involved in marital disruption than those who are educated. The research also concluded occurrence of low level of divorce among the educated couples (Banu, 2008). In addition, if the female is more educated, they can maintain good relations and take wise decisions at the time of conflicts (Benham, 1974 and Isen & Stevenson., 2012). The paper says that decisions of educated women are correlated to strong family structure and these women are less likely to prefer divorce. Another study was conducted among the educated faculty members of one of the universities and the results show that there was an increase level of satisfaction among the educated faculty (Hasani, Mokhtaree, Sayadi, Nazer, Mosavi, 2012). On this ground, it was also seen that majority of the respondents of the present study believe in marital adjustment and conflict resolution.

Majority of the respondents supported that their partners are emotionally sound but contrary, neutral responses were received from majority of the respondents over the issue of violence/abuse in marital life. It shows that few also faced some form of violence in their lives, which could have direct relation with their emotional intelligence, but has no link to education, as majority of the participants are highly educated.

CONCLUSION

The researcher suggests that emotional intelligence test should be conducted by all the partners in order to know compatibility and their self traits. It is also important to have mutual respect and understanding for each other to improve marital life.

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