



A STUDY ON MARITAL ADJUSTMENT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING AMONG WOMEN

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Abstract:

The empty nesting period is also known as the post-parenting period. This is when the last child leaves the house. This stage is marked by both psychological problems and adjustment. Women in this period are vulnerable and other forms of abuse. This study sheds light on women's psychological well-being and marital satisfaction. It is a quantitative study. The study was conducted on 60 samples of women in Nagpur city, Maharashtra. The study ended with the finding that most women had psychological health problems and poor adaptation in married life. One study suggested social work intervention.

Key Words: *Psychological wellbeing, marital adjustment, Women, Marital relationship*

Introduction:

Empty nest syndrome is a phenomenon in which parents feel sad, lost, and lost when their children leave the house. Although parents encourage their children to become independent, the experience of letting go is painful. This heartbreaking reality makes women's lives more vulnerable. They often experience a deep sense of loss that leaves them vulnerable to depression, identity crises, marital conflict, and alcoholism.

Gerson defines the family cycles as an unattached young adults, moving to coupling, then to expansion with the addition of children, and then to contraction where the children leave the home and begin their own family life cycle. Post parental life is characterized by the empty nest stage that point in the family cycle where children have grown and departed from the home. For the elderly couple, this means a time when they are alone and living in a house that is filled with



memories of their children. For some parents, this becomes a time of reflection, restlessness, and even dissatisfaction (Gerson, 1995).

Women undergoing the empty nest experience complicated emotions such as feeling sad, feeling relieved, wondering about oneself, loving children, dealing with missing someone, dealing with transition, coping with anxieties and denial, seeking supports, and feeling positive. The present paper attempts to throw light upon the mental wellbeing and marital adjustment experienced by the elderly couples experiencing the empty nest syndrome or living in the post parenting period of life coupled with human ageing (Clay, 2003).

Empty nest syndrome adds to many risky responses to life that include depression, sadness, anxiety, guilt, somatic symptoms, anger, resentment, irritability, frustration and loneliness. Sometimes these maladaptive responses may be the start of a major psychopathology like major depressive disorder, anxiety disorders and rarely a psychotic reaction (Powell, 1977).

Research conducted by Saleel Kumar in Kerala titled psychological wellbeing and marital adjustment on elderly couples in post parental stage of proves that females experienced greater range of psychological and marital adjustment problems than the male. The study reveals that women are more vulnerable to psychological issues and problems related to marital adjustment (Saleel Kumar, 2015).

The earlier discussions on the empty nest syndrome in the life of women clearly reveal that women experiencing this stage are under vulnerability. Research in particular to the study on psychological wellbeing and marital adjustment is scanty in India. This research aims to address the gap that prevails in the body of knowledge and attempts to measure the psychological wellbeing and marital adjustment experienced by the women experiencing empty nest syndrome.

Aim of the study:



This study aims to understand the psychological well-being and marital adjustment experienced by women in the empty nest life stage in Nagpur, Maharashtra.

Specific Objectives:

1. To understand the socio-demographic profile of the women in the empty nest stage.
2. To study the psychological wellbeing experienced by the women in empty nest stage.
3. To gain insight into the marital adjustment in women at empty nest stage.

Methods and Tools:

This research is a quantitative study with descriptive nature. The universe of the study comprised women experiencing empty nest stage of life in Nagpur City. The study includes 60 women as sample. Samples were drawn from universe using non-probability sampling method. Self-administered interview schedule with Ryff's Psychological wellbeing scale (1989) and marital adjustment questionnaire was used to measure the variables. Data was collected directly from the women through one on one interview.

Results and Discussions:

Association between respondent's monthly income and their psychological wellbeing reveals that the respondents having monthly income less than INR 3999, 83.3% experienced moderate level of psychological wellbeing whereas 16.7% accounted for low level of psychological wellbeing. Among those with monthly income between INR 4000-7999, 50% of the respondents are equally distributed for moderate and low level of psychological wellbeing respectively. Among the respondents with monthly income INR 8000 and above, 61.5% of the respondents had moderate while 21.2% accounted for low and 17.3% of them had higher level of psychological wellbeing. However, no significant association is found between monthly income and psychological wellbeing.

Test of ANOVA shows the differences between respondents' age groups and perceived marital adjustment. Women in the age group 61-65 year, has the highest mean score of 128, while 81 – 85



has mean score 110, age group 66 - 70 with the mean score of 109.83 and age group 76 – 80 obtained the mean score 103.56. This reveals that elders in the age group 61 - 65 years have better marital adjustment than those belong to other age groups. However, the calculated F value is 2.985 and the p value (0.027) is observed to be lesser than 0.05 level. Hence, statistically significant differences exist between elders' age group and their marital adjustment. This reveals that as the age is less, the marital adjustment perceived by the respondents is greater in women at empty nest stage of life.

Differences between marital adjustment and occupational categories of the respondent reveals that the respondents in the agricultural group had the highest mean score of 117, while group 3 had a mean score of 109.80, group 2 had a mean score of 105.21, group 1 had a mean score of 102.44, and Group 5 had a mean score of 101.58. It shows that respondents belonging to the Group 4 had the higher marital adjustment than those belong to other groups. The calculated F value is 0.521 and the p value is higher than 0.05. Hence, there doesn't exist any significant differences in marital adjustment ratings among the different occupational categories of subjects in this study. However, the mean scores indicate that the respondents in agricultural sector have greater marital adjustment and the respondents who did not work have lesser marital adjustment.

The One-way ANOVA calculated to understand the psychological wellbeing demonstrated by the respondents varies across the different age groups of the respondents reveals that the Group 1 (61-65 years) had a mean score of 165.89, group 4 (76-80 year) had a mean score of 165.67, group 2 (66-70 years) had a mean score of 164.44 and Group 3 (71-75 years) had the mean score of 162. The calculated F value was 0.229 and the p value (0.921) is higher than 0.05. Hence, no significant differences in the scores of psychological wellbeing are observed among the different age groups, as rated by the subjects. However, the mean score values indicate the higher psychological wellbeing among those respondents in the age group 61 – 65 years and lower among those in the age group 81 – 85 years. This reveals that as age decreases psychological wellbeing increases and as age increases psychological wellbeing decreases among women in the empty nest stages of life.



Key Findings:

Among the total 60 respondents, cent per cent of the respondents are females.

Little more than one fourth of the respondents (28.3%) are graduates.

Little less than half (48.8%) of the women were engaged into any of the income generating jobs.

It was reported that (53.3%) of the respondents had 2 children, (26.7%) of them had 3 children, (10%) of them had 1 child and (9.9%) of them had 4 children.

Regarding the women's participation in the activities of social clubs or organisations, it is reported that 40% of them are engaged as member of social clubs or organisation and remaining 60% of them do not belong to any social clubs or organisation.

No significant association is found between the women's religion and their marital adjustment.

No significant association between monthly income and their marital adjustment.

No significant association found between religion and mental wellbeing.

No significant association is found between monthly income and psychological wellbeing.

Significant differences exist between respondent's age and their marital adjustment. This reveals that as the respondent's age is lesser, the marital adjustment perceived by them is higher among the women in empty nest stage of life.

Significant differences exist in marital adjustment ratings across the different educational groups. This reveals that marital adjustment is perceived to be higher in the women who are graduates whereas it was low in women who had qualification up to schooling. Hence higher the educational qualification better is the marital adjustment.



Significant differences are seen in psychological wellbeing of women. Women who had higher education perceived having better psychological wellbeing than their counterparts who had low level of education.

Social Work Interventions:

To achieve better psychological well-being and marital adjustment for women going through the empty-nest phase of life, provide safe and shared people with opportunities for interaction, ongoing socializing, recreation, social clubs, etc. Community-based centers can be established to provide opportunities. Faith-based experiences promote healthy relationships and positive mental health to prevent depression and suicide, and promote lifelong social connections and community engagement for women in the empty nest stage of life. . Social workers are best suited to run these centers. In addition, involvement in social clubs and organizations of these centers, participation in various therapeutic and health promotion activities, and provision of mental health services in collaboration with individuals and groups are among the major concerns of these centers. may become.

Conclusion:

This Study on psychological wellbeing and marital adjustment among women in the empty nest stages of life in Nagpur is that they are affected by factors such as the age, education, occupational status, number of children, retirement and so on. Similar factors such as autonomy, personal growth, environmental mastery, positive relation with others, purpose in life, self acceptance, the expression of affection, communication skills, problem solving, their responses to the demanding and difficult factors, and the effect they have on them are very diverse. Empty nest stage of life is defined as the phase of life when the children are grown up, but no longer live at home. Although both men and women emotionally experience this transition, it has been considered uniquely stressful for women since it entails the loss of the major components of the mother role, a role which has traditionally been a central focus of many women's lives and identities (Harkins 1978). This present study proves that the women do experience greater level of psychological issues



during the period of empty nest stage. Higher marital satisfaction and better marital adjustment may aid in a more successful and positive transition to the post parental period with higher psychological or mental well being. This can be also that better marital adjustment can furthermore augment psychological wellbeing.

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