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Educational and Professional Differences in Working Women Marriages and their Effects on Life Satisfaction in Gujranwala City, Pakistan

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Abstract

Background: A high level of marital contentment is a measure of marital success. The objectives of this study were to determine whether there is a relationship between marital contentment and independent variables of education and the profession of couples.

Methods: Descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted on 113 participants in 2019. All participants included in this study were working women's and married for at least six months belonging to the northern part of the city, Gujranwala. Data was entered and analyzed in SPSS version 21.

Results: The majority of the couples i.e., 63.7% had the same level of education in terms of years and equivalence, while 49.6% are in the same profession. About 59.3% of women were satisfied in terms of their marital life. There was no statistically significant relationship between marital contentment, education level, and profession.

Conclusion: Most of the couples had the same level of education in terms of years and equivalence, while about half are in the same profession. Most of them were satisfied in their life.

Keywords: marital contentment, education level, profession

Introduction

Looking for a healthy, joyful, and satisfactory life between the fundamental rights of all humans. It is significantly associated with physical and mental health, satisfaction with relationships, general well-being, and quality of life. As the family is the central unit of any nation, marital satisfaction is a related factor to the stability of any nation. Too much marital discontent leads to family members being unstable socially which trickles down to social problems hence to the nation.

The role of a woman is vital in the progress of society. A married woman has many roles to play, i.e. a mother, sister, wife, daughter, daughter-in-law, etc. which is a highly stressful job. Traditionally, women are expected to care for their family and home requirements whereas men are required to earn to support the finances. Since this status is changing at a high speed (1). Industrialization and rising costs of living are compelling more women to assume working status to earn a living and support their families. It is therefore the need of the modern era that women

work side by side with men to run their house most effectively.

In the majority of countries, across all income levels, the contribution of women in labor markets is today higher than three decades ago (2). She may job in an office for six to eight hours but their work does not end there. After finishing office, a mother returns home and takes care of her children, husband, other house members, and house. Her office, as well as home responsibilities, lead to a very demanding schedule.

The stress of work and house responsibilities jointly reasons of anxiety and depression among working women who end up in difficulties in looking after their home, family, and work matters (3). In addition to the stress and lack of time to care for themselves and their families, working women are reported to do extra for their families than housewives.

A survey shows in 2016 in Pakistan reported that women work primarily in the home or on the farm. Women working in agriculture or doing easy-going work at home, are not counted and reported as work (4). From outside the home, jobs available to women pay low wages. Women earn less than men, and this difference has been persistent. The World Bank report provides data of the indicator, 'female labor force participation rate pro Pakistan' from 1990 to 2018. The average value for Pakistan throughout that period was 18.66 percent with a minimum of 12.51 percent in 1995 and a maximum of 25.12 percent in 2018 who have an academe degree work outside the home (5). It is reported that women in rural Pakistan work 12-15 hours, doing work at both home and outside in the fields. The condition for urban women is not much different (6).

Based on this background, a need was identified to discover the life satisfaction of married working women. This study was designed to determine whether there is a relationship between marital satisfaction and the independent variables of education level, and profession of women and their husbands. This study was conducted to improve the life satisfaction of married working women by assessing the differences in education and profession and their effect on marital life in Gujranwala city, Pakistan. With the objective: to find out the relationship between education and professional differences in working women Marriages and its Effects on marital life satisfaction in Gujranwala, Pakistan, this study was planned.

Methodology

A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted in the community medicine department, Gujranwala Medical College (GMC), Gujranwala. All participants included in this study were working women and married for at least six months selected from the northern part of the city, Gujranwala in 2018. Those who are separated/widows were excluded from the study as they were not living a married life. We don't want to include recall-based data in this study. A total of 140 participants were interviewed, though 27 respondents provided insufficient information, leaving a valid sample size of 113 respondents. Simple random sampling (SRS) was used to select the participant, to eliminate the systematic bias. At a 5% confidence level, the sample size was calculated by using the simple proportion formula by assuming the 50% prevalence of working women.

The level of participant satisfaction was measured by using a five-point Likert scale pre-designed questionnaire. It was also validated by pilot testing on 5 LHWs. Areas of satisfaction were recorded as: Very satisfied: 5, Satisfied: 4, Average: 3, Dissatisfied: 2, and very dissatisfied: 1, which was then aggregated in two categories. The MEAN of every domain was calculated which was divided by its number of items to find out the cut point. The satisfaction level was divided into satisfied and not satisfied groups. The respondents securing a score equal to or more of the mean are considered as satisfied, other those who get a score below the mean are categorized as not satisfied. Education level and profession were considered as the main variables of the study.

For analysis, the data was entered into the statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS) version 21. Frequency percentages were calculated for categorical variables, while mean and standard deviation were calculated for numeric variables. Statistical chi-square test was then derived and interpretation was done and results were discussed. The hypotheses were tested at a five percent level of significance.

Results

Total responses of 113 married women were included in this study to assess life satisfaction in terms of life partners' education and profession. These women lie in the age group of 22-62 years with a mean (\pm sd) of 32.88 ± 7.57 years, served married life minimum of one year and a maximum of 37 years with a mean (\pm sd) of

6.34 ± 5.98 years, having kids in the range of none to 5 kids with a mean (±sd) of 1.86 ± 1.34 kids. While their partners lie in the age range of 20-68 years, mean (±sd) of 34.13 ± 9.21 years. Results showed that 72 (63.7%) couples had the same level of education in terms of educational years and equivalence, while 56 (49.6%) are in the same profession. The majority of the working women 67(59.3%) were satisfied with their life. (Figure 1)

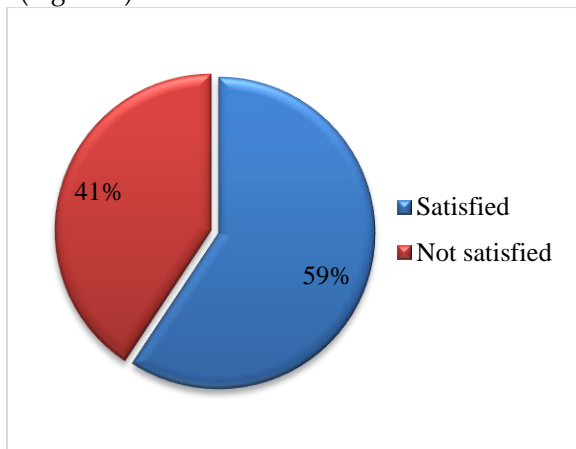


Figure 1. Working women Marriage life satisfaction

1.1. Education and profession of participants

The broad picture of respondent’s education reveals that out of a total of 113 married women, 8 (7.1%) had secondary school certificates, 11 (9.7%) had high secondary school certificates, 24 (21.2%) were graduate and, 17 (15%) had master’s degree in different subjects. The remaining have professional education in the health-related field, as 15 (13.3%) had nursing education while 38 (33.6%) were medical and allied health graduates e.g., MBBS, DPT, etc.

When asked about profession 30 (26.5%) told that they are serving as doctors, 20 (17.7%) are linked with the nursing profession. 33 (29.2%) are in the teaching field, 15 (13.3%) work in different offices, while 15 (13.3%) were linked with some other professions like stitching, housemaid, working in daycare centers, etc. Out of the total 88 (77.9%) had fixed timings of the job while working hours vary depending on the workload of 25 (22.1%) participants. 32 (28.3%) had government job, 75 (66.4%) work in private sector, while 6 (5.3%) run their own business/setup. The majority of the participants 60 (53.1%) told that to work outside of the home is their own choice. 41 (36.3%) are earning to support their spouse to meet the financial requirements, 12 (10.6%) said that it’s their choice and also the need to do work outside the home.

1.2. Education and profession of participants life partners

Broadly, education of the participant working women’s spouse can be categorized as having Graduation, Masters, MBBS, HSSC, SSC, BSN, DPT, DAE, LLB and PhD as 35 (31%), 27 (23.9%), 27 (23%), 9 (8%), 8 (7.1%), 2 (1.8%), , 2 (1.8%), 2 (1.8%), 2 (1.8%) and 1 (0.9%) respectively.

They are serving as teachers/demonstrators 32 (28.3%), followed by medical doctors 28 (24.8%), engineers 14 (12.4%), business owner 11 (9.7%), office workers 10 (8.8%), nurses 5 (4.4%), bankers 2 (1.8%), lawyer (2 (1.8%), army officer 1 (0.9%), and linked with some other work as a driver, servant, gardener, etc. as 8 (7.1%).

74 (65.5%) of them had fixed timings of working hours while working hours of 39 (34.5%) are not defined.

1.3. Education and Profession differences in working women and their partners

The majority of the couples 72 (63.7%) had the same level of education in terms of years and equivalence, while 56 (49.6%) are in the same profession as shown in figure 2.

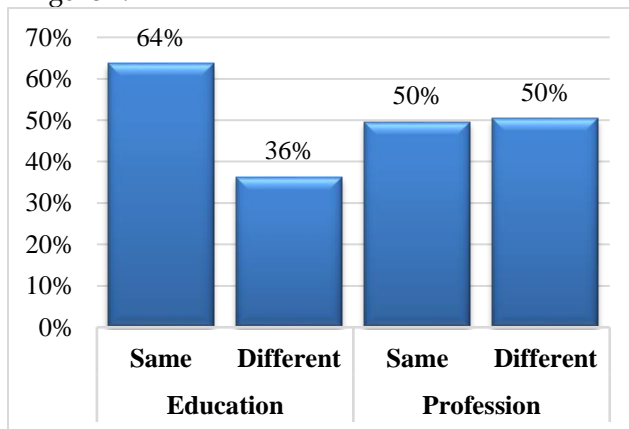


Figure 2. Education and Profession differences in working women and their partners

1.4. Views of the working women about work outside from home

The majority of the women 73 (64.6%) answered that it’s tough to carry out home responsibilities because of the job. Out of the total 113 participants about half 58 (51.3%) replied that they will quit the job/ work outside if they had a choice, same number and percentage assumed that marriage prospects are better for working women than non-working women. About 60 (53.1%) of them viewed that children of working women perform better than those of non-working women. Majority of them 70 (61.9%) willing to allow

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their daughters to work outside their homes. Detail of their views is provided in table 1.

Table 1. Working women views about work

Questions	Yes n(%)	No n(%)
Difficult to carry out home responsibilities because of the job?	73(64.6)	40(35.4)
I give up working if I had a choice?	58(51.3)	55(48.7)
Marriage prospects are better for working women than a non-working woman?	58(51.3)	55(48.7)
Children of working women perform better than those of non-working women?	60(53.1)	53(46.9)
I want my daughter to work if I had?	70(61.9)	43(38.1)

1.5. Feelings of working women on spouse job status

Few questions were asked from the respondents, relevant to the spouse’s job status. More than half of the working women 64 (56.6%) disagreed that their spouse’s job impedes their future career success. While 39 (34.5%) agreed with it. 46(40.7%) of them wished that their partners pick a job that gets more respect to them. Husbands of 43 (38.1%) of them were not satisfied with their jobs and felt no pride in their job status. 37 (32.7%) of working women felt embarrassed if their life partners accompany them at a work event. While according to 47 (41.6%) of them, their spouse’s job did not bring them status as shown in table 2.

Table 2. Working women views about spouse job

Questions	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)
My spouse’s job impedes my future career success.	64(56.6)	10(8.8)	39(34.5)
I wish my spouse had picked a job that gets more respect.	44(38.9)	23(20.4)	46(40.7)
I am embarrassed when my spouse accompanies me to work events.	44(38.9)	32(28.3)	37(32.7)
My spouse is not proud of his job status.	41(36.3)	29(25.7)	43(38.1)
My spouse’s job does not bring me status.	42(37.2)	24(21.2)	47(41.6)

Relationship satisfaction assessment

Twelve questions were asked to assess the satisfaction of working women’s married life. Results revealed that more than half of the respondents gave positive responses to all questions. The majority of the working women 67(59.3%) were satisfied in their life. (Table 3)

Table 3. Marital life satisfaction assessment questions

Questions	Somehow	Usually	More often
	N(%)	N(%)	N(%)
How well does my partner meet my needs?	15(13.3)	20(17.7)	78(69)
To what extent has my relationship met my original expectations?	14(12.4)	32(28.3)	67(59.3)
Things between me and my partner are going well?	12(10.6)	25(22.1)	76(67.3)
I enjoy my partner’s company?	17(15)	18(15.9)	78(69)
How good is my relationship compared to most?	17(15)	26(23)	70(61.9)
How much do I love my partner?	13(11.5)	31(27.4)	69(61.1)
In general, how satisfied am I with my relationship?	19(16.8)	24(21.2)	70(61.9)
If I had my life to live over, would I marry the same person?	31(27.4)	19(16.8)	63(55.8)
Can’t imagine ending my relationship with my partner?	17(15)	15(13.3)	81(71.7)
Can’t imagine any other person making me as happy as my partner does?	12(10.6)	24(21.2)	77(68.1)
How many problems are there in my relationship?	34(30.1)	20(17.7)	59(52.2)
How often do I wish hadn’t gotten into this relationship?	44(38.9)	19(16.8)	50(44.2)

Inferential analysis (Table 4) showed that the results are not statistically significant. Different education or profession does not affect the life satisfaction of married women.

Table 4. Association of education and profession on marital life satisfaction

Variables		Satisfied	Not satisfied	P-Value
		N(%)	N(%)	
Education	Different	25(22.1)	16(14.2)	.783
	Same	42(37.2)	30(26.5)	
Profession	Different	32(28.3)	25(22.1)	.567
	Same	35(31)	21(18.6)	

Discussion

Marital satisfaction is one of the key factors in constancy of any nation, as a family is the basic unit of any nation. To build a successful family marital satisfaction is the key point. So, one effective way to

enhance marital satisfaction and declining marital distress are to identify factors that most likely lead to later discord. The variables of focus in this study are education level and professional differences among married couples. The study revealed that more than half of the working women were satisfied in their life. Unfortunately, very little literature we could search successfully.

This study found that 36.3% were working due to need, (10.6%) said that it's their choice and also the need to do work outside the home. According to the findings of another study, conducted in Karachi, Pakistan 31.5% of women were working due to needing. Our study revealed that the majority of women (64.6%) face difficulty carrying out home responsibilities because of their job. Results contrast with the findings of mentioned study according to which less than half of the responding women (41.5%) were finding it difficult to carry out home responsibilities because of it (7).

According to the results of this study different education or profession of the spouse did not affect the life satisfaction of the married women. While a study was done in New York, and Netherland showed that women with more education have fewer stable marriages (8-10). However, research conducted in the United States Heaton, found that marriages were more stable if the husband is older or more educated, but not if the wife is older or more educated (11).

These findings are similar to the findings of research done by Agha who found that there was no statistical significance between education and marital satisfaction ($P < .05$) (12). Ernest too found that education had no positive influence on marital satisfaction (13). However, some studies were contrary to this study, for instance, Tucker and O'Grady found that subjects judged similarities in education levels to be an important determinant in whether the couple was likely to have a satisfying marriage (14). Bradbury found in his study that there was a strong relationship between marital education and marital satisfaction (15). Tampieri's study found that as the education level of individuals increased, job satisfaction decreased and marital satisfaction increased (16).

Limitations of the Study

The main limitation of this study is that it is based on self-report measures. It is therefore impossible to determine whether reported marital satisfaction responses are with considerable bias or answered in a socially desirable manner. A larger study with more

participants and areas would perhaps yield results that are better subject to broad interpretation.

Conclusion

Most of the couples had the same level of education in terms of years and equivalence, while about half are in the same profession. Most of them were satisfied in their life.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no potential conflict of interest.

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