

# Narsinghpur District Middle Age Couples Correlation between Adjustment and Life Satisfaction Areas

Shweta Nema\*, Prof. Indu Bansal\*\*

\* Research Scholar Department of Home Science Banasthali University

\*\*Dean Faculty of Home Science Banasthali University

**Abstract-** The present research was taken up with broad objective to study the life satisfaction among middle aged couples in Narsinghpur District of Madhya Pradesh. The total sample of this study is 1110. This sample includes working-nonworking, educated-non-educated and urban-rural population. The age range of this study is 50-60 years. The result of this study shows that there is significant correlation between couples adjustment and life satisfaction.

**Index Terms-** Mid Age Adjustment, Health, Home, Social, Marital, Emotional, Financial Adjustments, Mid Age Life Satisfaction, Mental, Job, Social, Marital and Family Satisfaction.

## I. INTRODUCTION

It is important to adjust naturally with the mid-age transitions that occur both physically and mentally. There are challenges which should be met and coped with successfully. At this age it is good to look at the world with new prospective and changed interests. Some may find this adjustment stage really difficult and hard to cope with. Following are some of these important changes and adjustments which are faced in middle age.

- **Physical / Health changes and adjustments**  
Loss and graying of hair, joint pain, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis, sagging muscles, appearance of wrinkles etc. are common phenomenon. These changes are natural and add gravity to looks and soberness of personality. The body system functions start to deteriorate in many, the people at this age may feel weak, have gastro-intestinal problems, suffer from insomnia, feel fatigue quite frequently, may have aches and pains, dental caries. With better medical and nutritional benefits of progressive societies, people feel much more connected and youthful than in the past. Changes occur in the physiological and reproductive functioning of individuals. Loss of sex drive and sexual attractiveness may lead to depression in some people. This stage of life may manifest mood swings, depression, self-criticism, carelessness towards business, hostility. Some people develop interest in cultural activities for example: attend concerts, lectures, religious programs, reading, writing, painting, social work etc.
- **Changes in family relations and adjustment**  
Marriage for certain families is synonymous with conflict. Chronic marital conflict at this stage may take the form of either hot arguments or silent distance. In the middle age period of life spouses need to be closer in relationship with one another as compared to the early years of their married life. It is more

difficult for women to cope up with the 'empty nest' period of their life. For some this may be a traumatic time when domestic responsibilities get minimized and one may find life monotonous. Boredom may be felt by many when there is no family oriented activity to perform. This is also time when menopausal symptoms set in; making it difficult to cope for some women.

At mid-age, children are now adults and parents are much older; needing more attention and extra assistance. These extended-care-giving demands, legally, financially and physically burden middle-age person. People at late middle adulthood stage also have to prepare for their own retirement.

- **Financial Adjustments**

Financial decisions arise against the backdrop of present family structure, current and perceived future needs, and competing demands placed on limited resources. Because of high demands on expenditure, balancing among the cost of living, paying for children's college education, developing resources like house, vehicles, arrange for marriage expenses of children and funding retirement, mid-adults feel like on a treadmill one can never get off.

- **Emotional Adjustment**

Emotional behaviors expressed by couples differ as a function of age, gender and marital satisfaction. The intensity of the middle-age intimacy crisis depends on the need-satisfaction of the relationship and the success achieved in the previous stages of intimacy. Older adults are biased toward the positive aspects of close relationships (Story, Nathan et. al 2007). Emotionally positive and responsive listening is one of the key to successful conflict resolution in marriage (Pasupathi, Monisha et. al.1999).

- **Life Satisfaction**

Life Satisfaction is examined from the perspective of subjective well-being which refers to people's own evaluation of their lives. Apart from many challenges there are also significant benefits for the relationship in the middle age couples. Most of mid-adults now a day enjoy relatively good health and stabilized finances. This can be an opportunity for couples to pursue their own interests and to spend more time together and get more life satisfaction. Blanchflower and Oswald (2008) reported a significant quadratic effect of age on the happiness. Increased work demands, parenting adolescents, empty nesting, caring for aging parents, financial issues and retirement are just some of the concerns that increase stress during mid-life.

As far as middle age is concerned following parameters can be taken into account to explain the life satisfaction:

- **Mental**

A close marital relationship can be viewed as a significant interpersonal resource across the adult life span, representing

potentially the most intimate type of emotional support throughout the adulthood years. Conjugal support is a multidimensional construct consisting of three factors: instrumental support, emotional support and confiding (Anderson & McCulloch 1993). Physical health of mid-adult couples is related with their nature of marital relationship (Bookwala 2005) over and above marital status.

• Job

Work satisfaction is at its peak in mid-life years and the quality of work performance remains high, despite decline in some cognitive or physical skills. Patterns of work and work satisfaction do vary between men and women in middle adulthood. Men are more likely to improve their level of satisfaction in situations where change is possible. Women tend to withdraw or engage in complaining with co-workers. Still, women are better able to balance their dissatisfaction with areas of contentment.

• Social

In the process of socialization, adults prepare for a transition in role; it also involves identifying the new norms and expectations associated with such new social role as in-laws and grandparents. Adults of this age have more concern for laws, traditions, and cultural values and restricted acceptance against too rapid cultural change.

• Marital

It is likely that middle-aged partners' identification of successful problem-solving strategies contribute to the sense that they have control over their relationship. Skilled diplomacy (an approach to solving problems that involves confrontation of the spouse about an issue, followed by a period during which the confronting spouse works to restore harmony), considered an effective skill for marital problem-solving and is practiced more often by wives than by husbands.

• Family

Middle age is also referred as the mid-life "squeeze," or the "sandwich generation" as family relationships in the middle age extend in both directions: relationships with grown children and relationships with aging parents. The family role at this stage involves maximum amounts of assistance given in both directions in the generational chain, as well as maximum responsibility for maintaining affection bonds.

Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significance relationship between life-satisfaction among middle aged couples.

II. METHOD

The sample comprised of 555 Couples (555 males and 555 females) resulting the total sample size of this study to be 1110. This sample includes working-nonworking, educated-non-educated and urban-rural population from Narsinghpur district of Madhya Pradesh, India. The age range of couples studied is 50-60 years, selected on the basis of convenient sampling. It represents a group of different non-probability sampling techniques.

Variables under study and their measurement

Measure used for this study was "old age adjustment inventory" (developed by Shamshad Hussain and Jashbir Kaur). This inventory was developed for old aged male and female ranging

between 50 to 65 years of age belonging to different professions. This 125 items inventory measures the adjustment of old aged people into six areas- health, home, social, marital, emotional and financial. Percentile norms are available sex wise and professional status wise.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Correlation values of husband and wife in adjustment areas

Adj. Areas Husb.→	Heal.	Home	Social	Mari.	Emot.	Fina.
Adj. Areas Wife ↓						
Heal.	.503**	.409**	.366**	.309**	.351**	.225**
Home	.437**	.584**	.443**	.378**	.349**	.314**
Social	.405**	.456**	.563**	.319**	.354**	.235**
Mari.	.299**	.383**	.335**	.462**	.236**	.123**
Emot.	.398**	.369**	.380**	.213**	.544**	.273**
Fina.	.302**	.358**	.311**	.164**	.334**	.489**

Abbreviations: Adj=Adjustment, Husb.=Husband, Heal.=Health, Mari.=Marital, Emot.=Emotional, Fina.=Financial.

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The table 1 shows couples correlation in adjustment areas. The results show that there is a positive correlation between husbands and wives in adjustment areas health, home, social, marital, emotional and financial. It means husbands and wives are positively affected to each other in areas of health, home, social, marital, emotional and financial. The p-value less than .05 indicate that the result is not due to chance.

Table 2: Correlation values of husband and wife in life satisfaction areas

Life satisfaction Areas Husband →	Mental	Job	Social	Marital	Family
Life satisfaction Areas Wife ↓					
Mental	.529**	.177**	.158**	.144**	.342**
Job	.319**	.289**	.223**	.177**	.231**
Social	.196**	.485**	.537**	.431**	.185**
Marital	.040	.382**	.403**	.566**	.264**
Family	.228**	.169**	.142**	.227**	.524**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The table 2 shows correlation values of couples' life satisfaction. The results show that there is a positive correlation between

husbands and wives in mental, job, social, marital and family. It shows that husbands and wives positively affected to each other in these areas. The p-value less than .05 indicate that the result is not due to chance.

Table 3: Correlation values of husbands' adjustment areas and life satisfaction areas

Adj. Areas Husb. →	Heal.	Home	Soci.	Mari.	Emot.	Fina.
Life sati. Areas Husb. ↓						
<b>Ment.</b>	.143**	.201**	.195**	.029	.160**	.140**
<b>Job</b>	-.065	-.078	.056	-.020	.108*	-.066
<b>Soci.</b>	-.081	-.130**	-.008	-.038	.040	-.145**
<b>Mari.</b>	-.079	-.146**	-.031	-.023	.055	-.060
<b>Fami.</b>	.188**	.203**	.214**	.112**	.151**	.120**

Abbreviations: Adj.=Adjustment, Husb.=Husband, Sati.=Satisfaction, Ment.=Mental, Soci.=Social, Mari.=Marital, Fami.=Family, Heal.=Health, Emot.=Emotional, Fina.=Financial.  
\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)  
\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The table 3 shows correlation values of husbands between adjustment areas (health, home, social, marital, emotional and financial) and life satisfaction areas (mental, job social, marital and family). The result shows that there is a highly significant positive correlation between adjustment and life satisfaction areas of husbands. It shows that husbands are positively affected in these areas. The p-value less than .05 indicate that the result is not due to chance. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 4: Correlation values of wives' adjustment areas and life satisfaction areas

Adj. Areas Wife →	Heal.	Home	Soci.	Mari.	Emot.	Fina.
Life sati. Areas Wife ↓						
<b>Ment.</b>	.137**	.180**	.235**	.120**	.237**	.120**
<b>Job</b>	.058	.012	.111**	.012	.102*	.085*
<b>Soci.</b>	-.153**	-.101*	-.012	-.054	.033	-.120**
<b>Mari.</b>	-.134**	-.072	.015	-.008	.045	-.050
<b>Fami.</b>	.117**	.229**	.224**	.161**	.160**	.098*

Abbreviations: Adj.=Adjustment, Sati.=Satisfaction, Ment.=Mental, Soci.=Social, Mari.=Marital, Fami.=Family, Heal.=Health, Emot.=Emotional, Fina.=Financial.  
\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)  
\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The table 4 shows correlation values of wives between adjustment areas (health, home, social, marital, emotional and financial) and life satisfaction areas (mental, job social, marital and family). The result shows that there is a highly significant positive correlation between adjustment and life satisfaction areas for wives. It shows that wives are positively affected in these areas. The p-value less than .05 indicate that the result is not due to chance. The null hypothesis is rejected.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions: The result concluded that the couples adjustment and life satisfaction areas are showing significant differences between middle-age husbands and wives. The result depicts that there is significant correlation relation between couples adjustment and life satisfaction.

Suggestions for couples better mid-age adjustments:

1. Give freedom to your spouse
2. Being a good listener
3. Care for family
4. Supportive nature
5. Preplanning and readiness for financial ups and downs
6. Free time and recreational activities
7. Abstinance from vices
8. Positive attitude and confidence on decisions
9. Including family members in decisions
10. Taking decisions with poise and broad view
11. Being flexible in accepting others desires and liking
12. Avoid from being too much ambitious or miser
13. Avoid being strict disciplinarian

Suggestions for family members and children:

1. Give mid-age couples due respect and attention
2. Family members should be supportive towards mid-age physiological and emotional changes
3. Frequent visits to parents by children

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Anderson T. B., McCulloch B. J. (1993). Conjugal support: factor structure for older husbands and wives. *J Gerontol.* 48(3), 133-42.
- [2] Carstensen, L. L., Gottman, J. M., Levenson, R. W. (1995). Emotional behavior in long-term marriage. *Psychology and Aging*, 10(1), 140-9.
- [3] Gorchoff, S. M., John, O. P., Helson, R. (2008). Contextualizing change in marital satisfaction during middle age an 18-year longitudinal study. *Psychological Science*, 19(11), 1194-1200.
- [4] Goel, S., Narang, D. K. (2012). Gender differences in marital adjustment, mental health and frustration reactions during middle age. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 1(3), 42-49.
- [5] Henry, N. J., Berg, C. A., Smith, T. W., & Florsheim, P. (2007). Positive and negative characteristics of marital interaction and their association with marital satisfaction in middle- aged and older couples. *Psychology and aging*, 22(3), 428-441.
- [6] Jennifer, A. Volsky, Rushton (1998). *Intimacy, Marital Satisfaction, and Sexuality in Mature Couples*. Thesis Concordia University Montréal, QuSbec, Canada.
- [7] Kashiwagi, K., Hirayama, J. (2003). Marital norm, reality and satisfaction in middle-aged couples: why are wives less satisfied than husbands? *ShinrigakuKenkyu*. [Article in Japanese], 74(2), 122-30.
- [8] Lavalekar, A. (2007). Gender wise comparison on emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction. *Gender and Behaviour*, 5(2), 1388-1405.

- [9] Pasupathi, M., Carstensen, L. L., Levenson, R. W., & Gottman, J. M. (1999). Responsive listening in long-married couples: a psycholinguistic perspective. *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior*, 23(2), 173-193.
- [10] Shiota, M. N., Levenson, R. W. (2007). Birds of a feather don't always fly farthest: similarity in big five personality predicts more negative marital satisfaction trajectories in long-term marriages. *Psychology and Aging*, 22(4), 666-675.
- [11] Schmitt, M., Kliegel, M., Shapiro, A. (2007). Marital interaction in middle and old age: a predictor of marital satisfaction? *International Journal of Aging & Human Development*, 65(4), 283-300.
- [12] Story, T. N., Berg, C. A., Smith, T. W., Beveridge, R., Henry, N. J., Pearce, G. (2007). Age, marital satisfaction, and optimism as predictors of positive sentiment override in middle-aged and older married couples. *Psychology and Aging*, 22(4), 719-727.
- [13] Windsor, T. D., Butterworth, P. (2010). Supportive, aversive, ambivalent, and indifferent partner evaluations in midlife and young-old adulthood.

*Journals of Gerontology. Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 10.1093/geronb/gbq016.s

#### AUTHORS

**First Author** – Shweta Nema, Research Scholar Department of Home Science Banasthali University, [snmprj@gmail.com](mailto:snmprj@gmail.com)

**Second Author** – Prof. Indu Bansal, Dean Faculty of Home Science Banasthali University, [indubnsl@yahoo.com](mailto:indubnsl@yahoo.com)

**Correspondence Author** – Shweta Nema, Research Scholar Department of Home Science Banasthali University, [snmprj@gmail.com](mailto:snmprj@gmail.com)