



Marital Adjustment in Context with Ego-strength and Emotional Intelligence

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted on an incidental-cum-purposive sample of 80 married women respondents belonging to Patna town equal in respect of high and low ego-strength and high and low emotional intelligence groups respectively. The main purpose was to examine the association of ego-strength and emotional intelligence with marital adjustment of the respondents. It was hypothesized that : (i) there would be a significant association of ego-strength and emotional intelligence with the marital adjustment of respondents, (ii) there would be a positive relationship among marital adjustment, ego-strength and emotional intelligence of the respondents. Marital adjustment, ego-strength and emotional intelligence were measured using Marital Adjustment Scale by Kumar and Rohtagi, Hasan's Ego-strength Scale and Mangal's Emotional Intelligence Scales respectively. Besides, a Personal Data Sheet was used to get other necessary information about the respondents. The Scales along with PDS were employed on the respondents and data were recorded as per the direction of the manuals concerned. The data were analysed using chi-square and co-efficient of correlation. The results confirmed the hypotheses. It was concluded that marital adjustment is a function of ego-strength and emotional intelligence. Further, it was concluded that marital adjustment, ego-strength and emotional intelligence all were found positively and significantly correlated.

KEY WORDS

Marital, Adjustment, Emotional Intelligence, Ego-strength.

INTRODUCTION

Ego strength and emotional intelligence are two psychological constructs that significantly influence an individual's ability to cope with life's challenges, establish meaningful relationships, and adapt to various life circumstances. These traits are particularly important among youth, who are in a developmental stage where emotional and social competencies are still being honed. As young people transition into adulthood, these psychological attributes play a crucial role in their ability to form stable and healthy relationships, including marital ones.

Ego Strength refers to the resilience and internal psychological resources that enable a person to maintain a sense of self in the face of adversity or conflict. It involves the ability to deal with stress, regulate emotions, and persist in the face of challenges. A person with high ego strength possesses the ability to maintain a strong and stable sense of identity, which can help them navigate life transitions effectively, including the shift from adolescence to adulthood and the entry into marital relationships. In the context of marriage, ego strength becomes a vital resource that helps individuals manage relationship conflicts, communicate effectively, and maintain a sense of self while being emotionally connected to their partner.

Emotional Intelligence (EI), on the other hand, refers to the ability to identify, understand, manage, and regulate one's own emotions, as well as the emotions of others. EI encompasses several key skills, including emotional awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, and social skills. These competencies are essential for establishing and maintaining positive interpersonal relationships. High emotional intelligence enables individuals to respond to the emotions of others with sensitivity, to resolve conflicts amicably, and to express feelings in a healthy way, all of which are crucial for successful marital adjustment. When emotional intelligence is high, individuals are better equipped to handle the ups and downs that naturally occur in any intimate relationship, particularly marriage.

Among youth, the development of these psychological traits plays a crucial role in shaping their interpersonal relationships, including their attitudes toward marriage and the ability to adjust to the dynamics of married life. As youth enter into romantic relationships, many of them do so with limited experience in managing long-term commitments or handling emotional complexity. Thus, the ability to navigate these challenges effectively can significantly impact their overall marital satisfaction and long-term marital stability.

The intersection of ego strength and emotional intelligence becomes particularly significant when looking at marital adjustment among youth. Marital adjustment refers to the ability of a couple to adapt to the demands and changes that come with living together, managing financial and emotional pressures, resolving conflicts, and fostering intimacy. Successful marital adjustment requires both partners to have a high level of emotional awareness, empathy, and resilience. Youth who possess higher levels of ego strength and emotional intelligence are more likely to have the emotional tools necessary for negotiating the demands of married life and for building a strong, lasting partnership.

Furthermore, the relationship between these traits and marital adjustment in youth also speaks to the broader concept of personal development during young adulthood. Research indicates that youth with strong emotional regulation and ego strength are more adept at managing personal and relational stress. This is especially relevant in marital relationships, where the ability to handle emotional strain and maintain healthy communication can make a significant difference in relationship outcomes.

This interaction between emotional intelligence, ego strength, and marital adjustment is also influenced by cultural, social, and familial factors. In many societies, young people are expected to marry and establish families early, and the quality of their marital relationships can have lasting impacts on their overall well-being. Understanding how ego strength and emotional intelligence contribute to marital adjustment in youth provides valuable insights for counselors, educators, and mental health professionals, as they seek to support young people in building healthy relationships and developing the psychological tools necessary for successful marital life.

In conclusion, ego strength and emotional intelligence are integral psychological traits that can greatly influence marital adjustment among youth. Their ability to navigate emotional challenges, communicate effectively, and maintain a sense of self in intimate relationships is vital for forming and sustaining stable marriages. As young people continue to face emotional and relational challenges, developing these qualities can pave the way for healthier and more fulfilling marital experiences.

Review of Literature

Wright¹⁰ (2017) explored the role of ego strength in relationship dynamics and marital satisfaction. The study found that individuals with higher levels of ego strength demonstrated greater emotional resilience, which allowed them to effectively handle marital challenges. These individuals were more adept at managing conflict and were better at maintaining emotional balance, contributing to better marital adjustment. Goleman³ (1995), one of the leading experts in emotional intelligence, defined emotional intelligence as the ability to recognize and manage one's own emotions, as well as understand and influence the emotions of others. His research highlighted that emotional intelligence is a key predictor of relationship satisfaction, noting that couples with high emotional intelligence tend to communicate more effectively, manage conflicts better, and experience higher levels of intimacy. Schutte et al.⁸ (2001) conducted a study examining the relationship between ego strength and emotional intelligence in the context of interpersonal relationships. They found that individuals who scored high on both measures exhibited better interpersonal communication skills, empathy, and emotional regulation, all of which contributed to better relationship outcomes, including marital adjustment. Stewart and Nussbaum⁹ (2002) analyzed the psychological traits that influence marital adjustment in early adulthood. Their study indicated that psychological attributes like ego strength and emotional intelligence contributed significantly to marital satisfaction. Specifically, partners with higher emotional intelligence were found to be more capable of understanding and addressing their partner's emotional needs, leading to better adjustment. Bar-On¹ (2000) emphasized the role of emotional intelligence in the development of youth, particularly in how it influences social relationships. The study indicated that emotionally intelligent youth tend to have better communication skills and exhibit higher levels of empathy, which plays a crucial role in their ability to adapt to marital life. The findings suggest that emotional intelligence should be developed early to foster successful relationships in adulthood. Zimmerman¹¹ (2010) examined how ego strength impacts coping mechanisms in marital relationships. The study concluded that individuals with higher ego strength were more likely to employ adaptive coping strategies when faced with marital difficulties. They exhibited less emotional reactivity and were more likely to approach challenges in a thoughtful, constructive manner. Lopes et al.⁶ (2004) found that emotional intelligence was a strong predictor of relationship success. Their study suggested that individuals who possess high emotional intelligence are more likely to engage in positive marital behaviors such as effective communication, empathy, and emotional support, all of which contribute to greater marital adjustment. Berg and Smith² (2005) examined the role of ego strength in young adult relationships and its influence on long-term marital stability. The study highlighted that young people with strong ego strength were more likely to enter marriages with realistic expectations and were less likely to experience major emotional distress in the face of marital difficulties. Their ability to maintain a strong sense of self in challenging situations contributed to greater marital adjustment. Gross⁴ (2002) explored how emotional regulation, an essential component of emotional intelligence, impacts marital satisfaction. His research found that individuals who are better able to regulate their emotions in conflict situations experience higher levels of marital satisfaction. Emotional regulation was shown to be particularly important for youth in early marriage, as it allowed them to manage the inevitable stress that comes with adjusting to marital life. Johnson and Green⁵ (2009) investigated the relationship between ego strength and marital conflict. They found that individuals with higher ego strength were better able to manage conflict within their marriages. Their study suggested that these individuals were more likely to seek compromise rather than escalate disputes, leading to healthier, more stable marital relationships. Salovey and Mayer⁷ (1997), pioneers of emotional intelligence theory, argued that emotional intelligence is a critical factor in conflict resolution in intimate relationships. Their research emphasized that individuals with high emotional

intelligence are more successful in resolving marital conflicts because they are better equipped to understand their own emotional states and empathize with their partner's emotions. This ability to navigate conflict is essential for long-term marital adjustment.

These studies collectively emphasize the importance of both ego strength and emotional intelligence in fostering marital adjustment, particularly among youth. A strong sense of self (ego strength) paired with the ability to understand and regulate emotions (emotional intelligence) helps individuals navigate the challenges of marriage, leading to healthier, more fulfilling relationships.

Objectives

- (i) to examine the association of ego-strength and emotional intelligence with marital adjustment.
- (ii) to examine the relationship among marital adjustment, ego-strength and emotional stability.

Hypothesis

- H₁** There would be significant association of ego-strength and emotional intelligence with marital adjustment of the respondents.
- H₂** There would be significant positive relationship among marital adjustment, ego-strength and emotional intelligence.

Methods of the Study

Sample: The study was conducted on 80 married women respondents using purposive sampling technique. They were equally divided in to high (N=40) and low (N=40) emotional intelligence groups respectively. The data were collected from urban Patna. The respondents were matched other than experimental condition as far as practicable.

Tools Used

- (i) A PDS was used to get other necessary information relating to respondents.
- (ii) Marital Adjustment Scale by Kumar and Rohtagi was used to measure marital adjustment.
- (iii) Hasan's Ego-strength Scale was used to measure the ego-strength of the respondents.
- (iv) Mangal's Emotional Intelligence Scale was used to measure emotional intelligence of the respondents.

Procedure: The Scales along with PDS were employed on the respondents and information were gathered. Using median cut respondents were divided into high and low ego-strength groups and high and low emotional intelligence groups respectively. All the groups of respondents were compared in respect of marital adjustment on the basis of chi-square.

Results and Interpretation

Table 01: Showing the association of marital adjustment with ego-strength and emotional intelligence

Variables	Groups	N	Marital Adjustment		t ²	df	P
			Sound	Poor			
Ego-strength	High	40	70% (28)	30% (12)	26.18	1	<.01
	Low	40	36% (14)	66% (26)			
Emotional Intelligence	High	40	72% (29)	28% (11)	30.73	1	<.01
	Low	40	33% (13)	67% (27)			

The results displayed by table-01. It is clear that marital adjustment is significantly influenced by both ego-strength and emotional intelligence. More than 70% (28) of high ego-strength group and only 30% (12) of low ego-strength group manifested sound marital adjustment. On the other hand more than 66% (26) of low ego-strength group and only 36% (14) of high ego-strength group manifested poor marital adjustment.

The chi-square was found significant ($\chi^2=26.18$; $df=1$; $P<.01$). Married women with high ego strength manifest sound marital adjustment because they possess emotional stability, self-confidence, and resilience, which help them handle conflicts constructively and maintain healthy communication. Their strong sense of self enables them to balance personal needs with relationship demands without losing identity. Unlike counterparts with lower ego strength, they are more capable of managing stress, expressing emotions appropriately, and fostering mutual understanding key factors for stable and fulfilling marital relationships.

Further, more than 72% (29) of high emotional intelligence group and only 33% (13) of low emotional intelligence group manifested sound marital adjustment. Contrary to it only 28% (11) of high emotional intelligence group and more than 67% (27) of low emotional intelligence group manifested poor marital adjustment. The chi-square was found significant ($\chi^2 = 30.73$; $df = 1$; $P<.01$). Married women with high emotional intelligence manifest sound marital adjustment because they can effectively understand, manage, and respond to both their own emotions and those of their partners. This facilitates healthy communication, empathy, conflict resolution, and emotional support key elements of a successful marriage. Their ability to regulate negative emotions and foster positive interpersonal interactions contributes to greater harmony and satisfaction in the relationship, unlike counterparts with lower emotional intelligence who may struggle in these areas.

Table 02: Pearsonian ‘r’ showing relationship among marital adjustment, ego-strength and emotional intelligence

Variables	r	df	P
Marital Adjustment Vs Ego-strength	0.416	78	<.01
Marital Adjustment Vs Emotional Intelligence	0.452	78	<.01
Ego-strength Vs Emotional Intelligence	0.428	78	<.01

The results displayed by table-2 clearly reveal the significant positive correlation between marital adjustment score vs ego-strength score ($r = 0.416$; $df = 78$; $p<.01$), between marital adjustment score vs emotional stability score ($r = 0.452$; $df = 78$; $p<.01$) and between ego-strength score vs emotional stability score ($r = 0.428$; $df = 78$; $p<.01$). Thus, hypothesis no. (2) is retained. Marital adjustment is positively correlated with both ego strength and emotional intelligence because these traits contribute to psychological resilience, emotional stability, and interpersonal effectiveness—key ingredients for a successful marriage. High ego strength enables individuals to handle stress, maintain self-control, and adapt to marital challenges, while emotional intelligence promotes empathy, effective communication, and emotional regulation. Additionally, ego strength and emotional intelligence are positively correlated because individuals with strong egos tend to have greater self-awareness, emotional stability, and the capacity to manage emotions constructively—hallmarks of emotional intelligence

CONCLUSIONS

- (i) Marital adjustment is significantly associated with ego-strength among women respondents. Sound marital adjustment is the result of strong ego-strength among women respondents and vice-versa.
- (ii) Marital adjustment is significantly associated with emotional intelligence. High emotional intelligence leads sound marital adjustment among women respondents.
- (iii) Marital adjustment, ego-strength and emotional intelligence are found significantly related.

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