

# Correlates of Life Satisfaction and Adjustment among Middle Aged Married Couples

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Received: May 14, 2018

Accepted: June 16, 2018

## ABSTRACT

*Middle age is one of the most imperative and researched period of individual life. This is moment of transitions in conditions of family farm duties, physical health changes, social interests and hobbies, etc. Present time couples relationship and adjustment also sees ups and downs. Till now a lot of researchers have conducted studies on middle life adjustments and life satisfaction of middle aged married couples. This literature review is an effort to examine the correlates which play important role in mid aged married couples adjustment and life satisfaction*

**Keywords:** Health, Social, Emotional Adjustment, Middle Aged Couples.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Capability, maturity, responsibility and sustainability are important features in middle age. Middle Age is such a stage of life when life patterns are modified in many ways to establish adaptation in a new lifestyle. People of this age want to enjoy satisfaction with the success, family and social life they have received in their lives, as well as planning for the future and look forward to their children's success and planning for old age. At the time of middle ages, the power of the young generation, the power of freedom and decision making is also considered. Middle age is such a stage when people are fully prepared towards the challenges, expectations and liabilities and face a new set and also make many agreements as well. There may be other aspects related to life such as someone who has to adapt to changes like parents' crisis or face the untimely death of the spouse, etc.

Today it is difficult to define middle adulthood in older adults because there are substantial differences in behavior and attitude at this point. Collins's Dictionary define middle age, usually middle age is between 40 and 60 years of age. But the prominent social scientist Eric Eriksson sees it after a while and defines mid-age between 40 and 65 years. The Middle adulthood starts with one transition (40-45), followed by life structure (45-50). This structure is re-evaluated (50-55) and ends in a final life structure (55-60).

People have made some alternatives in some directions related to life, because they often do not feel the freedom to change their life. Whenever a crisis occurs in life, then often make decisions about changes. Those people who see anger, despair, hatred, etc. feel less optimistic in this middle age. By this time of age, many marriages have also endured many changes, such as more romantic, idealistic or compromise.

## II. MID-AGE ADJUSTMENTS

It is important to adjust naturally with changes in physiologically and mentally in middle age. There are many challenges in life that should be fought and successfully progressed. At this age some individuals have to face difficulties in setting up adjustments. Following are some of the important changes and adjustments in the Middle Age era.

### A. Physical / Health changes and adjustments

In this age, hair loss and bleeding, joints pain, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis, wrinkle appearance on the face, muscles-fat makeup etc. is common occurrences. These changes are natural. Lots of people of this age may feel weak, there are problems of gastro-intestines, insomnia and often feeling tired, pain and dental caries etc. can be. Today, with better medical and nutritional benefits of progressive societies, people feel more connected and young than in the past.

Changes occur in the physical and reproductive work of individuals. Some people may have depression due to sex drive and loss of sexual attraction. This phase of life can reveal mood swings, depression, self criticism, negligence towards the business, hostility. Some people of this age develop an interest in cultural activities. For example: Participating in concerts, lectures, religious programs, reading, writing, painting, social work etc.

### B. Intimacy and behavioral changes

According to Rahmani, Khoi, et al (2009), marital satisfaction is importantly related to sexual gratification. Accordingly this, couples who have established proper sexual relationship in marital life can get more marital satisfaction. Another discovery, Lorenz, et al. (2006) also found in his research that the people satisfied with sexual relations were committed to being satisfied and happy with their marriage, and higher marital quality helped to reduce marital instability. In the research of Heiman, Long et al (2011), found that the relationship satisfaction in most men depends on health, physical intimacy and sexual activity, while doing sexual acts only in women is the prediction of relationship satisfaction. In a combination of middle age couples, a combination of anxiety and immaturity will lead the members of the couple to potentially reach more emotionally-protected areas than conflict-related subjects, in order to limit exchanges that cause the arguments

### **C. Changes in family relations and adjustment**

At present, marriage has become a struggle for some families. Marriage struggle in this phase can either take the form of domestic violence or take the form of separation. In the middle age of life, husband or wife should be closer to each other than in the early years of their married life, but often they are distant. For middle age women, this life span is considered a 'empty nest' period, which is difficult for them to face. It can be a painful time for some couples. At this time when domestic responsibilities are reduced and there is no oriented activity for the family then boredom can be felt by many people.

At middle age a person needs more attention and additional support as children are now adult and parents are very old. Late middle-aged people will also have to prepare for their retirement.

### **D. Financial Adjustments**

Financial decision occurs beside the background of present family arrangement, existing and professed future wants, and rival demands placed on partial resources. Because of high weight on expenses, matching between the costs of alive, paying for children's college education, rising possessions like house, vehicles, arrange for marriage expenses of children and funding retreat, mid-adults believe like on a treadmill one can never get off.

### **E. Emotional Adjustment**

Emotional behaviors articulated by couple be different as a purpose of age, gender and marital satisfaction. The strength of the middle-age familiarity crisis depends on the need-satisfaction of the connection and the achievement in the earlier stages of understanding. Older adults are influenced toward the positive aspect of close relations (Story, Nathan et. al 2007). According to Pasupathi, Monisha et. al.(1999), sensitively positive and receptive listening is one of the key to successful conflict resolution in marriage . Carl Jung described the developmental assignment of the second half of life as the need to expand neglected inside resources and improve the inner life which may result in the hardship of the inner life - the world of feelings, values and inner creativity. Stoppage to admit the changes may lead to grave shocking situations like mental illness, use of drugs, addiction problems, alcoholism and at times suicide or murder.

## **III. LIFE SATISFACTION**

Life Satisfaction is measured from the viewpoint of individual well-being which refers to people's self assessment of their life. Apart from lots of challenges there are also key benefits for the relationship in the middle age couples. A large amount of mid-adults now a day enjoy moderately good health and stabilized assets. This can be an chance for couples to chase their own benefit and to use more time together and get more life satisfaction. Blanchflower and Oswald (2008) reported a significant quadratic effect of age on the pleasure. Bigger work demands, parenting adolescents, empty nesting, helpful for aging parents, economic issues and retreat are just some of the concern that boost pressure during mid-life.

As far as middle age is afraid subsequent parameters can be taken into description to explain the life satisfaction:

### **A. Mental**

A close marital relationship can be viewed as a considerable interpersonal source across the adult life extent, instead of potentially the warmest type of emotional support right through the adulthood years. Conjugal support is a multidimensional build consisting of three factors: influential support, emotional support and confiding (Anderson & McCulloch 1993). Physical health of mid-adult couples is connected with their personality of marital affiliation (Bookwala 2005) more than and above marital status.

### **B. Job**

Work fulfillment is at its hit the highest point in mid life years and the quality of work presentation remains high, even with refuse in some cognitive or substantial skills. Patterns of work and work fulfillment do vary between men and women in middle adulthood. Men are additional expected to improve their level of satisfaction in situations where change is probable. Women have a propensity to take out or connect in

argumentative with co-workers. At rest, women are better able to balance their displeasure with areas of satisfaction.

### C. Social

In the development of socialization, adults put together for a switch in role; it also involves identify the fresh norms and opportunity linked with such new communal role as in-laws and grandparents. Adults of this age have extra worry for laws, society, and cultural values and controlled rejection against too rapid cultural change.

### D. Marital

It is probable that middle-aged partners' classification of successful problem-solving strategies donate to the sense that they have control over their relationship. Skilled negotiation (an approach to solving problems that involves argument of the partner about a matter, followed by a stage during which the confront spouse works to re-establish agreement), careful an effective skill for marital problem-solving and is expert more frequently by wives than by husbands.

### E. Family

Middle age also is referred as the mid-life “pinch,” or the “sandwich generation” as family relations in the middle age expands in both guidelines: affairs with grown children and relationships with aging parents. The family position at this stage involves most amounts of support given in both instructions in the generational chain, as well as maximum liability for maintaining affection bonds.

## IV. LITERATURE REVIEWS

The researcher reviewed accessible literature to know more of middle age realities, which have been presented below-

1. Croh, Antonuichi et al. (1989) did a research on White and Black Women in Middlelife (40-64 age group) in which men were studied. Samples were prepared from two national surveys, including four groups of 186 white women, 202 white men, 254 black women, and 169 black men. As a result it was seen that job satisfaction is positively related to life satisfaction for all four groups and happiness for white women and black men. Personal income in black women and white men is positively related to alleged control and related to life satisfaction for white women. As a result, the business position is positively related to the apparent control for white and black women; the role stress relates to life satisfaction between negative men and for pleasure among black women.

2. Anderson and McCulloch (1993) took a sample of 298, which included older married dyadas who participated in Aging Couple Study. This research was used to confirm confirmative factor analysis techniques and to test marital support in a series of nested measurement models at a personal level. In this, two research questions were addressed: (A) the feasibility of marital support as a couple's creation and (b) the dimension of social support within the marital diad. The results show that marital support was a husband or wife rather than a couple, construction. It also came to the conclusion that marital support was a multi-faceted creation which included three factors: instrumental support, emotional support and trust. In addition, husbands and wives understood the dimensions of marital support separately.

3 Shake (1999) felt health status in Chinese married couples and researched them with a sample of 378. The results of the research show that marital adjustment and marital satisfaction were related to the symptoms of medieval crisis, life satisfaction and perceived health. It also contains PTA that relations between marital quality and health measures are bilateral in nature. But marital quality did not predict changes in the symptoms of medieval crisis among husbands and wives. But marital quality has predicted a change in health status in wives but not in husbands. The results also show that over time, mental health influenced the marital adjustment of wives, but not husband's.

4. Scoveron e. a. (2000) conducted a research study involving one hundred eighteen couples living in the large metropolitan area to participate in the study. In this research, two groups were formed, in which the average age of female participants was 46.72 years and 48.56 years for men. Based on the level of joints discrimination, this American study found 74% of total marital adjustment in the husband's marital adjustment score and 61% of the difference in the wife marital adjustment score. Due to some variation of self-score, there was considerable difference in marital adjustment. On a large scale, emotional status was specifically attributed to husband and wife for marital disputes. Unlike family system theory, actual joints were not equal to variation in comparison to random matching couples. In the end, more complementarily between couples with specific dimensions of emotional cutoff and emotional reaction ability has predicted more marital disaster.

5. Kashiwagi, Hirayama (2003) the point of this study was to explore fresh changes in marital norm and reality in middle-aged couples and how marital actuality, as apparent by oneself, was connected with their demographic variables, as well as their marital satisfaction. In this study participated 277 pairs of middle-aged, nuclear-family couples. Key findings were as follows. First, factor analysis of marital reality variables extracted three factors: love each other, respect for the husband's life style and respect for wife's life style. Second, concerning the wife's education and income, 'respect for the wife's life style' was highest among highly educated double income couples. Third, 'love each other' was the most important interpreter of marital satisfaction for both husbands and wives. Finally, 'respect for the husband's the life style' was linked with husband's satisfaction, while that for the wife's was not with wife's marital satisfaction.
6. In US based study on 729 respondents Bookwala (2005) suggested that marital quality indices accounted for a significant value of explained dissent in physical health. Nearly all, higher levels of negative spousal behaviors exclusively contributed to physical health, predicting more physical symptoms, persistent health problems and physical disability and poorer perceived health. The incidence of negative spousal behaviors was constantly connected with poorer physical health.
7. White and Myers (2006) revealed in the study that women (N = 224) between 35 and 65 years old participated in a study that measured the relationship among chronological age, subjective age, wellness, and life satisfaction. According to study women whose subjective age was less than or equal to their chronological age reported better wellness; total wellness was a significant predictor of life satisfaction.
10. Karhan (2009) in his research included 122 Turkish couples who had expressed interest in participating in research. In this, 40 pairs of the worst test scores were randomized in the study and control groups. Before the introduction of the research, no differences were made on the test score between the two groups ( $P > 0.05$ ). After participating in research, the study group's test scores were better in the total than the control group ( $p < 0.001$ ).
11. A research by Alder (2010) studied to determine whether there is a relationship between marital satisfaction and independent variables of age, education level and girlfriend's length. Respondents (N = 60) needed to complete online surveys about their experiences in their marriage. As a result, there was no statistically significant relationship between matrimonial satisfaction, age, education level and girlfriend's length. However, the results showed that there was a negative relationship between post-engagement's girlfriend and diadicist adjustment, which indicates that the engagement adjustment decreases as well as the matrimonial adjustment decreases.
12. Seider and Herschel (2011), in California, through a study of the middle age group (N = 82) and the old (N = 74) pairs to determine whether the 15-minute conflict between the husband engaged in the conversation Unbalanced emotional sequence of inquiry related to marital satisfaction. In this research it also examined whether the age and gender controlled the relationship between separate emotional sequences and marital satisfaction. This research focuses on the sequences of discrete emotions started by the three former emotions associated with disturbing marriage (anger, contempt and sadness). Natijo disclosed important relationships between discrete emotions and marital satisfaction to examine 39 different emotional scenes. Conclusions indicate that the relationship between different sense sequences and marital satisfaction was not different in the form of age, but when they did, they started to be strong for the old couples. Important differences in this study showed how discrete emotional sequences are related to marital satisfaction.
13. Berg, Cynthia et al. (2011) conducted a study based on 300 middle-aged and older couples, in which the measures of the notion of cognitive ability, marital satisfaction, perceptions of a mistake work and decided to associate their spouse. Studies show that older adults (especially men) supported cognitive compensation and mutual enjoyment and report using collaboration compared to middle-aged adults. As a result, it was seen that the major requirement for cognitive compensation was only related to less cognitive ability for older wives and greater marital satisfaction was associated with more mutual enjoyment. These two functions related to the report of more consistent use of collaboration in collaborative work and perception of reciprocal affiliation.
14. Kouros and Cummings (2011) studied in which 296 US-based couples were included and gathered information for three years on marital satisfaction, marital conflict and depressed symptoms annually. The result was found that transaction related relationships were identified between the marital satisfaction and depressed symptoms for the husband. High levels of depressed symptoms later predicted reduction in marital satisfaction and with a decrease in matrimonial satisfaction, over time, they predicted depressed symptoms. For wives, high levels of marital conflict have predicted the lateral height in depressed symptoms over time. As a result of the cross partner's findings, it indicates that husband's depressed symptoms were also related to subsequent fall in the marital satisfaction of the husbands.

15. Hassani et al. (2012) did a study in which the youngest couple were 32 years old and the oldest was 62. There was a modest satisfaction rate of 68% in this study and the emotional intelligence score was 337. In all, emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction were not linked to gender and age. The reciprocal and sympathetic aspects of many aspects of matrimonial life are meaningful to the meaning of gender in relation to data. It was seen in the study that apart from many aspects of emotional intelligence, there was only meaningful separation for the responsibilities between men and women in relation to data. The total score of emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction indicates that it was not meaningfully linked to gender. As a result, it was seen that there was a statistically meaningful relationship of all aspects of emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction, and 37% of marital satisfaction is estimated by emotional intelligence. As regards the result achieved, it is highly recommended in relation to the high relation between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction, that the respective academic organizations of the country should pay more attention to teaching the skills needed to increase emotional intelligence so that marriage improves and family The foundation of this will be strong

16. Ayon, Schivitz-Ezra and Palgi (2013), in their studies, evaluated the relationship between the relationship between loneliness and subjective evaluation of marital relations as well as the interpersonal relationships of married men and women. This health and retirement study is a national survey of adults over the age of 50 in the United States. Overall, 2723 couples completed this questionnaire in this study. The research result suggested that subjective evaluation of relationships with spouse plays a major role in the spirit of loneliness. According to the results received, loneliness in men and women shares mutual associations and interprets 24% and 29% variability in the loneliness given by married men and women. The results show that increasing the capitalization of someone's social life can also be beneficial for his partner. In order to reduce loneliness in married couples, intermarriage should be kept in mind as well as interpersonal relationships of married men and women, in addition to their marital relations.

17. Landis et al. (2013) which examines the relationship between behavior and satisfaction of their relationship in the old spousal dyadas. A total of 132 married couples were taken in the study, ranging between 53 and 84. The study was examined in which it found that their major dynamical rivalry strategies - a major indicator of the functional adaptation of daily stress in the marital context - were very important with the satisfaction of relations. The results show that the subjective assumption of partner's partner behavior partner was more strongly linked to their satisfaction than their self-reported support. Apart from this, personal support beliefs for marital satisfaction were more important than organizationalism. As a result, while facing the long-standing challenges of the elderly, the dadidic rejection of older adults can serve as an effective tool to stabilize the bonding effectiveness.

## V. DISCUSSION

Based on the earlier research done on the married couples of middle age group, adjustment and satisfaction in their life has also been discussed in this paper. In the research study, it has been proved that there are many factors like family environment, working conditions, social environment, financial status, marital relations, etc. which affect the adjustment of married couples and life satisfaction. . Many countries have studied these correlations in many countries and societies. But still there is a lack of a dedicated study on the factors affecting the adjustment and satisfaction of middle-aged couple in Indian perspective, keeping in mind that it needs to be addressed.

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