Human Nature Research Publisher

Research Article   http://hnpublisher.com

A Study on Marital Satisfaction among Pakistani Women; Role of Dowry and Demographics

Umm e Habiba[1] , **Anila Kamal[2]**

[1]MPhil Scholar, National Institute of Psychology, Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad
[2]Vice Chancellor, Rawalpindi Women University, Rawalpindi
Correspondence: habibabutt762@gmail.com[1]

ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study. This research investigated the impact of dowry demanded, dowry at marriage, occupational status, family system, marriage type, age at marriage, educational attainment, duration of marriage, and number of children on marital satisfaction.

Method. The Enrich Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS) was filled by 486 married women from Pakistan's Punjab area who were chosen through purposive sampling convenient technique (Fowers & Olson, 1993).

Findings. The findings demonstrated that there was a significant statistical difference between the two groups in marital satisfaction those who are being demanded by dowry and those who are not demanded dowry by their in-laws at time of marriage. Analysis on based of dowry revealed that the difference in the marital satisfaction was statistically non-significant on dowry given and without dowry given. Among the demographic factors, the impact of employment status and family system was statistically significant on marital satisfaction. Separately, we determined that the impact of age at marriage, educational attainment, marriage duration, and number of children had a non-significant impact on the marital satisfaction. Accordingly, it was demonstrated that age difference from spouse had significantly negative correlation with marital satisfaction.

Conclusion. There should be prevention of dowry system as well as stress on the proper enforcement of law against dowry traditions.

Keywords: Marital Satisfaction, Dowry, Married Women, Pakistan.

Introduction

Marriage is the most crucial of all the interpersonal relationship (Berscheid & Regan, 2005). A stable family will result from a healthy marriage. One of the essential elements of a strong, functioning family is marital satisfaction (Greef, 2000). Marital satisfaction is described by Schoen et al. (2002) is a measure of how healthy and successful a marriage is as a whole and as a representation of that. When examining all parameters of a marriage, marital satisfaction is the spouse's consciously felt sense of pleasure and fulfillment in their relationship (Chandrakanth, 2015). In today's modern era the society is changing at very faster rate. It is important to become aware of the changing trends for weddings and to watch the chattels of those trends (Gana et al., 2013).

The marital quality in Uzuncakmak and Yilmaz (2021) was calculated by a level of dyadic agreement, intimacy, dyadic satisfaction and unity between couples. In Pakistan, the general factors that play a decisive role in deciding marital satisfaction in society include contact, partner education, gender satisfaction, dual income, comprehension, relationships with in-laws and compromise (Faisal & Sari, 2018).

The dowry, which has grown to encompass a significant wealth transfer from the bride's family to the groom's, has become a key negotiation point in marriages (Sen & Zinta, 2018; Thomas et al., 2015; Anderson & Ray, 2010; Khanal & Sen, 2020). Only those women are highly esteemed today, especially in Pakistan, who provide the groom's family with a substantial dowry and satisfy all of their demands (Raja et al., 2017; Sharma et al., 2005). Furthermore, the worth of dowries has been quickly increasing, resulting in the possibility that the costs of girls' marriages may be economically disastrous to their parents (Bhagat, 2016). The parents of the bride may also presume that a sizable dowry is necessary to guarantee that their daughter would be properly taken care of in her new home. A daughter-in-law with a huge dowry may be given preferred treatment by her in-law parents, who may give her less household chores, greater autonomy, and more polite treatment (Rastogi & Therly, 2006).

A substantial body of research has also been done on the demographic factors of marriage quality (Rogers & Amato, 2000). Smadi (2017) noted that marital satisfaction may vary across different cultures, a study by Sinha (2016) in India indicated that there is a significant difference in marital adjustment due to age and shows no difference in terms of employment level. According to prior research, demographic factors that significantly influence marital satisfaction include the number of children, level of education, personal income, and income of husband (Guo & Huang, 2005; Pimental, 2000; Trudel, 2002; Zainah et al., 2012).

There has been a dramatic increase in the number of women entering the workforce in past few decades. It is widely acknowledged that working married women have significantly altered their home lives (Vaghela, 2014). Numerous studies have shown that married women who are employed do better in their marriages than those who are not (Rani, 2013; Vaghela, 2014). The relationship between the length of a marriage and marital satisfaction appears to be inconsistent, and is often U-shaped or negative (Wendorf et al., 2010). One the one hand, it appears that partners become increasingly similar to one another as a relationship progresses, which promotes relationship permanence and togetherness (Anderson, 2003). On the other side, partners may generally experience lower levels of reported satisfaction if their sexual desire and, consequently, sexual satisfaction decline (Schroder & Schmiedeberg, 2015).

Pakistan is a collectivist-oriented nation, and marriage rituals and connotation reflect a pattern that is very dissimilar from that of the West. Marriage in Pakistan symbolizes the joining together of two families. Marriage is viewed as the uniting of two families, not simply two individuals, hence it is more of a communal or familial affair than an intimate one (Sonpar, 2005). Marriage sustainability and permanency are crucial to the couple, as well as to their family and society at large (Sonpar, 2005).

The researchers anticipates that this study will help further investigate prior findings and add to the body of literature in this field given the wide variety of findings that have been reached. Additionally, the researcher assumed that social workers and relational therapists will be able to make therapeutic and clinical implications from the results. Taking into account the current trend of rising divorce rates, late marriages, increase in dowry demands, dowry related abuse researchers attempted a comparative investigation among those who came with dowry at marriage and those who came without dowry at marriage. Researchers carefully investigated at whether the demographic factors in the study have an effect on marital satisfaction. The variables of the study included occupational status, family system, marriage type, age at marriage, level of educational attainment, marriage duration, and number of children.

In this study, researchers classified those women who came with dowry at their marriage as "*dowry at marriage*" and those who came without dowry at their marriage as "no dowry at marriage."

The Present Study Hypotheses

For the purpose of this investigation, researchers initially had four hypotheses in consideration. First, researchers investigated for any significant variations in the marital satisfaction of those who were being demanded dowry by their in-laws and those who were not being demanded dowry by their in-laws. Second, researchers examined if there was a statistically significant difference in women's marital satisfaction based on of dowry given at marriage or not given at marriage. Third, researchers examined whether the demographic factors age difference from spouse at marriage, educational attainment, employment status, marriage duration, family system, the number of children and the marriage duration had a significant impact on marital satisfaction. Finally, researchers investigated whether demographic factors and marital satisfaction and were associated.

Method

Sample Characteristics

486 participants from Punjab province of Pakistan made up the entire sample. Sample consisted of married women. Among total sample, 75 married women were being demanded dowry by their in-laws and 406 married women came with dowry at their marriage. There were 237 non-working married women and 249 working married women. The average age of married women was 23.03 years (SD: 3.00), while the average age of their husbands at marriage was 25.95 years (SD: 3.37). The participants' marriage lengths ranged from 1 to 7 years, with a mean of 4.65 years (SD = 2.04).

Researchers categorized the level of education as primary (grade 5), middle (grade 8), and matric (grade 10) level 1; intermediate (grade 12) level 2; graduation (grade 14) level 3; and higher education (grade 16 or above) level 4. Regarding the educational attainment of the women who came with dowry at marriage ($n = 406$), 27.8% had a level-4 education, whereas 17.7%, had level 3 education, 21.7% had level 2 education, and 32.8% had level 1 education of the women who came with dowry at their marriage. Those women who came without dowry at marriage ($n = 80$), level-4 education consisted of 33.8%, level-3 education consisted of 13.8%, level-2 education consisted of 18.8%, and level-1 educational attainment consisted of 33.8%.

An employment-level classification showed that among the working married women ($n = 249$), 83.5% came with dowry at their marriage and only 16.5% came without dowry at their marriage. This classification is also same among non-working married women ($n = 237$). The mean age of marriage for those who came with dowry at their marriage ($M = 23.03$, $SD = 3.10$), compared with the mean age of marriage for those who came without dowry at marriage ($M = 23.05$, $SD = 3.15$). The mean of number of children for the working married women was ($M = 2.12$, $SD = 1.03$) and for non-working married women ($M = 2.02$, $SD = 1.13$).

Measures

ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale. Researchers measured marital satisfaction with the ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS) Urdu version because of language difficulty for the present sample. Idealistic Distortion subscale was translated by (Shabbir, 2019) and Marital Satisfaction subscale was translated by (Iqbal, 2013). The ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS) is an 15-items self-report measure that assess a person overall personal assessment and level of satisfaction with his or her marriage (Fowers & Olson, 1989). The participants were asked 15 questions related to their marital relationship on five-point rating scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Idealistic distortion subscale (IDs; 5 items; theoretical scale score range: 5–25), marital satisfaction (MSS; 10 items; range: 10–50). In the EMS scale, a higher score implies greater marital satisfaction. The EMS Scale offers a one-item sample of the ten marital satisfaction categories on the most significant dimensions of marital satisfaction indicate the EMS scale's content validity (Fournier et al., 1983).

Demographic Variables

Through the use of a demographic data sheet created by the researcher, information on demographic characteristics was obtained. The factors examined included the age gap from spouse at marriage, educational attainment, employment status, marriage duration, marriage type, family system, number of children, and length of marriage.

Procedure

Participants were provided with informed consent papers to review and signed if they agreed to participate in the study after their suitability for participation had been determined. The researcher responded to any queries concerning the study and their involvement. After giving their approval, study participants received questionnaires to complete. Participants were asked to give accurate responses, and their anonymity was guaranteed. 520 questionnaires were distributed among married women. 505 questionnaires were returned by the married women, among which 19 questionnaires could not be used for further analyses as they were incomplete. Thus, 486 women were selected for the final sample of the study (237 non-working, 249 working married women. Each delivered questionnaire consisted with a stamped, addressed envelope. There was no time constraint, and the questionnaires were given out during duty hours for working married women and for non-working married women questionnaires were administered at their homes. At the end, the respondents' significant collaboration was appreciated and praised.

Method of Analysis

Researchers used the SPSS-23 software to carry out all of statistical analysis. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was the main analytical technique used in this study to assess the impact of the independent variables (age gap from spouse at marriage, educational attainment, marriage duration, number of children, and length of marriage on the dependent variables. To compare the difference in means between the two groups, researchers employed t-test (employment status, family system, marriage type). The strength of the correlation between the dependent and demographic variables was investigated using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation. For all statistical analyses, researchers employed an alpha level of .05.

Results

In total, 520 questionnaires were distributed, 505 (80%) were returned, among which 19 questionnaires could not be used for further analyses as they were incomplete. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha for the EMS scale were: EMS = .91 ($M = 58.42$, $SD = 10.33$); IDs = .82 ($M = 20.01$, $SD = 3.94$); and MS = .86 ($M = 38.40$, $SD = 6.86$; $N = 486$).

The t-test analyses confirmed first hypothesis by showing a significant difference between the marital satisfaction of the dowry at marriage and no dowry at marriage, EMS, $t(484) = -4.54$, $p < .01$ (two-tailed), $d = 0.61$; IDs, $t(484) = -4.92$, $p < .001$ (two-tailed), $d = 0.68$, and MS, $t(484) = -3.90$, $p < .01$ (two-tailed), $d = 0.52$. (Because a higher score in the EMS scales implies greater marital satisfaction, it is those women who are not being demanded dowry at time of marriage from their in-laws who appear to have better marital satisfaction levels). The EMS subscales' mean scores and t-values for both who are being demanded dowry by their in-laws and who are not demanded dowry by their in-laws are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: *Comparison between Dowry demanded and No Dowry demanded by in-laws in the ENRICH Marital Satisfaction (EMS) Scales*

	Dowry demanded			No dowry demanded			
	n	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*t*-value
EMS	75	52.76	12.09	411	59.45	9.64	-4.54**
IDs	75	17.60	4.79	411	20.46	3.60	-4.92***
MS	75	35.16	8.05	411	38.99	6.46	-3.90**

∗∗ p < .01. ∗∗∗ p < .001. df = 484

Table 2: *Comparison between Dowry at marriage and not dowry at marriage in the ENRICH Marital (EMS) Scales*

	Dowry at marriage			No dowry at marriage			
	n	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*t*-value
EMS	406	58.64	10.10	80	57.31	11.45	1.05
IDs	406	20.03	3.91	80	19.94	4.10	.20
MS	406	38.60	6.69	80	37.38	7.67	1.46

Note. df = 484

Table 2 presents the average scores and t−values in EMS scales for both who came dowry at marriage and those who came without dowry at marriage. There was non-significant difference in the case of ENRICH Marital satisfaction (EMS, $t(484) = 1.05$, $p > .05$ (two-tailed), $d = .12$), idealistic distortion (IDs, $t(484) = .20$, $p > .05$ (two-tailed), $d = 0.02$), and marital satisfaction (MS, $t(484) = 1.46$, $p > .05$ (two-tailed), $d = 0.02$) between dowry at marriage and not dowry at marriage.

The independent samples t-test was used to examine the variations in marital satisfaction among married women based on their occupational status (working or non-working, family structure (nuclear vs. joint), and style of marriage (love marriage vs. arranged marriage). Table 3 shows the results.

Table 3:

Independent samples t-test for the differences in ENRICH marital satisfaction

	n	EMS		t(484)	ID		t(484)	MS		t(484)
		M	*SD*		*M*	*SD*		*M*	*SD*	
Occupational status										
Working	249	57.52	10.44	-1.96	19.73	3.94	-1.63	37.79	6.97	-2.02*
Non-working	237	59.36	10.16		20.32	3.93		39.04	6.70	
Family system										
Nuclear	130	56.67	11.49	-2.10*	19.45	4.29	-1.81	37.22	7.65	-2.14*
Joint	356	59.06	9.82		20.22	3.79		38.83	6.51	
Marriage type										
Arranged marriage	402	58.48	10.39	.30	20.03	3.97	.20	38.45	6.90	.34
Love marriage	84	58.11	10.10		19.94	3.84		38.17	6.70	

As shown in Table 3, comparisons using the t-test revealed a significant difference between the marital satisfaction of the working married women and non-working married women only on one subscale, MS, $t(484) = -2.02$, $p < .05$ (two-tailed), $d = 0.18$. Enrich marital satisfaction and other subscale idealistic distortion revealed non-significant differences. There was significant difference in the case of ENRICH Marital satisfaction (EMS, $t(484) = -2.10$, $p < .05$ (two-tailed), $d = 0.22$), and marital satisfaction (MS, $t(484) = -2.14$, $p < .05$ (two-tailed), $d = 0.23$) between nuclear family system and joint family system. Marriage type revealed non-significant differences on EMS, IDs, and MS.

Effect of Independent Variables on Marital Satisfaction

For the effect of age at marriage was not significant on EMS, $F (2, 483) = .82$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.003$, IDs, $F (2, 483) = 1.52$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.006$, and MS, $F (2, 483) = 0.44$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.002$. When it was viewed separately, the effect of age at marriage was not significant on EMS, $F (2, 403) = .30$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.001$, ID, $F (2, 403) = .52$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.003$, and on MS, $F (2, 403) = .18$, $p > 0 .05$, est $\eta2 = 0.0009$, for those who came with dowry at marriage. For those who came without dowry at marriage, the effect of age at marriage was also not statistically significant on EMS, $F (2, 77) = 1.49$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.04$, ID, $F (2, 77) = 2.68$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.07$, and MS, $F (2, 77) = .90$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.02$. The effect of education was not statistically significant for any of the EMS scales for the entire sample. There was statistically non-significant effect on EMS, $F (3, 482) = .17$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.001$, IDs, $F (3, 482) = .21$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.001$, and MS, $F (3, 482) = .20$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.001$. Further analysis showed that there was no significant effect of education on the EMS, Idealistic distortion, and marital satisfaction of those who came with dowry and those who came without dowry at marriage. The effect of marriage duration was not significant on EMS, $F (2, 483) = 2.48$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.01$, IDs, $F (2, 483) = 1.30$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.005$, and MS, $F(2, 483) = 3.00$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.01$. On number of children, there was also statistically non-significant effect on EMS, $F (2, 483) = .31$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.001$, IDs, $F(2, 483) = .13$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.0005$, and MS, $F(2, 483) = .40$, $p > 0.05$, est $\eta2 = 0.002$.

Table 4: *One-way ANOVA for the differences in ENRICH Marital Satisfaction (EMS)*

	Df	*F*	*η²*	*p*
Demographic age				
EMS	2	.82	0.003	0.44
S within-group error	483	(106.84)		
ID	2	1.52	0.006	0.22
S within-group error	483	(15.51)		
MS	2	.44	0.002	0.65
S within-group error	483	(47.22)		
Education				
EMS	3	.17	0.001	0.91
S within-group error	482	(107.31)		
ID	3	.21	0.001	0.89
S within-group error	482	(15.62)		
MS	3	.20	0.001	0.90
S within-group error	482	(47.35)		
Marriage duration				
EMS	2	2.48	0.01	0.09
S within-group error	483	106.11		
ID	2	1.30	0.005	0.27
S within-group error	483	15.52		
MS	2	3.00	0.01	0.05
S within-group error	483	46.74		
No of children				
EMS	2	.31	0.001	0.74

S within-group error	483	107.07			
ID	2	.13	0.0005	0.88	
S within-group error	483	15.60			
MS	2	.40	0.002	0.67	
S within-group error	483	47.23			

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent mean square errors. S = subjects

Table 5: *One-way ANOVA for the differences in ENRICH Marital Satisfaction (EMS)*

		EMS		IDs		MS	
	n	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Age at marriage							
16-22	231	59.03	9.69	20.34	3.60	38.69	6.59
23-28	237	57.91	10.92	19.74	4.27	38.16	7.09
29-38	18	57.22	10.60	19.50	3.57	37.72	7.53
Educational attainment							
1	160	58.20	9.86	19.85	3.82	38.35	6.55
2	103	58.51	11.60	20.04	4.30	38.47	7.72
3	83	57.95	10.19	20.00	4.07	37.95	6.75
4	140	58.88	10.05	20.21	3.75	38.67	6.67
Marriage duration							
1-2 years	104	60.41	10.41	20.57	3.96	39.85	6.81
3-5 years	173	57.89	9.59	19.91	3.79	37.98	6.39
6-7 years	209	57.86	10.80	19.84	4.05	38.02	7.19
No of children							
1-2	335	58.53	10.57	20.06	4.00	38.47	7.00
3-4	140	58.01	9.79	19.89	3.84	38.11	6.55
5-6	11	60.27	10.51	20.36	3.96	39.91	6.86

Correlation Coefficients between Demographic Variables and EMS Scales

Table 6 has shown, only one demographic variable age difference from spouse had a significant negative correlation with Enrich marital satisfaction ($r = -.11$, $p < .05$) and with marital satisfaction ($r = -.05$, $p > .05$). Other demographics variables age at marriage ($r = -.12$, $p < .05$), income ($r = -.02$, $p > .05$), husband's income ($r = -.03$, $p > .05$), education ($r = .01$, $p > .05$) have a non-significant correlation with Enrich marital satisfaction scale (EMS) and both of its subscales; idealistic distortion and marital satisfaction. Further analysis showed that when viewed separately for dowry at marriage and without dowry at marriage, there was also non-significant correlation of demographics e.g, age at marriage, age difference from spouse, income, husband's income, and education with Enrich marital satisfaction and both of its subscales; idealistic distortion and marital satisfaction.

Table 6: *Correlation Coefficients between Study Variables*

	All (global)			Dowry at marriage			No dowry		
	EMS	ID	MS	EMS	ID	MS	EMS	ID	MS
Age at marriage	-.05	-.06	-.04	-.03	-.04	-.02	-.14	-.16	-.12
Age difference from spouse	-.11*	-.07	-.12*	-.06	-.04	-.08	.05	.10	.02
Income	-.02	-.02	-.02	-.01	-.01	.01	-.08	-.07	-.08
Husband's Income	-.03	-.03	-.03	-.00	.01	-.01	-.12	-.15	-.10
Education	.01	.03	.01	.05	.06	.04	-.17	-.18	-.16

*$p < .05$.

Discussion

Despite the fact that the major objective of the current research was to investigate the impact of dowry demanded, dowry given and demographic factors on marital satisfaction of those women who came with dowry at marriage and those who came without dowry at marriage. When it was investigated, researchers discovered the women's marital satisfaction varied significantly of those who are being demanded dowry by their in-laws and those who are not being demanded dowry. And in line with the findings of Parveen et al. (2019) the increase of demand dowry poses the most ongoing concern to the connection between marriages with the moral order. In practice, it exposes women to more abuse, denies the advantages of keeping one's appropriate place and good relations. The current investigation has provided indications that the women who are not being demanded dowry at marriage by their in-laws have higher ratings on each of the three scales, demonstrate higher level of marital happiness than those who are being demanded dowry by their in-laws. Despite the difference in marital satisfaction, those women who are being demanded dowry and those who are not being demanded dowry was statistically significant, it has shown the moderate effect size for EMS ($d = 0.61$), ID ($d = 0.68$), and MS ($d = 0.52$).

Then researchers examined the marital satisfaction of those women who came with dowry at marriage and those who came without dowry at marriage. Regarding the dowry-level study, the EMS, IDs, and MS scores for dowry at marriage and non-dowry at marriage did not differ statistically significantly. Only the EMS displayed a relatively little effect (d = 0.12; effect size). The remaining two subscales' effect sizes were insignificant (IDs, $d = 0.002$, MS, $d = 0.002$). The findings of present study contrast the existing literature (Anderson 2000; Ahmad et al., 2014; Chauhan, 1995; Davis et al., 2009; Srinivasan & Lee, 2004).

Among employment status, one of the independent factor, significantly impacted marital satisfaction. When examining the mean marital happiness scores in context of occupational status, non-working married women seems to have greater marital satisfaction than working women. These results are similar to a research conducted on chinese working women which indicates that employed most Chinese women hold dual or triple duties as wage earners, housekeepers, and frequently caretakers while also maintaining full-time employment (Yang, 2014; Qi & Dong, 2018). Furthermore, family system had also significant effect on marital satisfaction. When examining the mean score, women on joint family system seems to have greater marital satisfaction than women on nuclear family system. a finding reported by numerous other researches, including (Niranjan et al., 2005; Nagaraja et al., 2012; Naz et al., 2014). It may also be due to within the joint families the degree of marital satisfaction can be calculated by different criteria. Some will improve the economic situation, improve the health of a young married woman, improve family harmony, calm and understanding. Marriage type indicated non-significant differences on marital satisfaction. The findings of Myers et al. (2005) and Parker (2002), found no difference in marital happiness between those in arranged marriages and those in love marriages. In arranged marriages spouses have a similar caste, socioeconomic conditions, language grouping, similar religion, etc. that makes their marriages comfortable.

In case of age at marriage, the current study also revealed non-significant differences on marital satisfaction for those who came with dowry at marriage and for those who came without dowry at marriage. Studies that take into account the ages of the spouses tend to concentrate on the numerous developmental difficulties that couples encounter throughout their lifetimes. For instance, the pair may experience midlife crisis or "empty nest" circumstances (Brim, 2004; Henry, 2005) Therefore, despite countless changes and difficulties in life, couples must work together to sustain their love and marriage relationship (Randall & Bodenmann, 2017). When considered collectively, marital satisfaction may change with age and at various stages of a relationship. The literature cannot draw any simple predictions concerning age-related trends of marital performance (Schmitt et al., 2007).

Educational attainment also revealed non-significant differences on marital satisfaction for those who came with dowry at marriage and for those who came without dowry at marriage. Literature also

highlighted the findings concerning the relation between the marital happiness and education are not clear (Batool & Khalid, 2012). Tucker and Grady (2001) found that higher-educated spouses were only regarded as having more happy marriages with higher-educated partners and vice versa. Length of marriage indicated similar non-significant differences on marital satisfaction for dowry at marriage and no dowry at marriage. The results of the current study contradict those on the relationship between the length of a marriage and marital pleasure by (Anderson et al., 2003; Schumm & Bugaighis, 1986; Vandervorst, 2000). Furthermore, Literature highlighted instead of having more or less number of children families usually wish for sons instead of daughters because they need their heirs for the wealth and most of the women got divorced due to a wish of son by their in-laws (Mahmood et al., 2016). The results of present study on number of children also in align with the previous researches done on western sample (Nelson, 2013; Shapiro, 2000).

The absence of any positive or negative correlation between any of the independent variables and the two EMS subscales is an interesting finding. For example, married women's age at marriage revealed a non-significant association with EMS, IDs and MS (globally) and also when viewed separately for dowry at marriage and not dowry at marriage. Age difference from spouse indicated a significant negative correlation with ENRICH Marital satisfaction ($r = -.11$, $p < .05$) and marital satisfaction ($r = -.12$, $p < .05$). In the same way, women's income, husband's income had a negative, although non-significant, correlation with Enrich marital satisfaction, idealistic distortion, and marital satisfaction. In regards of effect size or correlation strength; age at marriage ($\eta2 = 0.16$), husband's income ($\eta2 = 0.15$), educational attainment ($\eta2 = 0.18$) had a lesser impact on marital satisfaction for those who came without dowry at marriage. Age difference from spouse ($\eta2 = 0.12$) had also Low overall impact on marital satisfaction; all other variables had insignificant overall effect size.

Contrary to previous findings, the findings of the present study shows that marital satisfaction does not significantly affect by age at marriage, personal income, spouse income, or level of education (Guo & Huang, 2005; Janssen et al., 1998; Kalmijn, 1999; Pimentel, 2000; Trudel, 2002; White & Edwards, 1990; Zainah et al., 2012).

Conclusion

Finally, even though not all of our hypotheses were confirmed, the present research has provided some evidence that indicates women who are not subjected to in-laws' dowry demands experience higher levels of marital satisfaction. It has been determined that dowry is an immoral practice in society and that it needs to be outlawed in the nation. It causes a lot of marital disputes and conflicts to be encouraged among married women. The present research contradicts the widely held view in society that the dowry is a key factor in marital pleasure. The results of this study indicate that Punjabis are highly involved in giving and taking dowry. The dowry system is implemented in Pakistani society by both love and arranged marriages, educated and illiterate individuals alike. There are many factors including one's background, compatibility and understanding between partners, past experiences, socio-economic difference between wife and husband, and one's beliefs and values, which may have an effect on marital satisfaction and may be subjects for further studies consideration. Furthermore, both the government and young people should take action to manage this system.

Limitations of the Present Study

There are several limitations on this study. The study's primary limitation was that the sample size was small and non-randomly selected. It is only selected from five cities of Punjab Sialkot, Gujranwala, Narowal, Lahore, Rawalpindi, and MandiBahaudin. Thus, it is important to be cautious when extrapolating the results of this study. Another limitation of this research was that it was a cross-sectional correlational study, which does not allow for causal inferences but only reveals relationships. Finally, self-report measures were primarily utilized by the current study, Self-report measurement is prone to common critiques, such as not being culturally appropriate responses in scenario of dowry and marriage,

retrospective reconstruction, even if self-report measures are preferable to behavioral indicators for inherently internal characteristics, according to (Finkel et al., 2002).

Implication

In addition to its theoretical contribution, our findings could help therapists to evaluate and comprehend their clients and providing them pre-marital counseling and analyzing the patterns of marital happiness in Pakistani society. For example, one of the conclusions of this study was the exact opposite of what we anticipated that non-significant differences on marital satisfaction of those women who came with dowry and those who came without dowry at their marriage. The Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and Higher Educational Institutions such as colleges and universities should organize and conduct seminars to remind women and also their parents who are on the verge of delaying marriage or fear of divorce because of providing not adequate dowry. Media should raise awareness and there must be proper enforcement of law against dowry traditions, dowry demands, and participation in the dowry system.

ORCID iDs

Umm e Habiba [1] https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9858-5518
Anila Kamal [2] https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2548-6644

References

Ahmad, N., Hussain, A., Tariq, M. S., & Raza, M. A. (2015). Role of dowry in successful marital life: A case study of District Dera Ghazi Khan, Pakistan. *Kuwait Chapter of Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review*, *4*(5), 62-72.

Anderson, C., Keltner, D., & John, O. P. (2003). Emotional convergence between people over time. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 84*(5), 1054–1068.

Anderson, S. (2000). *The economics of dowry payments in Pakistan* (Vol. 82). Macroeconomics.

Anderson, S., & Ray, D. (2010). Missing women: age and disease. *The Review of Economic Studies*, *77*(4), 1262-1300.

Batool, S. S., & Khalid, R. (2012). Emotional intelligence: A predictor of marital quality in Pakistani couples. *Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research*, *27*(1), 65-88.

Berscheid, E., & Regan, P. (2005). *The psychology of interpersonal relationships*. Prentice Hall.

Bhagat, R. B. (2016). *"The practice of early marriages among females in India: Persistence and change".* International Institute for Population Sciences Working Paper No. 10. Mumbai.

Brim, O. G., Ryff, C. D., & Kessler, R. C. (Eds.). (2019). *How healthy are we?: A national study of well-being at midlife*. University of Chicago Press.

Chandrakanth, J. (2015). Marital coping style among working and non-working women. *International Journal of Management and Social Science, 3*(6), 57-64.

Chauhan, R. (1995). *Dowry in twentieth century India: A window to the convict of caste, class, and gender* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. State University of New York.

Davis, P., Haque, R., Hasin, D., Aziz, M., & Begum, A. (2009). *Everyday forms of collective action in Bangladesh: Learning from fifteen cases*. Collective Action and Property Rights Working Paper No. 94. Washington.

Faisal, C. M., & Sari, Y. R. (2018). *Comparison of the marital satisfaction between dual-earner and single-earner couples*. Diversity *in unity: Perspectives from psychology and behavioral sciences* (pp. 49-55). Routledge.

Finkel, E. J., Rusbult, C. E., Kumashiro, M., & Hannon, P. A. (2002). Dealing with betrayal in close relationships: Does commitment promote forgiveness?. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 82*(6), 956–974.

Fournier, D. G., Olson, D. H., & Druckman, J. M. (1983). Assessing marital and premarital relationships: The Prepare-ENRICH inventories. *Marriage and Family Assessment*, *54*(2), 229-250.

Fowers, B. J., & Olson, D. H. (1993). ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale: A brief research and clinical tool. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *7*(2), 176-185.

Gana, K., Saada, Y., & Untas, A. (2013). Effects of love styles on marital satisfaction in heterosexual couples: A dyadic approach. *Marriage and Family Review*, *49*(8), 754-772.

Greef, A.P. (2000). Characteristics of families that function well. *Journal of Family Issues, 21*(8), 948-962.

Guo, B., & Huang, J. (2005). Marital and sexual satisfaction in Chinese families: Exploring the moderating effects. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy, 31*(1), 21-29.

Gwanfogbe, P. N., Schumm, W. R., Smith, M., & Furrow, J. L. (1997). Polygyny and marital life satisfaction: An exploratory study from rural Cameroon. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, *28*(1), 55-71.

Henry, R. G., Miller, R. B., & Giarrusso, R. (2005). Difficulties, disagreements, and disappointments in late-life marriages. *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, *61*(3), 243-264.

Kamo, Y. (1993). Determinants of marital satisfaction: A comparison of the United States and Japan. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 10*(4), 551–568.

Khanal, K., & Sen, R. (2020). The Dowry Gift in South Asia: An Institution on the Intersection of Market and Patriarchy. *Journal of Economic Issues*, *54*(2), 356-362.

Lee, G. R. (1977). Age at marriage and marital satisfaction: A multivariate analysis with implications for marital stability. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *39*(3), 493-504.

Mahmood, Z., Anwer, M. S., Javaid, A., & Nawaz, S. (2016). Social and economic determinants of divorce in Pakistan: A case study of Multan District. *Journal of Culture, Society and Development*, *19,* 18-24.

Myers, J. E., Madathil, J., & Tingle, L. R. (2005). Marriage satisfaction and wellness in India and the United States: A preliminary comparison of arranged marriages and marriages of choice. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, *83*(2), 183-190.

Nagaraja, A., Rajamma, N. M., & Reddy, S. V. (2012). Effect of parents' marital satisfaction, marital life period and type of family on their children mental health status. *Journal of Psychology*, *3*(2), 65-70.

Naz, S., Naz, S., & Gul, S. (2014). Relationship between economic independence, social support and quality of life among elderly people. *Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology*, *40*(2), 255-260.

Nelson, S. K., Kushlev, K., English, T., Dunn, E. W., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2013). In defense of parenthood: Children are associated with more joy than misery. *Psychological science*, *24*(1), 3-10.

Niranjan, S., Nair, S., & Roy, T. K. (2005). A socio-demographic analysis of the size and structure of the family in India. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, *36*(4), 623-652.

Parker, R. (2002). Why marriages last. *Australian Institute of Family Studies*, *28*(8), 2-17.

Parveen, S., Ilyas, M., Iram, T., & Abid, U. (2019). Economic exploitation of housemaids: Victims of intimate partner violence. *Religación*, *4*(16), 289-299.

Pimentel, E.E. (2000). Just how do I love thee? Marital relations in urban China. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 62*(1), 32- 47.

Qi, L., & Dong, X. Y. (2018). Gender, low-paid status, and time poverty in urban China. *Feminist Economics*, *24*(2), 171-193.

Raja, A. J., Alam, I., & Sarir, S. (2017). Domestic violence against women in union council watala, district Bhimber Azad Kashmir. *Peshawar Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Science*, *3*(2), 135-143.

Randall, A. K., & Bodenmann, G. (2017). Stress and its associations with relationship satisfaction. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, *13*, 96-106.

Rani, M. R. (2013). Marital adjustment problems of working and non-working women in contrast of their husband. *Education*, *2*(7), 21-34.

Rastogi, M., & Therly, P. (2006). Dowry and its link to violence against women in India: Feminist psychological perspectives. *Trauma, Violence Abuse*, *7*(1), 66-77.

Rogers, S. J., & Amato, P. R. (2000). Have changes in gender relations affected marital quality?. *Social Forces*, *79*(2), 731-753.

Schmitt, M., Kliegel, M., & Shapiro, A. (2007). Marital interaction in middle and old age: A predictor of marital satisfaction?. *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, *65*(4), 283-300.

Schoen, R., N.M. Astone, K. Rothert, N.J. Standish and Y.J. Kim, (2002). Women employment, marital happiness and divorce. *Social Forces, 81*(2), 643-662.

Schröder, J., & Schmiedeberg, C. (2015). Effects of relationship duration, cohabitation, and marriage on the frequency of intercourse in couples: Findings from German panel data. *Social Science Research*, *52*, 72-82.

Sen, G., & Zinta, R. L. (2018). Prevalence of domestic violence among rural and urban population. *Prevalence*, *3*(3), 190-196.

Shapiro, A. F., Gottman, J. M., & Carrere, S. (2000). The baby and the marriage: identifying factors that buffer against decline in marital satisfaction after the first baby arrives. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *14*(1), 59-70.

Sharma, B. R., Harish, D., Gupta, M., & Singh, V. P. (2005). Dowry–a deep-rooted cause of violence against women in India. *Medicine, Science and the Law*, *45*(2), 161-168.

Sinha, C. (2016). Adjustment of married women in relation to age and job status. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, *6*(1), 42-45.

Smadi, E. Y. (2017). Levels of marital satisfaction and its relation to some variables on a sample of women in Amman city/Jordan. *Asian Social Science*, *13*(12), 103-111.

Sonpar, S. (2005). Marriage in India: Clinical issues. *Contemporary Family Therapy, 2*(3), 301-312.

Spanier, G. B., & Lewis, R. A. (1980). Marital quality: A review of the seventies. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *42*(4), 825-839.

Srinivasan, P., & Lee, G. R. (2004). The dowry system in Northern India: Women's attitudes and social change. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, *66*(5), 1108-1117.

Thomas, H. N., Hess, R., & Thurston, R. C. (2015). Correlates of sexual activity and satisfaction in midlife and older women. *The Annals of Family Medicine*, *13*(4), 336-342.

Trudel, G. (2002). Sexual and marital life: Results of a survey. *Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy, 28*(3), 229-249.

Tucker, M. W., & O'Grady, K. E. (1991). Effects of physical attractiveness, intelligence, age at marriage, and cohabitation on the perception of marital satisfaction. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, *131*(2), 253-269.

Uzunçakmak, T., & Yilmaz, F. A. (2021). Determination of dyadic adjustment, happiness and related factors in married Turkish women living in Anatolia. *Journal of Religion and Health*, *60*(3), 1937-1951.

Vaghela, K. J. (2014). A comparative study of marital adjustment among employed and unemployed married women of urban and rural area. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*, *2*(1), 35-40.

Vandervorst, J. (2000). *The association between marital satisfaction and length of marriage* [Unpublished licentiate thesis]. Katholieke University Leuven.

Wendorf, C. A., Lucas, T., Imamoğlu, E. O., Weisfeld, C. C., & Weisfeld, G. E. (2011). Marital satisfaction across three cultures: Does the number of children have an impact after accounting for other marital demographics?. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *42*(3), 340-354.

White, L., & Edwards, J. N. (1990). Emptying the nest and parental well-being: An analysis of national panel data. *American Sociological Review, 55*(2), 235–242.

Yang, J. (2014). Continuity and strategy: A gender pattern of household work division in China between 1990–2010. *Academic Research*, *2*, 31-41.

Zainah, A. Z., Nasir, R., Hashim, R. S., & Yusof, N. M. (2012). Effects of demographic variables on marital satisfaction. *Asian Social Science, 8*(9), 46 – 49.