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Marital Satisfaction and Lifestyle in Married Men Working Nightshift

Tina Fernandes

Head, Department of Psychology, St. Francis College for Women,
Begumpet, Hyderabad, Telangana, India

Nandini Sanyal

Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology,
St. Francis College for Women, Begumpet, Hyderabad, Telangana, India

Gurram Keerthika

Graduate Student, St. Francis College for Women, Begumpet, Hyderabad, Telangana, India

Namita Ruparel

Post Graduate Student, St. Francis College for Women, Begumpet, Hyderabad, Telangana, India

Abstract:

The objective of the present study is to determine whether there is any relationship between marital satisfaction and lifestyle in men with spouses working day shift, men with spouses working in night shift and men with spouses who are homemakers. A non-probability purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample of 180 married men working night shift. Among them 60 men had spouses working day shift, 60 men had spouses working night shift and 60 men had spouses who were homemakers. Index of Marital Satisfaction (IMS) (Hudson, 1992) and Life Style Inventory (Pareek, 1997) were administered to the participants. The results revealed that the men with spouses working day shift scored significantly higher than the men with spouses working night shift and the men with spouses who are homemakers on marital satisfaction ($p < 0.05$). The findings also indicated that the men with spouses who are homemakers scored significantly higher than the men with spouses working day shift on the fitness dimension of life style ($p < 0.05$). The present study brings to light the disadvantages of working night shift and how special attention should be given to enhance couple relationships for a happier and healthier married life.

Keywords: Lifestyle, marital satisfaction, married men, spouses, working shifts.

1. Introduction

Marital satisfaction is defined as a feeling of happiness, pleasure and satisfaction by the wife or the husband, when considering all the aspects of a married life (Agha-Mohammad, Mokhtaree, Sayadi & Mosavi 2012) Marital satisfaction is a key element of perceived happiness (Stanley, Bradbury & Markman, 2000). Marital satisfaction is in fact a positive and pleasing attitude that is possessed by the couple from the different factors in their married life. It is essential to be stated that different factors have been identified to be effective in marital satisfaction including: age of marriage, marriage duration, children, education, financial issues, sexual issues, relatives and acquaintances, religious beliefs, personality traits, ability to understand the partner, communication skills, leisure time and commitment (Agha-Mohammed et al., 2012). Conflicts in the relationship among couples lead to disorganization in their social relationships, tendency to social corruption, and decay of culture among husband and wife (Jonaity et al., 2009; Ahmadi et al., 2005).

Marital satisfaction is one of the most important factors that contribute to the progress of couples in their relationship, in achieving their goals, managing events, which is affected by emotional stability of couples (Beirami et al., 2012; c.f. Sarabandi, 2012). It has effects on psychological health, educational success, job satisfaction and income of couples. Conflicts in the relationship of couples lead to disorganization in their social relationships, tendency to social corruption, and decay of cultural values among them (Jonaity et al., 2009; Ahmadi et al., 2005).

Research has identified numerous factors relating to marital satisfaction (Bradbury et al, (2000).The review of literature on marital satisfaction conducted in the 1990's, organizes the various studies into two main themes: interpersonal processes and micro contexts/macro contexts. Interpersonal processes include factors such as cognition, affect, physiology, behavioral patterning, attitude, violence and social support. While, micro contexts are circumstances that have direct links to interpersonal functioning in marriage, they are broader social contexts that have more indirect or subtle effects on interpersonal functioning. With respect to interpersonal process, research on cognitions related to marital satisfaction has focused on the attributions of partners. Studies by Bradbury, Beach, Fincham, and Nelson (1996) have indicated that maladaptive attributions are related to high rates of negative behaviors between couples during problem solving. There are different discoveries regarding negative affect, with some studies showing that it is harmful to the marital relationship, whereas others found negative affect is not at all connected to the marital relationship. (Fincham & Beach, 1999).

Gove et al. (1983) in an early cross-sectional study found marriage to be the best predictor of happiness after controls are added for religion, education, age, and gender. The authors had taken steps to try to counter the selection problem by including "bad childhood experiences" variable, which they think will predict pre-marital wellbeing. The study found beneficial effects of marriage to be greater for men than for women. Also, using the married sample only, marriage quality is the single best predictor of wellbeing.

It is assumed that lifestyle has a determining role in marital satisfaction; lifestyle is one of the factors effecting marital satisfaction. Various researches in this field demonstrate that there is a positive relationship between lifestyle and marriage satisfaction. Studies have shown that Married couples may gain financially; marriage may bring increased emotional and helpful support. Marriage may change lifestyles because of some kind of guardian effect, where healthy activities are increased and risky behaviors reduced. (Rindfuss & Vanden Heuvel, 1990).

Life style is a pattern in which individual's life emerges in the activities, attachments, personal thoughts. In fact, life style is nothing more than the personality of people in society. In broad sense, life style includes the complete pattern of people's action and reaction in daily life (Aghaiee & Malek, 2004). Life style is particularly the reaction of an individual against difficulties and problems faced in life. Nowadays, life style and its significance is one of the main psychological issues. Choosing the life style which we want, consciously or unconsciously determines people's future. Life style is concerned with different factors such as exercise, leisure time, behavior, attitude and dealing with the stress where some factors such as regular exercise and healthy foods are more important than others (Almasi et al.,2010).

The reversal of work from day to night time has a usual meaning, in that employees are flipping their schedules to work at night and sleep during the day. Rather than a disappearance of work time, call center workers are experiencing a hyper-management of time on the job more than experiencing flexibility in work. Call centers are organizations that provide customer service for a wide variety of organizations (from book sellers, to credit card companies, to hospitals, government offices, etc.). The work involves answering phone calls from, or making calls to, customers. Indian call centers take a global role in this scenario, they handle the calls by U.S. customers, for U.S., firms via satellite. In this perspective, the work day is shifted entirely to the night in order to be available to customers in various countries of the Global North, who are 12 hours behind (Poster, 2007). Most jobseekers accept shift work simply because there are not enough daytime jobs available, for these individuals, evening and night work provides a unique source of gainful employment. Shift work's most alluring feature, however, appears to be its wage differential.

Study by Peplowska et al. (2014) has shown that night shift work might have an impact on personal life, particularly in social and family life. Moreover, unhealthy lifestyle changes have been suggested as contributors in the etiology of potential health effects of nightshift workers and the evidence for the association between night shift work and lifestyle factors, like smoking, alcohol consumption, physical activity and dietary habit has been mounting.

In the present study the researcher attempts to examine if there is an association between marital satisfaction and lifestyle. Marital satisfaction is one of the important factors that assign to progress of couples in their relationship. Different lifestyle pattern in relationship lead to disorganization of relationship among husband and wife. In this context, the present study attempts to answer the following research questions:

- Is there any difference between married men working nightshift with respect to their spouses doing dayshift, nightshift or homemakers in terms of marital satisfaction and lifestyle?
- Is there a relationship between marital satisfaction and lifestyle in men with spouses working dayshift, men with spouse working nightshift, men with spouses as homemakers?

1.1. Objectives

1. To observe whether there is any difference between married men working nightshift with respect to their wife doing dayshift, nightshift or homemakers in terms of marital satisfaction and lifestyle.
2. To study whether there is a relation between marital satisfaction and lifestyle (4 dimension, viz., autonomy, networking, perspective, fitness) in men with spouses working dayshift, men with spouse working nightshift, men with spouses as homemakers.

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

The present study adopts a between groups design to observe whether there are any differences in men with spouses working night shift, men with spouses working in day shift and men with spouses who are homemakers with respect to marital satisfaction and lifestyle and its 4 dimensions (viz., autonomy, networking, perspective, fitness). This study also adopts a correlational design to determine whether there is any relationship between marital satisfaction and lifestyle in married men working nightshift with respect to their spouses being dayshift employees or nightshift employees or homemakers.

2.2. Sample

For the present study, a non-probability purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample of 180 married men. Among them 60 men had spouses working night shift, 60 men had spouses working day shift and 60 men had spouses who were homemakers. Married men aged 25-35 years and working night shifts in multinational companies were included in the sample.

2.3. Instruments

Three questionnaires were used for this research, they were:

2.3.1. Information Schedule

Participants were asked to provide the details regarding their age, gender, family income, education qualification and the like on the Information Schedule.

2.3.2. Index of Marital Satisfaction (IMS)

The Index of Marital Satisfaction was developed by Hudson(1992). It consists of 25 personal statements to be scored on a 7-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from (1) “none of the time” to(7) “all of the time”. The scores range from 0 to 100 with higher scores indicating greater magnitude or severity of problems. Scores below 30 suggest the presence of clinically significant problem and scores above 70 nearly always indicates that clients are experiencing severe stress with a clear possibility that some type of violence could be considered or used to deal with problems. The IMS has a reliability coefficient of .96.

2.3.3. Lifestyle Inventory

Life style inventory (Pareek, 1997) consists of 36 items rated on 4-point Likert scale, 1- strongly agrees, 2-disagree, 3-agree, 4-agree strongly. The scale measures the work life balance of the participants. It is subdivided into 4 dimensions, namely, autonomy, networking, perspective, fitness. Autonomy in the context of this instrument is perceived as number of choices that a person has in a given situation. Networking refers to the quality of professional and personal relationships that a person has. Perspective to life in this instrument refers to the perceived purpose of life. Fitness refers to physical fitness. The scores of the items in each dimension are added separately. The Cornbach’s alpha of the scale was computed and it was found to be .889.

3. Results

Variable	Working Status			F
	With spouse working dayshift Mean(SD)	With spouse working nightshift Mean(SD)	With spouse is a housewife Mean(SD)	
Marital Satisfaction	38.53(2.01)	13.20(5.77)	15.12(4.33)	58.84**
Life Style (Autonomy)	8.42(2.01)	8.58(1.80)	9.00(1.73)	1.57
Life Style (Networking)	8.62(1.73)	8.52(1.68)	8.63(1.71)	0.08
Life Style (Perspective)	8.28(1.63)	8.30(1.59)	8.59(1.53)	0.74
Life Style (Fitness)	8.42(1.81)	9.09(1.76)	9.69(1.60)	8.14**
**p<0.01				

Table 1A- Results of One Way ANOVA and descriptive statistics with marital satisfaction and lifestyle and its dimensions as IVS and working status as DVS.

Variable	(I)working status	(J)working status	Mean Difference (I-J)
Marital Satisfaction	men with spouse working dayshift	men with spouse working nightshift	25.33*
	men with spouse working dayshift	men with spouse is a housewife	23.41*
	men with spouse working nightshift	men with spouse is a housewife	-1.92
Fitness	men with spouse working dayshift	men with spouse working nightshift	.66
	men with spouse working dayshift	men with spouse is a housewife	1.27*
	men with spouse working nightshift	men with spouse is a housewife	-.60
*p<0.05			

Table 1B- Showing Post-Hoc results of the working status with marital satisfaction and the dimension of lifestyle

Table 1

Table 1A reveals that there is a significant effect of working status of the spouses (working day shift, working night shift, homemakers) on marital satisfaction in men (F=58.4, p<0.01). Table 1B shows that the men with spouses working day shift

significantly differed from the men with spouses working night shift and the men with spouses who are homemakers with respect to marital satisfaction ($p < 0.05$). As is evident from the mean scores in Table 1A, the men with spouses working day shift ($M = 38.53$) scored significantly higher than the men with spouses working night shift ($M = 13.20$) and the men with spouses who are homemakers ($M = 15.12$) on marital satisfaction. In other words, men with spouses working dayshift are more satisfied in their marriage when compared to the men with spouses working night shift and men with spouses who are homemakers.

Table 1A also shows that there is a significant effect of working status of the spouses (working day shift, working night shift, homemakers) on the fitness dimension of life style in men ($F = 8.14, p < 0.01$). Table 1B shows that the men with spouses who are homemakers significantly differed from the men with spouses working day shift ($p < 0.05$) with respect to the fitness dimension of life style. As is evident from the mean scores in Table 1A, the men with spouses who are homemakers ($M = 9.69$) scored significantly higher than the men with spouses working day shift ($M = 8.42$). In other words, men with spouses who are homemakers are better in physical fitness as compared to men with spouses working dayshift.

	Marital Satisfaction	Autonomy	Networking	Perspective
Autonomy	.166			
Networking	.114	.586**		
Perspective	.076	.598**	.176	
Fitness	-.027	.615**	.277*	.370**
** $p < 0.01$				

Table 2: Correlation(r) between four dimension of Lifestyle and Marital Satisfaction of men with spouses working dayshift ($n = 60$)

Table 2 reveals that there is no correlation between marital satisfaction and the dimensions of lifestyle in men with spouse working dayshift.

	Marital Satisfaction	Autonomy	Networking	Perspective
Autonomy	-.008			
Networking	-.003	.441**		
Perspective	.069	.656**	.015	
Fitness	-.067	.678**	.151	.545**
** $p < 0.01$				

Table 3: Correlation(r) between four dimension of Lifestyle and Marital Satisfaction of men with spouses working nightshift ($n = 60$)

Table 3 reveals that there is no significant correlation between marital satisfaction and the dimensions of lifestyle in men with spouses working nightshift.

	Marital Satisfaction	Autonomy	Networking	Perspective
Autonomy	.004			
Networking	-.034	.357**		
Perspective	-.162	.613**	-.151	
Fitness	-.172	.758**	.140	.526**
** $p < 0.01$				

Table 4: Correlation(r) between four dimension of Lifestyle and Marital Satisfaction of men with spouses as homemakers ($n = 60$)

Table 4 reveals that there is no correlation between dimensions of marital satisfaction and the dimensions of lifestyle in men with spouses as homemakers.

4. Discussion

The present study revealed significant differences in marital satisfaction between men with spouses working dayshift, men with spouses working nightshift and men with spouses as homemakers. Consistent with these results, a study found that adjustments in family activities and marital roles are essential but largely invisible underpinnings to the employment relationship between shift work husbands and their employers (Hertz & Charlton, 1989).

A similar study conducted on the growing trend among parents is to work alternating shifts, where partners' paid work schedules are opposite and non overlapping (Presser, 1989, 1994, 2005). It has been suggested that working alternating shifts is a strategy that enables new parents to avoid the high cost of child care and/or to maintain values regarding the importance of exclusive parental care, especially with infants (Deutsch, 1999). Research shows, however, that working night shifts is less often a parental choice and more often a nonnegotiable job condition (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000). Moreover, the potential benefits of shift work, especially for parents of young children, may be negated by its deleterious effects on parents' mental health and their close relationships (Finn, 1981; Presser, 2000).

Significant differences are found in Fitness dimension of Lifestyle between men with spouses working dayshift, men with spouses working nightshift and men with spouses as homemakers. These results are supported by a study conducted on 3020 subjects using a psychosocial questionnaire. The subjects were employed men, aged 45-60 years, from a postal and telecommunication agency, the railway company, and 5 industrial companies. The importance of the shift schedule, age, and life-style factors as simultaneous predictors of the complaints was studied in a logistic regression analysis and an analysis of covariance. The prevalence of insomnia, sleep deprivation, and daytime sleepiness depended significantly on the shift system. All sleep complaints were more common in 2- and 3-shift work and in irregular shift work than in day work. The prevalence of daytime sleepiness was 20-37%, depending on the shift system. Leisure-time physical activity and alcohol consumption were the most important life-style factors predicting all sleep complaints, except snoring. The effects of physical activity and alcohol consumption differed for different shift schedules. Different shift's systems, also 2-shift work and permanent night work, seem to increase the frequency of sleep complaints; especially 3-shift work seems to interact with life-style factors by increasing the adverse effects and decreasing the beneficial effects on sleep and sleepiness (Härmä, Tenkanen, Sjöblom, Alikoski & Heinsalmi, 1998).

Another study supporting these results found that among men, good control over working times reduces the adverse effect of work stress on sickness absence especially among female employees. Employee work time control moderates the effects of job strain and effort-reward imbalance on sickness absence (Ala-Mursula et al., 2005).

The present study brings to light the disadvantages of working night shift and how special attention should be given to enhance couple relationships for a happier and healthier married life. Marital roles are a critical force shaping practices of daily family life. Not only should shift workers realize the importance of coordination for making time for the spouse for an effective family life, special attention and awareness of the importance of physical fitness should also be highlighted by the organizational psychologist.

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