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DEVELOPMENT AND PRELIMINARY PSYCHOMETRIC EVALUATION OF A MARITAL ADJUSTMENT SCALE: DOMAIN MAPPING AND EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

Vishesh Malik
Department of Psychology, University of Delhi, New Delhi
Naveen Kumar
Research scholar, department of psychology, Digambar Jain College, Baghpat

Abstract

Marital adjustment is a multidimensional process involving the coordination of emotional, behavioral, physical, and financial aspects of intimate relationships. The present study aimed to develop a brief self-report measure of marital adjustment and examine its preliminary psychometric properties through subjective domain mapping and exploratory factor analysis. Initially, 15 items were developed based on a review of the literature and conceptualization of four domains: financial, emotional, physical, and behavioral adjustment. Each item was subjected to subjective domain mapping and subsequently administered through an online questionnaire using a six-point Likert response format. Preliminary data were obtained from 94 participants, comprising 73 males and 22 females. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted using principal axis factoring with Varimax rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .724, while Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant, $\chi^2(105) = 455.285$, $p < .01$, indicating suitability of the data for factor analysis. Five factors with eigenvalues greater than one were initially extracted, collectively accounting for 60.65% of the variance. Following factor examination, items demonstrating cross-loadings were excluded, and internal consistency analysis yielded Cronbach's alpha of .701. The findings provide preliminary support for the development of a brief measure of marital adjustment. The proposed scale covers financial, emotional, physical, and behavioral aspects of marital relationships and may provide a basis for further validation among more diverse Indian populations and relationship contexts.

Keywords: *Exploratory factor analysis, marital adjustment, domain mapping, principal axis*

Introduction

Marital adjustment is defined as the integration of a couple with different personality traits in a union in order to complement each other to achieve happiness and common goals (Burgess et al., 1998). For the achievement of unity and solidarity in the family, the couple should agree on economic, managerial and psychosocial issues such as communication, value and goals, decision making, the way to conduct home-related activities, relationship with close relatives, making use of free time and income management, and thus they should establish marital adjustment. In case they fail to establish marital adjustment, there might be trouble in the unity and solidarity of the family which might lead to disagreement, emotional destruction, and dissolution in the family (Terzioglu, 1987).

Industrialization has changed marriage structures and increased the significance of understanding and evaluating the structure of marriage in terms of maintaining life in and adapting to a changing society. The spouses' values and goals in relation to marital adjustment are an important issue. Differences in the value systems of spouses might negatively affect the determination of common and accessible goals in all matters that concern the family and efforts to attain these goals and thus could be a source of

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problems in marriage (Terzioglu, 1987). Several studies on the issue have determined that factors such as education level, economic status, marriage pattern, family structure, marital conflict and number of children affect marital adjustment.

Marital adjustment is a lifelong process, although in the early days of marriage one has to give serious consideration. Understanding the individual trait of the spouse is an ongoing process in marriage because even if two people know each other before or at the time of marriage, there is a possibility that people change during the life cycle. Marital adjustment, therefore, calls for a maturity that accepts and understands growth and development in the spouse. If this growth is not experienced and realized fully, a death in a marital relationship is inevitable. Bob Garon, an American Filipino psychologist explains that the death of a relationship between couples is not an instantaneous rather a slow process. It is like undetected cancer that kills silently and softly. A study among married couples shows that 25% of them at some time in the adjustment process, discussed divorcing and 18% had seriously considered it. Psychologists identify three kinds of involvement in a marriage relationship: minimum, limited and maximum. Minimum involvement is seen in the traditional marriages that are aimed at safeguarding the structures to serve utilitarian ends. Limited interpersonal involvement in marriage gives reasonable comfort and security to the couples. Maximum involvement gives the couple a sense of satisfaction and confidence in the relationship. To have maximum involvement, the couple has to grow in their understanding of each other and adjust in different factors that affect the core of the family life. Although different psychologists identify different areas that need adjustment, some common areas identified by psychologists would be religion, social life, mutual friends and recreation, in-laws, money, sex, children and parenting, personality and developmental issues, family roles, and values. Conflicts are foreseen in all these above-mentioned areas in marital relationships. Most of the problems in marriages can be classified into three categories. They are unequal growth patterns among couples, family and cultural background, sex role stereotyping.

Carpenter, D. J in 2018 conducted a study on the topic “16PF Couples Counseling Report: Predictors of Marital Satisfaction, Personality Similarity, and Relationship Adjustment of Males in Marital Therapy”. The aim is to utilize the 16 Personality Factor Couples Counseling Report variables of overall Personality Similarity, Marital Satisfaction, and Relationship Adjustment of Males in Marital Therapy. A total of 150 people were selected for the study as sample. Results indicate that the relationship Adjustment and Personality Similarity were individually significantly and positively correlated with Overall Marital Satisfaction.

Riina, E., and Feinberg, M. in 2012 conducted a research on relationship between parents' childrearing involvement and adjustment by (a) differentiating between types of childrearing activities (task focused vs. relationship focused), (b) examining patterns of differences in these links for mothers versus fathers, and (c) testing whether gender-role attitudes regarding family labor moderated these associations. The sample size of 169 mothers and fathers reported on perceptions of their involvement in relationship-focused and task-focused childrearing, gender role attitudes, and their adjustment (parenting efficacy, depression, parenting stress, and role overload). Results indicated that fathers benefited from greater overall childrearing involvement, whereas higher relationship-focused care was linked to more negative adjustment for mothers. Gender role attitudes moderated these links for fathers, such that traditional fathers who were more involved in childrearing reported better parental adjustment.

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Haring, M., Hewitt, P., and Flett, G. in 2003 conducted a study to examine the relationship among perfectionism, marital coping, and marital functioning in a community. The sample size was composed of 76 couples. A theoretical model was tested in which maladaptive coping mediates the relationship between trait perfectionism and poorer marital functioning. As predicted, one of the interpersonal dimensions of perfectionism, socially prescribed perfectionism, was associated with maladaptive marital coping and poorer marital adjustment for both the self and the partner, even after controlling for depression and neuroticism. Finally, the use of negative coping strategies mediated the relationship between socially prescribed perfectionism and poorer marital functioning for both the self and the partner.

Scales mentioned above seems to be focused on a particular population. Present study aims to develop a self-report scale of marital adjustment which can be administered on broader population. Financial, behavioral, emotional and physical were measures considered while item- writing.

Method and results

The following steps were involved in scale construction

Item writing- Items were written after literature review of concepts i.e., marital adjustment.

Considering four domains Financial, Emotional Physical and Behavioral items were written using logical and scientific thinking based on marriage experience of the couples.

Initially 15-items were written considering these domains as measures of adjustment.

Number of items written was limited so that a short-scale could be developed.

Domain mapping

Four areas of marital adjustment namely financial, emotional, physical, and behavioral were conceptualized; the 15 items with domain mapping are depicted in Table 1. Rating for each item was given to each domain out of 10.

Table 1: Domain mappings of the written items

		Financial	Emotional	Physical	Behavioral
	y partner is the right person for me	2	10	5	7
	y partner usually asks me to be silent if we agree	1	8	5	10
	y partner does not like to have conflict	2	7	6	10
	y partner makes active efforts to maintain our ationship	2	8	7	10
	y partner is usually aware of my feelings	1	10	4	9
	y partner is not close enough to me	3	10	7	9
	y partner and I have nothing in common to talk out	1	8	6	10
	y partner admires many of my characteristics	4	10	8	7
	e trust each other to do the right thing	2	10	5	7
	y partner and I come from very different family ckground	10	7	5	8
	y partner doesn't like to spend money	10	6	7	9

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	ually, we decide together how to allocate money	10	9	6	8
	y partner and I are physically compatible	7	8	10	7
	y partner frequently shows love for me in a ysical way	7	9	10	8
	y partner is physically attractive to me	5	8	10	8

15 self-report items were used to create a google form, where response for each item was on 6-point rating scale varying from (strongly disagree, disagree, slightly disagree, slightly agree, agree, strongly agree). Basic details of subjects were asked along with the response on 15 items (Gender, and age). This scale was administered online sent via google form link to the participants. Google-form link was sent to more than 300 persons out of which 95 responded. Their data was taken for preliminary analysis. Scores was given 1 to strongly disagree, 2 to disagree, 3 to slightly disagree, 4 to slightly agree, 5 to agree, 6 to strongly agree. Items 2, 6, 7 and 10 were reverse scoring items. Data was analysed using exploratory factor analysis, factors were extracted principal axis factoring in SPSS. Factor rotation was carried out using Varimax with Kaiser Normalization method.

Preliminary administration of 15-items scale was carried out on a sample of 94 subjects of different age. Sample comprises of 22 females (23.2%) and 73 males (76.8%) subjects.

Table 2: Depicting descriptive statistics

Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
	5.2553	1.096	-2.525	7.550
	4.0745	1.4311	-.628	-.883
	4.3404	1.379	-1.215	.441
	4.9468	1.256	-1.894	3.534
	4.3085	1.164	-1.256	.851
	4.6809	1.377	-1.447	1.293
	4.5638	1.308	-1.026	.330
	4.3298	1.239	-1.003	.754
	5.1170	.98217	-2.605	8.989
	4.0426	1.327	-.531	-.921
	2.7766	1.496	.589	-.907
	4.7553	1.104	-1.603	2.779
	5.2021	.837	-2.647	12.020
	4.5319	1.179	-1.464	2.078
	4.9043	1.006	-2.264	6.678
al	67.82958	7.807	-1.515	3.786

Skewness and Kurtosis of data of subjects on each item were calculated after preliminary administration of 15-items' scale using SPSS. Data analysis had shown values in acceptable range i.e., (-2 to +2) for skewness (Item 1,9, and 15 were not in range) and (-3 to +3) kurtosis (Item 1,4, 9, 13, and 15 were not in range).

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Table 3: Inter-item and item-total correlation matrix

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1														
.245**														
382**	-.018													
642**	-.165	.234*												
426**	.012	.141	489**											
-.052	356**	.248**	.226*	330**										
-.139	368**	-.107	-.086	.075	501**									
270**	.004	.179*	391**	.145	.100	-.109								
431**	-.029	375**	293**	.100	-.131	-.161	392**							
.140	.061	250**	.027	-.002	.037	.116	.083	.120						
.160	-.133	.147	-.001	.046	-.019	.005	-.198*	.076	.081					
416**	.039	274**	.231*	.160	-.024	-.037	280**	394**	.037	.162				
587**	-.156	.135	419**	.200*	-.027	-.046	422**	533**	-.037	.028	368**			
309**	-.017	.092	.208*	.004	-.126	-.043	254**	373**	-.145	.098	.225*	522**		
422**	.309**	.031	345**	.136	-.077	.245**	362**	360**	-.029	.157	356**	611**	524**	
672**	.173*	442**	617**	492**	327**	.217*	508**	572**	294**	273**	556**	612**	449**	481**

The 15-items were examined in the descriptive statistics, few item shows high correlation with other items hence no item was deleted on that basis on inter-item correlation. Item-total correlation was ranging from .179 to .533 except for five items i.e., item5, 6, 7, 10 and item 11 showed almost zero correlation with total score. All items were analyzed in SPSS using exploratory factor analysis to check their factor loadings.

Table 4: KMO and Bartlett's test

ser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.724
tlett's Test of Sphericity	prox. Chi-Square	455.285
		105
	.	.000

Initially sample was analyzed for sampling adequacy before EFA. The minimum amount of data for factor analysis was satisfied. During the exploratory factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was checked first which was .724, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant (χ^2 (105) = 455.285, $p < .01$). This depicts the fitment of sampling.

Table 5: Depicting total variance explained by factors

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
	4.131	27.540	27.540	3.731	24.875	24.875	2.709	18.062	18.062

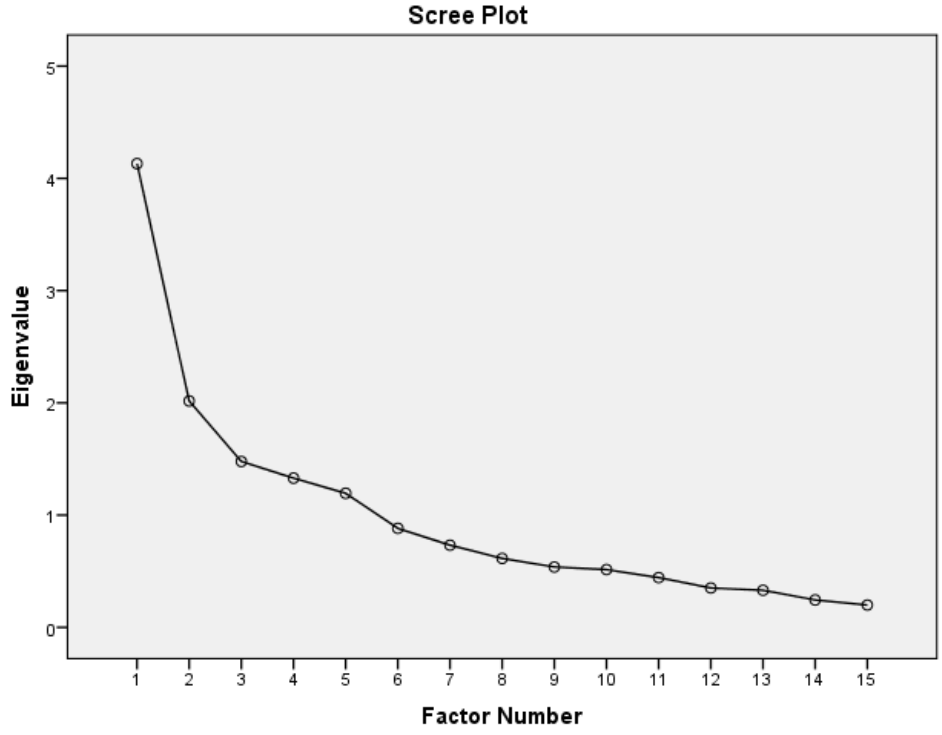
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	2.017	13.444	40.983	1.616	10.772	35.647	1.757	11.712	29.774
	1.478	9.852	50.836	.982	6.544	42.191	1.527	10.180	39.953
	1.330	8.864	59.700	.833	5.556	47.747	1.133	7.552	47.505
	1.194	7.963	67.663	.626	4.173	51.921	.662	4.415	51.921
	.882	5.882	73.545						
	.732	4.881	78.426						
	.614	4.096	82.522						
	.538	3.587	86.109						
	.515	3.432	89.541						
	.444	2.957	92.498						
	.351	2.341	94.839						
	.330	2.202	97.041						
	.244	1.630	98.670						
	.199	1.330	100.000						

Table 5 shows total variance shown by the factors extracted. Five factors are extracted after EFA having eigen value is greater than 1. All of these five factors explain 51.921 % variance together. Factor 1 explains 27.54 % variance, factor 2 explains 13.44 % variance, factor 3 explained 9.852 % variance, factor 4 explain 8.86% variance and factor 5 explains 7.96 % of variance in the variable.

Figure 1: Screen plot depicting factor along with different eigen value



Scree plot in Figure 1 is showing total factors extracted by the EFA, it can be seen through screen plot that total 5 factors are found above eigen value of 1. Hence, only these factors explain significant variance on the marital adjustment.

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Table 6: Unrotated factor matrix

	1	2	3	4	5
00001	.795				
00013	.771				
00015	.687		-.370		
00004	.657	.328		-.351	
00009	.637			.335	
00008	.523				-.418
00014	.519		-.347		
00012	.500				
00006		.861			
00007		.548			
00005	.345	.426			
00003	.392		.596		
00010			.308		
00002		.436		.455	
00011					.535

EFA analysis in SPSS has extracted 5 factors using principal axis factoring method, in which many items have shown loadings on multi-factors as shown inTable 6. 8 out of 15 items has shown factor loading on more than one factors. Therefore, factor rotation was carried out using Varimax method (SPSS) to calculate the exact loadings of items on different factors.

Table7: Rotation factor matrix

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
R00013	.780				
R00015	.722				
R00014	.676				
R00009	.596			.391	
R00012	.454				
R00004		.767			
R00005		.620			
R00001	.459	.609		.321	
R00006		.411	.749		
R00007			.656		
R00002			.606		
R00003				.727	
R00010				.343	
R00011					.559
R00008	.462				-.484

As shown in Table 7, factor rotation method has shown that, item 9 was loading on factor 1 as well as on factor 4. Item 1 has shown factor loading on three factors i.e., factor 1, factor 2 and factor 4. Item 6

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was loading on factor 1 as well as on factor 5 and Item 8 has shown negative factor loadings. Item 13, Item 15, Item 14, Item12, Item 4, Item 5, Item 7, Item 2, Item 3, Item 10, and Item 11 (total 11 out of 15) has shown factors loadings on single factors only. Hence, only these factors will be retained.

Table 8: Item-total statistics

Item-Total Statistics				
	cale Mean if Item Deleted	ale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
R00001	130.4043	222.028	.631	.674
R00002	131.5851	238.138	.083	.705
R00003	131.3191	226.714	.366	.686
R00004	130.7128	221.196	.564	.675
R00005	131.3511	227.306	.432	.684
R00006	130.9787	231.677	.245	.694
R00007	131.0957	236.690	.135	.701
R00008	131.3298	225.707	.446	.682
R00009	130.5426	227.262	.527	.682
R00010	131.6170	233.400	.214	.696
R00011	132.8830	233.330	.181	.698
R00012	130.9043	225.872	.505	.681
R00013	130.4574	228.530	.577	.683
R00014	131.1277	228.693	.386	.687
R00015	130.7553	229.735	.429	.687
R00016	67.8298	60.960	1.000	.676

Cronbach's alpha

Internal consistency reliability was calculated after removing items with loadings on more than one factors. Cronbach's α was .701 which is generally considered as acceptable. Also, internal consistency reliability for each item was calculated and shown inTable 8. Cronbach alpha for each item ranges from .674 to .705. Scale statistics including mean, variance, item-total correlation, squared multiple correlation and Cronbach's alpha after item deletion is given in Table 8.

Table 9: *Scale statistics*

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
135.6596	243.840	15.61537	16

Mean, variance, and standard deviation of scale's total are given in Table 9

Conclusion

The aim was to develop items of marital adjustment and carry out a subjective domain mapping. Here total 15 items were written covering four domains namely financial, emotional, physical, and behavioral. The size of number of item was limited so that short online scale could be developed. Each questions were kept on different domain of marital adjustment as per their high score provided subjectively, which were given as follows

Financial domain contains 3 questions i.e., 10,11,12

Emotional domain contains 5 questions i.e., 1,5,6,8,9

Physical domain contains 3 questions i.e., 13,14,15

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Behavioral domain contains 4 questions i.e., 2,3,4,7

In future the expectation was that this scale could be applied on people who live in relationship that can be of any gender i.e., male, female, or transgender also the applicability of this scale is on Indian population so that its reliability and validity would depend according to different cultural practices also. Efforts could be made to include couples from different states of the country so that variation also qualitative method can also be used along with this to support the reliability and validity of the scale.

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