

IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND COGNITIVE-EMOTIONAL REGULATION OF PROFESSIONAL MARRIED WOMEN

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Abstract

*The goal of this research was to find out how emotional abuse affects psychological well-being and cognitive-emotional regulation among professional married women of Sialkot – Pakistan. A total of 302 participants were included using a convenient sampling technique to gain the required results of the study. The association between the variables was determined using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The findings revealed a positive association between Emotional Abuse and Psychological Wellbeing ($r=.170^{**}$, $n=302$), Emotional Abuse and Cognitive Emotional Regulation ($r=.031$, $n=302$), and Psychological Wellbeing and Cognitive Emotional Regulation ($r=.466^{**}$). Moreover, by using an independent sample *t*-test, a significant difference among rural and urban areas was observed. Findings of ANOVA showed a significant difference in psychological wellbeing with regards to education and socioeconomic status. In addition to this, cognitive-emotional regulation is significantly different among different levels of married women's education.*

Keywords: *Emotional abuse, Psychological Wellbeing, Cognitive Emotional Regulation, and Professional Married Women.*

INTRODUCTION

In Asian society, many women suffer from emotional abuse, among those women, married women are the most sensitive population, reported experiencing emotional abuse throughout their marital lives. They are subjected to a high level of emotional abuse by their intimate partner, which harms their daily cognitive-emotional regulation. Furthermore, married women suffer from many domestic issues, due to the violent behavior and a higher level of aggression shown by their intimate partner who affects their psychological well-being and cognitive-emotional regulation to a great extent. Therefore, to investigate the level of such emotional abuse through which suffered married women and its adverse impact on psychological wellbeing and their cognitive emotion regulation, this study is formulated and conducted in which emotional abuse acts as an independent variable and psychological well-being and cognitive-emotional regulation act as a dependent variable.

Professional women are also suffering from stress about the work, on the other hand, they also have issues in their marital life that affect their psychological well-being and cognitive-emotional regulation. Thus, to carry out the duties and responsibilities of their home along with their workplace has also been very hectic and challenging for them causing mental fatigue, stress, and depressed thoughts along with a level of frustration among them. Such frustration and mental

fatigue also disturbed the level of emotional regulation and their psychological well-being.

In the current study, according to Ryff et al., (2007), Psychological well-being is considered as one's level of psychological pleasure, which includes emotions of fulfillment and satisfaction with life, and Cognitive Emotional Regulation (CER) is a set of four maladaptive and five adaptive mental techniques that people utilize to deal with emotionally stimulating information. (Nadia Garnefski, 2003). Furthermore, Emotional abuse is described as any act that reduces the feelings of identity, dignity, or self-worth of married women, such as punishment, isolation, verbal insults, embarrassment, or any other treatment (Jacobson and Gottman 1998).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The main goal behind the research was to identify the effect of emotional abuse on professional married women that become victims of abuse and mental health issues from their families. Also, they experienced violent behavior and negative attitude from their family that has harmed their psychological well-being and cognitive-emotional regulation. As a result, the goal of this study was to see how emotional abuse affected professional married women's psychological well-being and cognitive-emotional regulation.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To investigate the impact of emotional abuse on married women's psychological well-being.
2. To identify the effect of cognitive-emotional regulation on married women's psychological well-being and emotional abuse.
3. To find out the association between married women's psychological well-being, cognitive-emotional regulation, and emotional abuse.

HYPOTHESIS

1. Among married women, there would be a positive association between psychological well-being and cognitive-emotional control.
2. There would be a considerable difference in emotional abuse, psychological wellbeing, and cognitive-emotional regulation with regards to family status and residential status among married women.
3. There would be a substantial difference in emotional abuse, psychological wellbeing, and cognitive-emotional regulation with regards to occupation, education, age, duration of the marriage, socioeconomic status, and the number of children among married women.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How does emotional abuse affect the psychological well-being of married women?
2. How does cognitive-emotional regulation affect married women's psychological well-being and emotional abuse?
3. What is the relationship between emotional abuse, psychological wellbeing, and cognitive-emotional regulation among married women?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Williams (2003), evaluated the outcomes of marital status, marital transitions, and marital fantasy in psychological well-being for males and females and demonstrated that low ranges of marital first-rate and excessive ranges of marital stress are in all likelihood to

increase despair and limit ordinary pleasure with existence for males and females. The researcher reviewed that marital high quality is additionally an important determining thing in an individual's psychological well-being. Those with poor marital quality suffer from more psychological trauma than those who are not married.

Additionally, Hamdan-Mansour et al. (2011) found that women in Jordan's southern area had moderate to high levels of psychological well-being, according to the study. Marital violence is adversely related to psychological well-being, indicating that happy women are less likely to be mistreated. In addition, illiterate women reported more abuse. As a result, it could be concluded that empowered women are less likely to be mistreated.

Moreover, Panahi et al. (2016) researched to study the impact of cognitive-emotional regulation on Malaysian graduates' psychological well-being, with a high score in the positive reappraisal method. Planning was revealed to be a powerful predictor of psychological health among nine components of cognitive emotion regulation. Apart from that, catastrophizing, reassessment, other-blame, self-blame, perspective, and acceptance all contributed to the graduates' psychological well-being.

Also, Martin and Dahlen (2005) found that catastrophizing and self-blame are linked to greater emotional issues in adolescence, whereas responses like positive reappraisal are linked to fewer problems. Furthermore, catastrophizing has been proven to be the most important predictor of psychological maladjustment in teenagers, and positive reappraisal has a considerable favorable influence on psychological well-being.

Along with this, Moe (2012) investigated socio-demographic characteristics (family income, education, and marital status) tend to be essential factors in women's efficient working, and women's psychological well-being appears to be positively influenced by global perceptions of perceived social support. Furthermore, the researchers found that differences in women's psychological well-being ratings are more likely to be caused by other characteristics than by their age or ethnic background.

Furthermore, Karakurt and Silver (2013) conducted a study to examine the effects of gender and age on emotional abuse in intimate relationships as moderators. The Emotional Abuse Questionnaire, which has four subscales, was utilized to collect data for their analysis. There was less emotional abuse experienced in older females than in older males. Younger women reported high isolation levels and high property damage than men.

Moreover, Normand (2013) conducted research to demonstrate women's attachment to an emotionally abusive relationship which left them at risk personally. She explored those women who are emotionally abused suffer from a loss of self-esteem. She added in her study that to remain in an emotionally abusive relationship from the fear of losing it is a false belief and the opposite to this belief is true.

In addition to this, Khan et al. (2014) conducted a cross-sectional study to find out how often emotional abuse is among married female healthcare practitioners over the course of their careers.

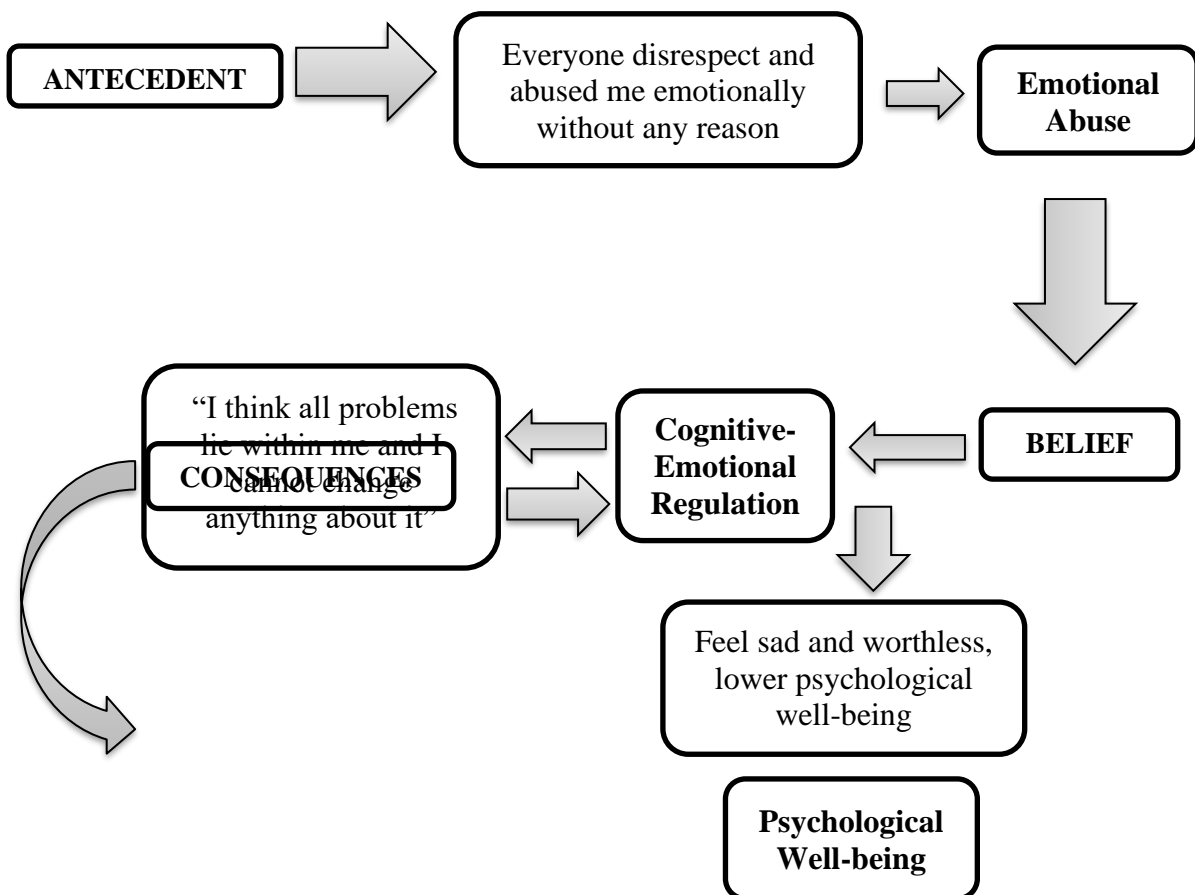
The researchers explored that 62.6% of women reported a lifetime prevalence of emotional abuse. Nurses experienced more emotional abuse in their life than doctors. They conclude that emotional abuse is frequent among professional women.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

ABC MODEL BY ALBERT ELLIS (1991)

According to psychologist Albert Ellis (1991), the ABC model is applied to people for their efforts in overcoming negativity. This strategy is primarily concerned with a person's view about the particular situation. It affects the way people make beliefs and predict future events and situations immediately. These thoughts or beliefs might be distorted or irrational, which in turn, leads to negative consequences.

This model accurately fits in the current targeted population, i.e., married women who are in their professional life and suffered abuse and violence from their families which creates a lot of stress and negative beliefs in them, leading them towards the negative consequences of weaker cognitive-emotional regulation, which in turn lower their psychological wellbeing.



METHODOLOGY

MEASURES

In this study, the consent form was used to take the preceding approval of the participants. A demographic form was used to collect information about the research participants' personal and

work lives. The following items such as the participant's age, education, duration of the marriage, occupation, family status, social-economic status, residential status, no of children were included in the form. Furthermore, emotional abuse was measured by the Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (28 items), developed by Jacobson and Gottman (1998), psychological well-being was calculated by Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scales (PWB), developed by (Ryff et al., 2007), and the Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (CERQ) was used to assess cognitive emotion regulation (Nadia Garnefski, 2003).

PARTICIPANTS

Research was conducted on professional married women to determine the effect of Emotional Abuse on Psychological Well-being and Cognitive Emotional Regulation.

The research was conducted on professional married women among doctors, entrepreneurs, bankers, and teachers of Sialkot, Pakistan.

DATA COLLECTION

Married women from different professions like doctors, Teachers, Entrepreneurs, and bankers age ranging 20-45 were included in the study using the convenient sampling method.

DATA ANALYSIS

After the data collection, analysis was run through SPSS software. To determine the relationship and difference between the variables, different statistical analysis were utilized to get the desired outcomes from the study.

RESULTS

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RESEARCH VARIABLES

Relationships among the variables were studied using Pearson product-moment correlation. The table given below shows the relationship between all the variables.

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation between Emotional Abuse, Psychological Wellbeing and Cognitive Emotional Regulation (N=302)

Variables	EA	PWB	CERQ	Mean	S.D
EA	--	.170**	.031	65.2	11.11
PWB	.170**	--	.466**	147.39	11.74
CERQ	.031	.466**	--	126.59	9.63

Note. **correlation is significant at .01 level (2-tailed); M= mean; SD= standard deviation; EA= Emotional Abuse, PWB= Psychological Well-being; CERQ= Cognitive Emotional Regulation Questionnaire

A strong positive association between Emotional Abuse and Psychological Well-being, $r=.170^{**}$, $n=302$, $p < .01$, two-tailed, was found through correlation analysis. Furthermore, correlation results explore that there was a positive relationship between Emotional Abuse and Cognitive Emotional Regulation, $r=.031$, $n=302$, $p < .01$, two-tailed. Finally, the outcomes reveal that there is a positive association between Psychological Wellbeing and Cognitive Emotional Regulation, $r= .466^{**}$, $n= 302$, $p < .01$, two-tailed.

RESIDENTIAL STATUS DIFFERENCE

Residential status differences in the levels of psychological well-being, emotional abuse, and cognitive-emotional regulation were investigated by applying an independent sample t-test.

Table 2: Mean, SD, and t values of Rural and Urban areas for Emotional Abuse, Psychological Wellbeing and Cognitive Emotional Regulation (N=302)

Variables	<i>Rural</i>		<i>Urban</i>		<i>t</i> (302)	<i>P</i>	<i>95%CI</i>		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>MSD</i>	<i>t</i> (302)			<i>UL</i>	<i>LL</i>	<i>Cohen's d</i>
EA	60.66	8.32	68.52	11.72	-6.45	.000	-5.45	-10.24	.77
PWB	145.37	10.19	148.86	12.57	-2.57	.006	-.82	-6.16	.30
CERQ	125.10	9.37	127.68	9.70	-2.316	.739	-.38	-4.77	.27

Note. *M*= mean; *SD*= standard deviation; *CI*= Confidence Interval; *LL*=lower limit; *UL*= upper limits

The t-test indicates that there is a notable difference between rural and urban concerning the levels of EA ($t = -6.45, p = .00$). Mean and standard deviation values are slightly less in rural ($M = 60.66, SD = 8.32$) than the values obtained by the urban ($M = 68.52, SD = 11.72$) with the effect of Cohen's $d = .77$. The test also explores the substantial difference between rural and urban concerning the levels of PWB ($t = -2.57, p = 0.006$). The mean and standard deviation values are slightly less in rural ($M = 145.37, SD = 10.19$) than the values obtained by the urban ($M = 148.86, SD = 12.57$) with the effect of Cohen's $d = .30$. Analysis shows that the mean scores of EA, PWB, and CER are less in rural as compared to the mean scores of urban. There was no significant difference in cognitive-emotional regulation levels between rural and urban areas, as demonstrated by the p-value of .739.

MEAN DIFFERENCE

The one-way analysis was utilized to find out the difference among levels of psychological wellbeing and cognitive-emotional regulation concerning age, duration of the marriage, education, occupation, socioeconomic status, and the number of children.

Table 3.1.1: One-way analysis of variance between PWB and education (N=302)

Education	<i>SS</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
<i>PWB</i>					
Between groups	1190.902	2	595.45	4.416	0.01
Within groups	40313.207	299	134.827		
Total	41504.109	301			

Note. *SS*= sum of square; *df*= degree of freedom; *MS*= mean square; $**p = .01$

Table 3.1.1 reveals that the results obtained from the ANOVA for PWB and education were found to be significant $F (4.416), p = .01$ which means there is a difference in psychological wellbeing among married women according to their education. Post hoc results further suggest that there is a difference found between the different groups of education among married women for their psychological wellbeing.

Table 3.1.2: One-way analysis of variance between CERQ and education (N=302)

Education	<i>SS</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
<i>CERQ</i>					

Between groups	1721.309	2	860.654	9.804	0.00
Within groups	26247.211		299	87.783	
Total	27968.520		301		

Note. SS= sum of square; df= degree of freedom; MS= mean square; **p<.01

As shown in the above table 3.1.2, the results revealed from the ANOVA found a notable difference between cognitive-emotional regulation and education F (9.804), p<0.01 which means there is a difference among married women’s cognitive-emotional regulation according to their education. Post hoc results further suggest that there is a difference found between the different groups of education among married women for their cognitive-emotional regulation.

Table 3.2: CERQ and socioeconomic status (N=302) variance through One-way analysis

Socio-economic status	SS	Df	MS	F	P
Between groups	795.733	2	397.867	4.378	0.01
Within groups	27172.787		299	90.879	
Total	27968.520		301		

Note. SS= sum of square; df= degree of freedom; MS= mean square; **p=.01

The findings of the ANOVA were found to be significant F (4.378), p=.01 in Table 3.2 which means there is a difference in cognitive-emotional regulation among married women according to their socioeconomic status. Post hoc results further suggest that there is a difference found between the different groups of socio-economic status among married women for their cognitive-emotional regulation.

DISCUSSION

The professional married women across the Asian society are the ones who are the most vulnerable population among all. They experienced a high rate of stress and mental fatigue as they have to run their family and earn also for their living. They also suffered a level of domestic violence from their family and experienced work-related stress from their jobs and workplaces which seriously impacted their mental health and psychological well-being. Emotional abuse including punishments, isolation, and a diminished sense of self-worth caused professional women to lack life satisfaction and accomplishment in their lives. It also lows down their adaptive cognitive strategies which impacted their professional as well as personal life to a greater extent, leaving them more vulnerable in the future.

The first hypothesis, i.e., In married women, there will be a positive association between psychological well-being and cognitive-emotional regulation. was supported by the study of Panahi et al. (2016) and can be seen in Table 1 in the result section of the article which states the impact of cognitive emotion regulation on the psychological well-being of Malaysian graduates, with a high score observed in the positive reappraisal technique.

According to the second hypothesis, there will be a substantial difference in emotional abuse., psychological wellbeing, and cognitive-emotional regulation with regards to family status and residential status among married women was supported by the theory of Moe (2012) which states

that socio-demographic characteristics have a vital role in women's proper function and psychological well-being as shown in Table 3.2.

The third hypothesis that is, there will be a significant difference in emotional abuse, psychological wellbeing, and cognitive-emotional regulation with regards to occupation, education, age, duration of the marriage, socio-economic status, and the number of children among married women was supported by the theory of Moe (2012) which states that socio-demographic variables including education have a crucial role in women's positive functioning and psychological health and is shown in Table 3.2.

According to the results, emotional abuse, psychological well-being, and cognitive-emotional regulation are positively correlated with each other. Moreover, women living in a specific area has also a great impact on their emotional abuse and psychological well-being. Education and socioeconomic status have indeed been found to have a significant impact on women's emotional health, psychological well-being, and cognitive-emotional regulation.

CONCLUSION

A satisfied and healthy intimate relationship is a key part of the psychological well-being of professional women. Above all the variables being studied, it was found that emotional abuse was positively correlated with psychological well-being and cognitive-emotional regulation. However, a significant difference was found between psychological well-being and cognitive-emotional regulation concerning the educational level. Women having different socioeconomic backgrounds were found to have different levels of cognitive-emotional regulation respectively. According to the current study, the level of emotional abuse in married women should be lower down so that they could carry out the adaptive cognitive strategies and be psychologically healthy and fit for their work.

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