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PERCEIVED SPOUSAL RELATIONSHIP AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS IN WOMEN SCHOOL TEACHERS

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# ABSTRACT



**OBJECTIVE**

To the find the relationship between spousal relationships and psychological distress in married women school teachers.

# DURATION AND PLACEOFTHE STUDY

The study was conducted in a public and private schools of Lahore from September, 2014 to August, 2015

# STUDY DESIGN

Correlational research design

# METHODS

Two hundred and ten married women schoolteachers(105 government teachers & 105 private teachers) were included in the study from eight government and ten private schools of Lahore city in Pakistan. Perception of Spousal Reciprocity Scale and Kessler Psychological Distress Scale translated by Hussain and Kausar (2010) were used as test tools.Data were analyzed in SPSSv.20.

# RESULTS

Pearson Product Moment analysis revealed a significant negative relationship between perceived spousal reciprocity and psychological distress. Regression analysis showed that perceived spousal reciprocity is significant predictorof psychological distress.

# CONCLUSION

Perception of spousal relationships was significantly associated with psycho-logical distress. It is important to realize that spousal support is an important factor in working women's life to enhance their psychological health.

# KEYWORDS

Spousalrelations,PsychologicalDistress,Working women.

# INTRODUCTION

Spousal Reciprocity is defined as describing relationships wherein spouses perceive each other as equal to each other; believe in mutual respect, and direct communication 1• Psychological distress is a measure of degree of manifestation of symptoms of anxiety and depression such as nervousness, sadness, restlessness, hopelessness, and worthlessness over a particular period of time'. Psychological Distress is a cluster of many depression and anxiety symptoms. It is continuum of psychological issues mainly described in terms of depression and anxiety. Psychological distress may be comorbid with acute and chronic stress specifically when the stage comes where there isa failure of physical and psychologicalcoping strategies''

Barnet, Brennan, Raudenbush and Pleck signified that the negative marital experiences were associated with increasing severity of psychological distress in working women5• The findingsof the indigenous research showed that working married women have to face more problems in their married life as compared with non-working married women and due to marital conflicts they are more prone towards depression'. The way spousal reciprocity can affect psychological distress of the female school teachers is stillunexplored intheliteratureavailable.Present study isconceived to find outtheanswerto this question.The present study hypothesized that

Thereis likely to be a relationship between perceived spousal reciprocity and psychological distressin married women schoolteachers.

Perceived spousal reciprocity is likely to predict psychological distress in

married women schoolteachers

# METHODS

**Participants**

A total 210 (105 government and 105 private) married women school teachers were included in the study through purposive convenient sampling technique.

Inclusion in the study based on the criterion that participant must have been working in the school for at least one year and have been married for at least one year. Teachers doing part-time jobs, working on contract, working in special schools, over the age of 55 years, working in schools where day-care or school psychologistswere available, widow/divorced, or the teachers with any severe psychological and physiological problems or physical disability such as amputation etc were excluded in the present research.

#### Instruments

##### *Perception* of *Spousal Reciprocity Scale (POSRS)'*

Perception of Spousal Reciprocity Scale (POSRS) is a 17-item inventory. It is rated on a 6 point Likert-type scale that include 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 6 (Strongly Agree). The higher score on this scale indicate greater spousal reciprocity. This tool was translated intoUrdu language by using back translation procedure proposed by MAPI institute. The internal consistency of the translated version of The Perception of Spousal Reciprocity Scale (POSRS) was .87 for the present research.

##### *Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (KlO)'*

Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (KlO) is a 10 items scale. It consisted of 5-point likert scale ranging from 1 (all of the time) to 5 (none of the time).The translated version of this tool by Hussain and Kausar (2010)' was used in the present study. The internal consistency of the translated version of The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (Kl 0) was .89 for the present research.

#### Procedure

After the approval of the study, school administration wascontacted to get access to the teachers. The participants were assured about confidentiality. Written informed consent was sorted. N=l0 participant (n=S from government school and n=S from private school) were included in the pilot study. On the average, the participants took 12-14 minutes to fill the whole research form. After piloting, the main study was conducted and data was entered to SPSS 20.Overall response rate was 27%.

## RESULTS

The data was screened for outliers and no outliers were found. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was conducted to find out the relationship between perceived spousal reciprocity, and psychologicaldistressin married women school teachers. Regression analysiswas done to find out the predictive role of perceived spousal reciprocity on psychologicaldistress.

The descriptive statistics showed that the average age of the participants was 37 years. Majority of the participantshad the family monthly income more than 50,000.Majority of the participants lived in nuclear family system with maximum number of family members ranging from 1-5. Seventy-two percent of the participants' spouses earned more than 50,000 Rupees per month. Majority of the

**Table I**

**Summary of Inter-correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations for Scores** on Perceived Spousal Reciprocity and Psychological Distress of government **and private school teachers**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variables** | *I* | ***2*** | ***M*** | ***SD*** |
| **I. Perceived Spousal Reciprocity**  **2. Psychological Distress** | **-.50\*\*** | **-.50\*\*** | 79.49  27.12 | 15.09  770 |
| ***M***  ***SD*** | 79.19  15.46 | 26.50  6.51 |  |  |

*\*p< .05, \*\*p< .01.*

Inter-correlations for government school teachers (n= 1OS) are presented in upperdiagonal,and inter-correlationsfor privateschool teachers (n= 1OS) are presented in lower diagonal. Means and standard deviationsfor government school teachers are presented in the vertical columns, and means and standard deviations for private school teachers are presented in the horizontal rows. For all scales, higher scores are indicative of more extreme responding in the direction of theconstruct assessed.

**Table 2**

Predictor of Psychological Distress

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Psychological Distress** | | | |
| **Model** | | | |
|  | *B* | p | 95%CI |
| **Constant** | **45.36\*\*\*** |  | [40.89,49.83] |
| **Perceived Spousal Reciprocity** | **-.23\*\*\*** | **.50\*\*\*** | [-.28,-.17] |
| *R'* |  | .25 |  |
| *F* |  | **69.43\*\*\*** |  |

*Note. N-210; CI -co11/ide11ce interval.* •- *p< .05,* ••- *p< .01, \*\*\*-p<.001*

It was hypothesized that there is likely to be a relationship between perceived spousal reciprocity and psychological distress in married women school teachers. According to Table 1, upper diagonal represents correlations for government school teachers. The result shows that perceived spousal reciprocity has highly significant negative correlation with psychological distress which also shows that the teachers who experience higher level of spousal reciprocity will havelow psychologicaldistress(see table 1).

Results depicts that there exists a highly significant negative relationship between psychological distress and perceived spousal reciprocity in private school teachers. It shows that private school

participants reported that they spent 2-4 hours with their husband and 4-6hourswith their children.Most of the participantswere either satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the quality time that they spend with their husband andchildren.



Majority of the participants arrange gatherings at home, go on gatherings and outings outside home with family at least once a month. Most of the participants lived with their husbands and most of them were either satisfied or somewhat satisfied with theirspousal relationships. Majority of the participants and their spouses worked for about 6-8 hoursdaily. However, the performance satisfaction was high for nearly whole of the sample. Most of the participants spent their income on theirfamily.

teachers, who experience more psychological distress, will experience lessspousalreciprocity and viceversa (seetable 1).

The regression model explained that perceived spousal reciprocity is a significant negative predictor of work-family spillover. The model turned out to be statistically significant F(1,208) = 69.43, p < .001 and spousal reciprocity accounted for 25% variance in psychological distress.

## DISCUSSION

Psychological distress has negative relationship with spousal reciprocity.The compromisesmade by the working mothersin order to create balance between work and marriage roles are also a leading factor towardspsychological distress.They cannot take proper sleep

as they bring extra school work at home such as paper/ home work checking to complete it late night after getting free from the household responsibilities especially if spousal support is absent. It also causes distress in working women. These findings are also verified by previous researches; that suggests that one of the major leading factorstowardspsychological distressis problemsinspousal relationships. Absence of spousal support makes it difficult for women to handle household also. Spousal support and communication is very important for women's mental health (Johnson & Wu, 20028; Manne & Glassman, 20009; Barnett, Raudenbush, Brennan,Pleck,& Marshall, 199510).

Secondly, it was revealed that perceived spousal support is the predictor of psychological distress. The findings of the indigenous research conducted by Hashmi, Khurshid, and Hassan showed that working married women have to face more problems in theirmarried life as compared with non-working married women and due to marital conflicts they are more prone towards depression' using Dyadic Adjustment Scale adapted version", Beck Depression Inventory" and Stress Scale", showed that working married women have to face more problems in their married life regarding marital adjustment ascompared with non-working married women and due to marital conflicts theyare more prone towardsdepression.

### CONCLUSION

The study will help in planning specific interventions regarding unhealthy spousal relationships and psychological distress in married schoolteachers.

# Limitations and suggestions

There was no division between primary, secondary and higher secondary school teachers. The inter-comparison of the schools' education systems were not focused in the present research. It is important to study thedifference between the working motherswho have children and who do not have. The comparison between the schools that provide day care for teacher's children and the schools who do not provide these facilities should be focused.

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# Undertaking

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