

## A Study of Depression in A Married Couples and Family Relationships

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### Abstract

Emotional intelligence, depression, and marital contentment among married couples in Chennai urban area are the subjects of this study. The goal of the study was to look at how emotional intelligence and depression affect how happy couples are in their marriages. Purposive sampling was used to select a sample size of 384 married individuals using Cochran's formula for calculating sample size. The study collects data through a primary data collection strategy. A closed-ended questionnaire with a "5-point Likert scale" is used to collect primary data about participants' emotional intelligence, depression levels, and marital satisfaction. The questionnaire's reliability and validity are demonstrated by means of Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test, and communalities. Excel and SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) were used to conduct statistical analysis on the collected responses. Emotional intelligence and depression were used to test for significant differences in marital satisfaction levels using ANOVA. In addition, the predictive power of emotional intelligence and depression on marital satisfaction was investigated using regression analysis. The results of this study will shed light on how depression and emotional intelligence affect married couples' marital satisfaction in Chennai. The findings may have implications for therapeutic interventions and counseling services aimed at enhancing marital satisfaction and overall well-being and will contribute to the existing literature on marital relationships.

**Keywords:** Depression, Marital Satisfaction, Emotional Intelligence, Married Couples, Chennai

### INTRODUCTION

Peace, growth, and the satisfaction of sexual and psychological needs improve both individual and societal well-being. Many married couples struggle to build and maintain healthy, satisfying relationships with one another despite the advantages of marriage, which resulted in an alarmingly high number of divorces. According to a number of studies, marital and sexual unhappiness is one of many factors that can have an effect on couples' relationships and, in some instances, increase the likelihood of divorce. According to Molaei (2016), marital happiness and contentment are considered indicators of marital fulfillment. As indicated by Kaplan and Maddux, several necessities to go no farther than themselves to get the conjugal delight they've been looking for [1] [2]. The development of this concept is influenced by marital contentment. According to Gharibi et al., they believe that each couple's marital happiness is distinct and based on their own set of values and expectations. Satisfaction in the Marriage During the early years of marriage, marital happiness is uncertain and the marriage is fragile; Therefore, the couple must cooperate in order to achieve marital contentment. According to LM & Leila (2013), married couples experience happiness when their relationship meets their expectations. According to Mohammedzadeh et al., marriage is a union between two people who are very different from one another. (2008).

When evaluating a potential partner for a healthy, long-term relationship, Claxton contends that people must look beyond superficial characteristics (Claxton et al.). (2012). Numerous factors, including "socioeconomic position, education, age, ethnicity, religion, physical beauty, Intelligence Quotient, and personal values and views," can be used to predict marital happiness (Chehreh et al., (Karibeeran & Mohanty, 2017) Emotional intelligence Self-awareness and social awareness are crucial components of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence includes the ability to identify and label one's own emotions, channel those feelings into productive psychological actions like "planning and problem solving," and control over one's own and others' emotional responses in stressful situations (Jassal 2021). In the 1990s, Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer came up with the idea of "emotional intelligence," and Daniel Goleman made it known to the general public (Singh et al.). (2022). A widely accepted concept is emotional intelligence, or EQ as it is more commonly referred to. However, according to MacCann et al., some psychologists contend that the fact that EQ

cannot be measured in the same manner as other traits like IQ contributes to its lack of explanatory power. 2020).

Many people suffer from major depressive disorder, or depression. It is characterized by persistent sadness or a lack of enthusiasm for activities that were once enjoyable (Chand et al.). 2021). Depression is distinct from the typical emotional ups and downs. There are a variety of factors that could be affected. These include community ties and friends. As a direct result, problems may arise at work and in school. Depression affects every person. People who have survived abuse, significant losses, and other traumatic life experiences are more likely to develop depression. Women are more likely than men to suffer from depressive disorders (Chand et al., 2021). Depression is influenced by a variety of social, psychological, and biological factors [2] [3] [4].

According to Chand et al., people who have gone through life's difficulties, such as unemployment, the death of a loved one, or traumatic events, are more likely to experience depressive symptoms. Due to the additional stress and dysfunction caused by depression, a depressed person's living conditions may both deteriorate.

Emotional intelligence and the relationship between it and marital happiness were defined by Anghel, T. C. (2016). Self-regulation and social awareness, two subcomponents of emotional intelligence, were found to strongly correlate with marital contentment. The best way to maintain a relationship is for both partners to develop emotional intelligence and work on improving themselves as individuals.

A. R. K. Abbasi, et al. (2016) looked at how a person's emotional quotient and attachment style affected their happiness in their marriage. The results suggested that emotional intelligence and attachment styles play a significant role in marital happiness by reducing conflict and encouraging constructive communication between partners. Ike, A. B., and others (2018) investigated whether differences in marital contentment could be explained by differences in self- and partner-reported emotional intelligence. The capacity to control one's own and others' feelings was a significant predictor of both one's own and one's partner's satisfaction with the marriage, as were self-reported measures of emotion control and management. Milani, A. S., et al. investigated and analyzed the effects of emotional intelligence training on women's marital happiness, sex lives, and mental health (2020). Women's happiness in marriage was improved by training in emotional intelligence.

DeLongis, A., and Zwicker, A., evaluated stress and coping in stepfamilies as divorce and quality of marriage indicators. Stress from stepfamily members has two effects on marital stability: via marital distress and depression, with parental pressures being particularly potent divorce drivers. The correlations between marital satisfaction and depression across age groups and between marital quality and depression in old age were the subjects of a 2019 study by Goldfarb, M. R., and Trudel, G. An overview of the connection between mental illness and unhappy marriages was provided. Although cross-sectional evidence suggests a strong connection between depression and marital quality, longitudinal studies and studies of mediators/moderators have produced conflicting results. This is especially true for older people, for whom little research has been done. J. I. Odinka et al., (2018) looked at the relationship between anxiety, postpartum depression, and marital contentment in low-risk women in Enugu, South-Eastern Nigeria. There was a high prevalence of marital unhappiness, postpartum depression, and anxiety among nursing mothers in Enugu, but these conditions were not accurately diagnosed. Due to their negative effects on the mother, her partner, and her newborn, postpartum depression and anxiety must be diagnosed, prevented, and treated early. Jenkins, A. I., et al. used a dyadic analytic approach to examine the prospective, bidirectional relationships between depression symptoms and marital satisfaction (2020). The findings demonstrated that if they were experiencing depressive symptoms, both spouses and husbands were more likely to report a decrease in their own and their partner's marital satisfaction. In order to learn more about married Iranian women's levels of happiness, emotional intelligence, and religious beliefs, Hajihassani, M., and Sim, T. (2019) conducted research. According to the findings, among Iranian women who were married off at a young age, "emotional intelligence and age at marriage" were significant predictors of

marital happiness. a marital happiness prediction model for postmenopausal women based on emotional intelligence. Due to the positive correlation between the two, having an adequate level of emotional intelligence is a crucial structural component in a happy marriage [4] [5] [6] [7].

Bibi, S., et al. conducted research on the emotional acuity and self-esteem of university students (2016). Although there was no statistically significant gender gap in self-esteem among college students, there was a positive correlation between self-esteem and emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence was found to be higher among women than among men.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To investigate the connection between marital contentment and depression among married couples in Chennai.
- To investigate the connection between marital contentment and emotional intelligence among married couples in Chennai.
- To compare married couples' emotional intelligence, depression, and marital contentment based on their age and gender in Chennai.

### **HYPOTHESIS**

- Emotional intelligence and marital contentment are positively correlated among married couples in Chennai.
- Married couples in Chennai have a positive correlation between depression and marital contentment.
- Gender, age, education, and income have different effects on emotional intelligence, depression, and marital satisfaction [6] [7] [8] [9] [10].

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Chennai is referred to as India's Silicon Valley. This makes it one of India's busiest cities. Because they are so preoccupied with work and live a fashionable lifestyle, people have less time for one another. Better mutual understanding is required for marital happiness. Chennai is the best location to investigate "the correlation between emotional intelligence and depression on marital satisfaction in married couples" because of this. Primary data collection was used in the study. Using Cochran's formula for the size of the sample and a purposive sampling strategy, 384 married people were selected as samples for this purpose. A closed-ended questionnaire with a "5-point Likert scale" was used to collect the primary data. Statistical software like Excel and SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) were used to analyze the questionnaire responses. The questionnaire's reliability and validity are demonstrated by means of Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test, and communalities; the hypothesis is supported by means of Mean, Correlation, ANOVA, and Regression. Questionnaire viability during pre-testing and face validity The viability of a questionnaire is evaluated during its development. Before sending the actual survey to the population of interest, the pretest is conducted.

The creation of a questionnaire or other measurement instrument for use in an experiment or survey is referred to by this term (Green et al., 1988), which goes about as a training run for genuine exploration (Chase et al., 1982). Before the final data collection, a face validity test and pre-test were conducted. This study's questionnaire has 23 questions, 15 of which are variable and 8 of which are demographic. This study uses a Likert scale for its questions. First, the questionnaire's content validity was examined. Two academics and one professional were consulted for feedback after the questionnaire was distributed. To get their thoughts on the questionnaire, these officials were questioned. The data collection questions were correctly phrased, according to their input [11] [12] [13] [14] [15].

Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability are used to evaluate internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha and the Composite Reliability (CR) values are shown in Table 2. Composite Reliability values ranged from 0.787 to 0.949, whereas Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.807 to 0.919. (Hair et al.,) Both statistical construct dependability measures are greater than 0.70. 2011, demonstrating the existence of construct dependability. Fornell and Larcker (1981) define AVE as the point at which a construct's AVE equals or exceeds 0.5. The



**Table 1: Analyses of Validity and Reliability**

Construct	Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	KMO Value	Communalities
Emotional Intelligence	EI1	0.812	0.949	0.869	0.785	.867
	EI2					.838
	EI3					.837
	EI4					.832
	EI5					.833
Marital Satisfaction	MS1	0.807	0.787	0.751	0.823	.531
	MS2					.598
	MS3					.605
	MS4					.575
	MS5					.520
Depression	D1	0.919	0.921	0.904	0.904	.760
	D2					.776
	D3					.778
	D4					.733
	D5					.731

The KMO test of sample adequacy's findings are presented in Table 2, with KMO values ranging from 0.785 to 0.904. A community is the proportion of an observable variable's variation that can be explained by latent components. A good metric for factor analysis is a commonality of at least 0.40. Field, 2013). The communalities of several items are shown in Table 2, and they all have communalities of 0.5 or higher. Assuming a significant alignment between the observed variable and the underlying structures, this indicates that the extracted components adequately explain the observed variable. The results demonstrate the validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

### Hypothesis

"Demographic factors (gender, age, education, and income) have different effects on emotional intelligence, depression, and marital satisfaction."Gender ANOVA Analysis

Hypothesis	Variables	Factor			Anova		Hypotheses Supported
		Gender	Mean	SD	F	Sig value	
	Emotional Intelligence	Male	23.9474	23.9474	2.317	.029	Supported
		Female	23.6229	23.6229			
	Marital Satisfaction	Male	22.0622	22.0622	0.956	.329	Unsupported
		Female	22.4343	22.4343			
	Depression	Male	15.5885	15.5885	0.673	.412	Unsupported
		Female	15.0457	15.0457			

The hypothesis investigates whether married couples' emotional intelligence, marital satisfaction, and depression differ by gender. There were two groups of people (Group 1: Male; Group 2: Female)." The results of the ANOVA indicate that the groups' Emotional Intelligence scores differ significantly ( $F = 2.317, p .05$ ), the groups' Marital Satisfaction scores differ insignificantly ( $F = 0.956, p >.05$ ), and the groups' Depression scores differ insignificantly ( $F = 0.673, p >.05$ ).

**Table 2: ANOVA Analysis**

Hypothesis	Variables	Factor			Anova		Hypotheses Supported
		Age group	Mean	SD	F	Sig value	
	Emotional Intelligence	23-30 years	23.8581	2.09959	2.107	.032	Supported
		31-37 years	23.7203	2.02500			
		38-45 years	23.8333	2.39467			
		Above 45 years	23.7647	1.81756			
	Marital Satisfaction	23-30 years	22.5419	3.70720	.681	.564	Unsupported
		31-37 years	21.9068	3.89167			
		38-45 years	22.1500	3.63982			
		Above 45 years	22.1373	3.41186			
	Depression	23-30 years	14.9290	6.27312	2.738	0.30	Supported
		31-37 years	15.8814	6.77876			
		38-45 years	14.8500	6.03893			
		Above 45 years	15.9216	6.73155			

The hypothesis examines whether married people's emotional intelligence, marital satisfaction, and depression differ by age group. There were four groups of people (Group 1:

23-30 years; Group 2: 31-37 years; Group 3: 38-45 years; Group 4: older than 45 years)." The results of the ANOVA indicate that the groups' Emotional Intelligence scores differ significantly ( $F = 2.107$ ,  $p.05$ ), the groups' Marital Satisfaction scores differ insignificantly ( $F = 0.681$ ,  $p >.05$ ), and the groups' Depression scores differ significantly ( $F = 2.738$ ,  $p.05$ ) [15] [16] [17] [18].

## DISCUSSION, SUMMARY & FINDING

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between marital contentment and depression in married Chennai couples. The Pearson correlation between emotional intelligence and marital contentment was found to be positive and statistically significant ( $r = .108$ ,  $p.05$ ). As a result, H1 received support. This demonstrates that Chennai married population would have happier marriages if they had higher levels of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence and marital contentment also had a positive and statistically significant Pearson correlation ( $r = .020$ ,  $p.05$ ). Therefore, H2 was not supported. This demonstrates that Chennai married population would have happier marriages if they had higher levels of emotional intelligence.

However, the significance value of the third hypothesis, which is less than 0.05 (i.e., 0.029), indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between emotional intelligence and gender, but there is no statistically significant difference between the mean group of marital satisfaction and depression and gender. Additionally, there is a statistically significant age-group difference in emotional intelligence and depression, but there is no such difference in marital satisfaction between the mean groups because the significance value is less than 0.05 (i.e., 0.032 and 0.30). Additionally, the difference between the mean group's marital satisfaction and depression is not statistically significant because its significance value is less than 0.05 (i.e., 0.015). However, the difference between emotional intelligence and educational qualification is statistically significant. Even though there is no statistical difference between Marital Satisfaction and income in the mean group, there is a statistical difference between emotional intelligence and depression with income because its significance value is less than

0.05 (i.e., 0.015 and 0.043). Lavalekar et al., Batool & Khalid (2009), and Schutte et al. (2010), 2001), and Stevens & Stevens (2006) discovered a positive and significant link between emotional intelligence and marital contentment, proving that emotional intelligence plays a beneficial role in marital contentment. Emotional expressiveness and marital happiness were found to be positively correlated in women by Rauer and Volling (2005), but they did not find a similar correlation in men [18] [19] [20]. There was no correlation between religious affiliation and marital happiness among young women, according to the findings of the study. Contrary to what the majority of research found, this finding was unexpected. Earlier studies (Yeganeh & Shaikhmahmoodi, 2013; 2012, by Rasouli and Soltani; 1990, Dudley and Kosinski; Olson and other, 2015) had demonstrated a positive correlation between marital contentment and religious inclination. This contradiction might be explained if the age of the sample group is taken into consideration. Additionally, the interviewees' socioeconomic status must be taken into consideration. In lower socioeconomic classes, issues like poverty and addiction have an impact on marital happiness, according to a 2003 study by Amato and Previti, whereas in "upper socioeconomic classes, the difference in values plays a part in marital dissatisfaction and, consequently, divorce." It is possible to draw the conclusion that conflicts over values, particularly "spiritual and religious values," "have not been a big problem for the group," given that the majority of the sample group is from lower socioeconomic levels and that the city of Chennai has a low standing in terms of both culture and economy. We might also use our ignorance of the sample group's other personality and mental characteristics as another justification. Religion, according to Sullivan (2001), has a negative effect on neurotic relationships. It would appear that religious orientation has greater beneficial effects if couples are less neurotic. Future research should examine "the personal characteristics of the sample group as well as the spouses' religious preferences" for a more precise explanation of the current findings. "Emotional intelligence and religious orientation are to marital pleasure" was the focus of the current study. Multiple

ways that "emotional intelligence impacts marital satisfaction" were demonstrated by the findings. This research will be very helpful to premarital counseling programmers. For instance, giving couples the authority to assess their "emotional intelligence before marriage" and, if necessary, providing the necessary instruction. The findings of this study also indicated that "the age at marriage has a significant direct association with marital happiness" among "demographic factors."

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The findings demonstrated how "emotional intelligence impacts marital satisfaction" in several manners. Programmers of premarital counseling will benefit significantly from this research. For instance, empowering couples to evaluate their "emotional intelligence before marriage" and, as necessary, providing the necessary instruction. The present study's findings also indicated that among "the demographic factors, the age at marriage has a significant direct association with marital happiness."

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## CONCLUSION

Emotionally mature married couples are better able to appreciate, comprehend, and respect their partners' sense of self-respect. This demonstrates that married couples who are emotionally competent experience higher levels of marital adjustment. According to numerous EI theories, a person is said to be emotionally intelligent if they can comprehend their partner's emotions (Pandey & Anand, 2010). The ability to correctly perceive and identify emotions varies from person to person. Some people are so sensitive to other emotions that they can tell their partners apart from the tiniest nonverbal cues like a frown. It's possible for some people to completely disregard their spouse's feelings. For instance, they might not be aware that their spouse is irate, jealous, or enraged. Finally, they are able to control and manage both their own and other people's emotions, allowing them to act in a particular way. The model that was created by Mayer et al. 2004), emotional regulation, comprehension, and management require a combination of the four branches. When other factors like personality and IQ were taken into account, marital happiness was found to be linked to EI. You can gain a better understanding of this by analyzing the fundamental skills necessary for adapting and experiencing marital fulfillment [23] [24] [25] [26].

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