The Role of Resilience in Predicting Marital Adjustment and Psychological Well-Being among Married People

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Abstract

Resilience is the ability to recover from difficult situations. The study examines its relationship with marital adjustment and psychological well-being. To explore the correlation between resilience, marital adjustment, and psychological well-being in married individuals. A purposive sample of 200 married individuals (male and female) was selected. The following instruments were used: Resilience Scale (Damasio et al., 2011), Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale (Ansari, 2010), Burgess Marital Adjustment Questionnaire (Kauseer & Khalid, 2003), and a demographic form. Data were analyzed using Pearson product-moment correlation, independent t-tests, and regression analysis. The study found a significant positive correlation between resilience and psychological well-being. Marital adjustment also showed a positive correlation with psychological well-being. However, resilience was negatively correlated with marital adjustment. Independent t-tests showed no significant differences between distinct groups of married individuals. Regression analysis indicated that resilience did not predict marital adjustment but was a significant predictor of psychological well-being. Resilience is a key factor in enhancing psychological well-being but does not predict marital adjustment. This study emphasizes the need for resilience to foster positive perspectives in life. Future research should address the limitations and explore other factors that may influence marital adjustment.

Keywords: Resilience, Marital Adjustment, Psychological Well-being

Introduction

Marriage is a part of life, which can become a good base of emotional, social, and psychological well-being. Different psychological factors such as resilience can influence dynamics in marital relationships. Referred to as resilience i.e. 'the ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change' (Southwick et al., 2014), resilience is a key predictor of stress and adversity management in the context of intimate relationships. With regard to marriage, resilience can be an essential predictor of marital adjustment (the degree to which spouses are compatible with and satisfied with each other). Additionally, marital adjustment has been related to psychological well-being, which includes a much broader concept than emotional stability - such as life satisfaction and mental health. (Ryff, 1989).

Pakistan is a country where traditional marital values, and family structure dominate, therefore, understanding the interaction between resilience, marital adjustment and psychological well-being is utmost important. A Pakistani marriage typically experiences its own socio contextual pressures in the form of expectations of family, gender roles and also economic challenges, which are also known to bring down marital satisfaction, as well as individual well-being (Agha et al., 2020). Yet, while these stressors present challenges to marriage, the resilience of individuals within marriage may offer a means of buffering the detrimental effects of such stressors. Greater marital satisfaction and psychological health can be facilitated by resilience which enables better coping

mechanisms, improves marital communication and problem solving skills (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). The previous research has found that resilient individuals are able to have better emotional regulation, stronger social connections, be more able to deal with conflict (necessary for marital adjustment) (Karademes, 2006). Moreover, marital satisfaction is also positively associated with greater psychological well-being (Diener, 2000) and poor marital adjustment is associated with mental health problems such as depression and anxiety (Whisman, 2001). While the literature provides research on the impact of resilience and other constructs regarding prediction of marital adjustment and psychological well-being, research in this area in the cultural context of Pakistan is still lacking as to the specific role resilience plays in this relationship. However, most existing studies were conducted in Western context where cultural and society may differ significantly from Pakistan (Choi et al., 2014).

This study therefore attempts to study the prediction of marital adjustment and psychological well-being of the married people in Pakistan on the basis of resilience. The study will thus bring some understanding of resilience as a protective factor contributing to marital and psychological health of married individuals in Pakistan by focusing on this underexplored area. The results may provide information to help the development of interventions that are culturally relevant to improve marital relationships and mental health outcomes in this population.

Literature Review
Resilience and Marital Adjustment
As a psychological construct, resilience has received increasing attention in marital and family therapy, in view of its important role in maintaining well-being in stressful life events. Resilience within our marriage is the ability to bounce back from relational conflicts, to cope with marital stress and the continuing ability to adapt to our changing dynamics in our relationship. It is clear that several studies have found that resilient people have greater capacity for coping, better emotional regulation and more adaptive approaches to problem solving in general and in marriage and these advantages appear to lead to higher marital satisfaction (Karademas, 2006; Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Spouses with positive communication patterns, conflict resolution skills, empathy, etc, are indispensable characteristics of practical adjustment to marriage (Karademas, 2006). Marital adjustment is process of blending and coping with expectations, roles, and behaviors within a marital relationship over time. As a dynamic process, marital adjustment refers to the emotional and practical aspects of the relationship, for example, communicated the ability to settle their differences and satisfaction with intimacy and roles (Spanier, 1976). Accordingly, resilience has been shown to help these components by promising to modulate couples in the face of challenges like financial stress, disagreements, or changes in family roles which would usually be destructive toward marital harmony (Agha et al., 2020). According to research (Southwick et al., 2014), resilience enables its possessor to look upon life more cheerfully, and it may protect from marital dissatisfaction this way, due to external stressors, by promoting a greater balance and a happier relationship.

Psychological Wellbeing and Marital Adjustment
Psychological well-being (PWB) consists of the psychological aspects of emotional regulation, life satisfaction, and self-acceptance (Ryff, 1989). A central aspect of marital adjustment, namely, marital satisfaction, has been repeatedly associated with positive psychological outcomes (Diener, 2000). Studies have shown that those who are more satisfied in their marriage tend to have higher levels of well-being and therefore functioning marriage may play a huge role as a means of emotional and psychological health (Whisman, 2001). On the other hand, dissatisfaction in marriage is frequently related to psychological distress such as symptoms of anxiety, depression and lower life satisfaction (Choi et al. 2014). In the area of resilience, a bidirectional relationship between marital satisfaction and psychological well-being is especially important. In addition to experiencing better psychological well-being, resilient individuals are more likely to have experienced higher marital satisfaction in the face of stress (Nawaz et al., 2021). That's because people with resilience are tend to be positive, handle conflict well and keep good relationships

with their partner, which in turn boosts the survival of marriage and psychological health (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). In particular, resilience prevents deterioration of psychological health and marital satisfaction over time from difficult marital conditions.

Resilience and Psychological Wellbeing
Resilience and psychological well-being have been highly debated in many different populations, and research has repeatedly found that resilient people have better mental health outcomes (Southwick et al., 2014). When talking about marriage, resilience perceives how individuals can manage marital challenges in a way that doesn't only maintain relational stability, but also one that contributes to personal well-being. People who are more resilient are in a better position to deal with stress, to recover from setbacks, and retain a sense of purpose—factors which are fundamental to positive mental health (Karademas, 2006).

The ability to cope with marital stressors, to communicate with the partner and to achieve relational satisfaction is important to psychological well-being, particularly in matters of marital relationships (Diener, 2000). Since resilient people usually have strong coping skills, the ability to regulate their emotions and have the problem—solving abilities (Karademas, 2006), they are more likely to have positive psychological outcomes for even marital difficulties. Given that these marital expectations are guided by traditional norms in cultures like Pakistan, and stressors such as economic hardship, family issue lying stress (Feel Insecure; Feel Fear of Rejection), female barbers see this as a valid thesis (Agha et al., 2020). Therefore, resilience may act as a buffer against the negative psychological effects of these stressors, and in this way underlie marital satisfaction and psychological well-being.

Gap in the Literature
Despite its rich history of study within the single person context, the extent to which resilience plays a part in marital adjustment and psychological well-being on the whole has received little attention, especially in non-western contexts such as Pakistan. By mainly conducted in Western culture where culture values and marriage norms are different to individualistic values might affect impact of resilience, marital satisfaction and psychological health. Despite the importance of cultural, socio economic and other factors determining how marital experiences occur, previous literature fails to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effect of resilience on marital adjustment and well-being in married individuals in Pakistan. The lack of understanding about resilience as a predictor of marital adjustment and psychological well-being among married individuals in Pakistan is a gap in the literature that the present study attempts to fill by examining the role of resilience in predicting marital adjustment and psychological well-being among married individuals. The knowledge of this relationship in the context of Pakistani culture will expand current interventions to improve marital quality and mental health outcomes of Pakistani couples (Sawangchai et al., 2022). The findings further could be used to develop resilience building programs specific for married individuals in Pakistan, who face unique challenges.

Objectives
- To find out the relationship between resilience, marital adjustment and psychological wellbeing among married people.
- To determine the effect of resilience on marital adjustment and psychological well-being among married people.
- To examine the relationship of study variables and demographics i.e. gender, education, marriage type, duration of marriage, family type, number of children etc.

Hypothesis
H1-There will be a significant relationship between resilience, marital adjustment and psychological wellbeing among married people.
H2-resillience will be a significant predictor of marital adjustment among married people
H3-Resillience will be a significant predictor of psychological well-being among married people.

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H4-There would be significant difference on resilience in married males and females.

Methodology
Research Design
Correlational research design was used in current study. It is research design which is non-experimental by nature see the relationship between resilience, marital adjustment and psychological wellbeing among married couple.

Sampling Strategy
Purposive sampling strategy is a non-probability technique which was used to collect the data in this study; the aim of this technique to select those particular subjects that can represent the population. The data was collected from the married couples through online Google form. The sample of this study was consisting of total two hundred married males and females.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria
Inclusion criteria
- Married people age ranges of 25-40 years were meets the criteria to be included in the research.
- Individual with duration of 3-4 years of marriage people were be included in the research.

Exclusion criteria
- Individuals qualification below then metric was be excluded from the research.
- Single, Widows, Divorces and separated individuals were being excluded from the study.

Measures for Data Collection
The following questionnaire and scales were used in the present study. Their explanation is given below:

1. Demographic Information Questionnaire: This questionnaire was used to inquire the basic information of the participant i.e. age, gender, education, marital status, family system, number of children.

2. Resilience scale: The Brazilian version of 14-item resilience scale was developed by Pesece. etal. (2005).This scale has reliable internal consistency and external validity. This scale consists of 14 items which were divided into five dimensions and these are "self-reliance", "meaningfulness", "equanimity", "perseverance", "and existential aloneness". The scale has seven point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). This scale was translated into Urdu language for this study (Damasio, Borsa & Da- Silva, 2011).

3. Burgess Marital Adjustment Questionnaire (MAQ): The MAQ scale consisting of 45 items which assessed the respondent's relationship with in-laws, financial adjustment, leisure time being spent with, children's affairs, and understanding with spouse. Each participant has to mark only one choice, which represents his/her best feelings. The questionnaire uses a 3-point scale: Not at all (3), to some extent (2), to great extent (1). The total score of couple ranges from 90 to270 on (MAQ). For the present study Urdu version would be used that was translated by Kauseer, R and Khalid, R. (2003).

4. Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale (PWB): This scale is developed by a psychologist name Carol D. Ryff. The scale consisting of 42 items and have six point Likert scale. PWB scale have six subscales and these are "Autonomy", "Environmental Mystery", "Personal Growth", "Positive Relations", "Purpose in life", and "Self-Acceptance". The Urdu translated version was used in this study (Ansari, 2010).

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Procedure

Firstly, got permission from home university to conduct survey activity and then approach the participants through their Gmail accounts. The purposive survey method was used to conduct survey. The research was an individual testing as the participants were requested to read the informed consent and then show their permission of letting this survey to use for the analysis of this study. Secondly filled out the demographic (age, gender, family type, education, number of children) and questionnaire forms very carefully. In the end pay, they were thanked about their participation and cooperation.

Ethical Considerations

First of all, permission for the conduction of study was taken from the university and department directors. Secondly, an informed consent form was attached in start of questionnaire in order to ask their consent about participation in study. Simultaneously they were assured about the confidentiality of collected information. This study did not cause any type of harm to any subject who participated in the study.

Results

Table No 1 *Frequencies and Percentages of the Demographic Characteristics of the Participants (N=220)*

Category	Sub-category	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	50%
	Female	50%
Family System	Joint Family System	51.8%
	Nuclear Family System	48.2%
Number of Siblings	One Sibling	40.1%
	Two Siblings	50.9%
Education	Illiterate	2.7%
	Matriculation	2.3%
	Intermediate Studies	14.5%
	Bachelor's Studies	34.1%
	Master's Studies	46.6%
Profession	Teaching	19.1%
	Medical Field	12.7%
	Business	22.3%
	Government Employees	25.9%
	Other Professions	20%
Total Family Income	Up to 30,000	32.7%
	31,000 - 67,000	34.1%
	68,000 and above	33.2%
Husband's Income	Up to 31,000	36.4%
	Around 70,000	35%
	71,000 and above	28.6%
Women's Employment	Housewives Only	58.2%
	Earning More than 20,000	41.8%
Marriage Duration	1 Year	11.4%
	2 Years	12.7%
	3 Years	17.7%
	4 Years	11.4%
	5 Years	10.9%

Table 1 showed that total sample population equally belonged to male and female gender that is 50%. It was seen through tables that 51.8% data belonged to joint family system while 48.2% were

from nuclear family system. 40.1 % of the sample population has one sibling while 50.9 % of the sample population has two siblings. In education domain 2.7% people were illiterate, 2.3% were done with matriculation, 14.5% done their intermediate studies, 34.1 % sample population done their bachelor's studies and 46.6% done their master studies. The total population was divided into five domains according to profession. 19.1 % sample population were consisting of teaching, 12.7 % population consist of medical field, 22.3 % of sample population were doing their business, 25.9 % were government employees and 20% population were connected to other than these domains. 32.7 % of sample population showed at most 30,000-total income of their family, 34.1% showed 31, 000 to 67000 income of their family and 33.2 % showed 68000 to number of laces. 36.4 % of the sample population husband earned at most 31, 000, 35 % husband population earned around 70, 000 and other 28.6% population earned 71, 000 and above. 58.2 % women of the sample population showed that they were housewives only while 41.8 % women sample population showed that they earned more 20,000. There is a domain showed the marriage years of the sample population. 11.4%, 12.7 %, 17.7 % ,11.4%, 10.9% and 35.9% spent one, two, three, four, five and six years of married life respectively.

Table No. 2 *Cronbach alpha of Resilience, Marital Adjustment and Psychological Well-Being scales (N=220) married people*

Variable	No. of items	A
1. Resilience	14	0.88
2. Marital Adjustment	45	0.54
3. Psychological Well- Being	18	0.855

Note: α = Cronbach's alpha (scale validity)

This table 2 showed the Cronbach alpha values of three scales. i.e. Resilience scale consist of 14 items and it have 0.88 Cronbach alpha, Marital adjustment scale have 45 items with 0.54 Cronbach alpha and psychological well-being scale have 18 items with 0.855 Cronbach alpha.

Table No 3 *Relationship between Resilience, Marital Adjustment and Psychological well-being among married people (N: 220)*

Variable	1	2	3
1. Resilience	-	-.020*	.001***
2. Marital Adjustment	-	-	.325**
3. Psychological Well-being	-	-	-

* P<0.5. ** P<.01, *** P<.001

Table 3 shows Pearson Correlation with Resilience, Marital adjustment and Psychological well-being in married people. It indicates that their significant positive correlation exist between resilience and psychological well-being. While resilience has negative correlation with marital adjustment. Marital adjustment scale also has positive correlation with psychological well-being scale.

Table No. 4 *Linear Regression Analysis of Predictors of Marital Adjustment among married people (N=220)*

Variable	B	SE	β	R	R2	F
MAS	-.02	.05	-0.2	.02	-.004	.09

***p<.001, *Note: SE=Standard Error, β= Standardized regression weight, R= Explained variance, R^2= change in R, F=Variability of the model.*

Table 4 shows the role of resilience with marital adjustment in married people. The R^2 value .001 revealed that the predictor explained 10% variance in the outcome variable with F (1, 218) = .090.

The findings revealed that resilience have no significance prediction effect on marital adjustment in married couples.

Table No. 5 *Linear Regression Analysis of Predictors of Psychological Well-being among married people (N=220)*

Variable	B	SE	B	R	R2	F
PWS	.001	.07	.001	.001	-.05	.001

***p<.001*, *Note: SE=Standard Error, β= Standardized regression weight, R= Explained variance, R^2= change in R, F=Variability of the model.*

Table 5 shows the role of resilience with psychological well-being in married people. The R^2 value .001 revealed that the predictor explained 10% variance in the outcome variable with F (1, 218) = .00. The findings revealed that resilience positively predicted the psychological well-being.

Table No. 6 *Independent sample t- test showing gender difference on resilience predicating the role of marital adjustment and psychological well-being among married couple*

Variable	Gender	M	SD	t	p	d
Resilience	Male	68.11	17.7	1.318	.189	0.17
	Female	65.1	16.3			
Marital Adjustment	Male	80.8	12.4	-.084	.933	0.00
	Female	80.9	14.8			
Psychological Wellbeing	Male	70.8	18.9	.520	.604	0.07
	Female	69.6	15.1			

Note: M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation

Tables showed the mean and standard deviation of resilience, marital adjustment and psychological well-being. Results revealed that non-significant result between gender and all the factors of resilience, martial adjustment and psychological well-being.

Table No. 7 *Independent sample t- test showing family system difference on resilience predicating the role of marital adjustment and psychological well-being among married couples*

Variable	Family System	M	SD	t	p	d
Resilience	Joint	62.8	18.6	-3.51	.001	0.47
	Nuclear	70.6	14.1			
Marital Adjustment	Joint	81.0	15.3	.167	.868	1.13
	Nuclear	80.7	11.6			
Psychological Wellbeing	Joint	67.9	17.4	-2.10	.037	0.95
	Nuclear	72.7	16.3			

Note: M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation

Table showed significant results of family system with resilience and psychological well-being while non-significant result with marital adjustment.

Discussion

The central goal of this study was, therefore, to look at the relationship between resilience, marital adjustment and psychological well-being in married population in Pakistan. These findings are useful for understanding the interrelationships among these variables and the implications for enhancing marital and psychological well-being. The findings indicate strong correlations and predictive relationships between resilience, marital adjustment, and psychological well-being, while other findings were contradictory and warrant further discussion.

Table 3 results showed that marital adjustment had a negative but weak correlation with Resilience which was statistically significant at ($p < 0.05$). Intriguingly, wider literature points to resilience being generally linked to better marital adjustment (Karademas, 2006; Youssef & Luthans, 2007). An explanation for this unexpected negative correlation may be related to the nature of resilience itself. Marital satisfaction with achievement motives leads to a form of disengagement or individual problem solving that may or may not enhance collaborative efforts which promote marital satisfaction (Spanier, 1976).

However, resilience did not significantly predict marital adjustment (Table 4) as a result of the regression analysis. The F statistic was not significant and the R^2 value of 0.001 indicated that resilience did not explain very much of the variance in marital adjustment. Fendley concluded that in this sample resilience is no more a prominent predictor of marital adjustment than communication, conflict resolution, or external stressors. In Pakistan, the socio-cultural context is one where traditional gender roles and family expectations prevail (Ahmed et al., 2023), which means external factors are possibly the biggest influence on marital satisfaction and adjustment (Agha et al., 2020).

While there was a significant positive correlation with psychological wellbeing, marital adjustment was found to be unrelated to resilience (Table 3). This is consistent with what we see in the literature where there is a consistent effect showing that resilient people are more psychologically well (Southwick et al., 2014; Karademas, 2006). The regression (Table 5) also further confirmed that resilience predicted psychological well-being, but with very small effect size, with an R^2 value of 0.001. While resilience is still a positive predictor of psychological well being, there are other factors that may be more important influences on wellbeing outcomes (e.g., coping styles, social support and life satisfaction) in this sample.

Seeing that the ability to cope with stress, and to recover from setbacks and maintain a positive attitude, by showing resilience, is by no means surprising that there is a positive relationship between resilience and psychological wellbeing (Fang & Mushtaque, 2024). Individuals who are more resilient are likely those who will have better with emotional regulation and higher life satisfaction (Ryff, 1989), which are keystones of well-being (Ryff, 1989). In addition, resilience may serve as a buffer against many of the stressors present in the realm of marriage which would otherwise act to reduce psychological health (Youssef & Luthans, 2007).

Independent Sample t-tests (see Table 6) showed no gender differences in resilience, marital adjustment, or psychological well-being. This indicates that, among this sample, male and female participants did not differ regarding resilience, marital adjustment, and psychological well-being. In contrast to such studies, here we found no gender differences, which are in line with studies that examine the impact of marital satisfaction on psychological well-being and suggest that men and women may carry or express their marital satisfaction and psychological wellbeing differently based on cultural or gender specific expectations (Whisman, 2001). Still, results here may indicate something more egalitarian about marital life in the study sample or that something else, including the family system or socio economic status, may be more important than gender in this arena.

The results of the independent sample t tests for differences between participants from joint and nuclear family systems in resilience, marital adjustment, and psychological well-being are presented in Table 7. Interestingly, resilience amongst individuals from nuclear families was higher, while psychological well-being was higher in nuclear families than in joint families. Due to the fact that the participation of relatives in the support of a student at higher education is assumed to be a broader type of support like it, further case studies are intrigued by the fact that relative 'kin relationships', although not granting a greater amount of autonomy or privacy, may still make a contribution to a more lateral and flexible approach to obtaining mail – and therefore may be more individualistic, and hence lead to a greater 'resilience' of the recipient. Conversely, joint family systems, that are more common in Pakistan, have a more collective, interdependent family dynamic that can place more external pressures on individuals leading to a decreased resilience and psychological well-being (Agha et al., 2020).

It is seen that marital adjustment of the individual did not differ significantly between the respondents from joint and nuclear families; however, the significant difference in the

psychological well-being may suggest that stresses inherent in living in a joint family system (intergenerational conflicts or extended family pressures) can have a negative effect on individuals' psychological well-being. This is consistent with previous research that describes great difficulty in family systems living together with other family members, as they may face a greater amount of familial obligations and less privacy (Choi et al., 2014).

Implication and Future Direction
This study carries important implications for marital counseling and psychological interventions in Pakistan. Resilience, however, is not a strong predictor of marital adjustment, but it does have positive effect on psychological well-being which can indicate the usefulness of promoting resilience building strategies. Interventions to increase resilience could enable individuals to better cope with marital conflict and other stressors that might in turn improve their psychological health. Furthermore, the family system of Pakistan is shaping the resilience and well-being of individuals. It is important to incorporate into program design the cultural factors of differences between nuclear and joint family systems. Additional future research should enhance our understanding of the cultural forces at play and investigate other possible predictors of marital adjustment, including conflict resolution skills or communication styles, in addition to socio economic status.

Limitations
However, this study contained some limitations. The first limitation is that the cross-sectional design does not permit the establishment of causal relationships among resilience, marital adjustment, and psychological well-being. Studies that followed people – longitudinal studies – would be better in assessing the long term effects of resilience on marital and psychological outcomes. Second, the use of the self-reported measures may introduce response biases, particularly in relation to topics that are sensitive for individuals such as marital satisfaction and psychological health. In future studies, a combination of multiple data sources or observational methods should be utilized in order to reduce bias.

Conclusion
Finally, while resilience is good for enhancing psychological wellbeing, it does not forecast marital adjustment of married people in Pakistan to noteworthy degree. Lastly, family system plays a very important role by allowing understanding the difference between joint family and nuclear family through the relationship of resilience and psychological health. These findings stress the need for understanding cultural and familial contexts in the study of marital and psychological well-being. However, promoting resilience may provide large benefits in improving mental health outcomes, or perhaps larger interventions involving both individual and relational factors may be needed to improve marital adjustment in this population.

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