

## Personality, Emotional Intelligence and Marital Satisfaction of Violent and Non-Violent Couples

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The present investigation attempted to examine the differences among Personality, Emotional Intelligence and Marital Satisfaction of Violent and Non-Violent Couples. Total Sample comprised 60 couples (30 each violent and non-violent), randomly drawn from Patiala city in the age range of 25- 45 years, both working professionally. Psychological measures were used to assess personality Big five inventory, Emotional Intelligence Scale and Marital Satisfaction (ENRICH Couple Scales). Significant t-values indicated differences between the two types of couples on various dimensions of Personality, Emotional Intelligence and Marital Satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Personality, Emotional intelligence, Marital satisfaction

The Domestic Violence Act of 1998 describes Domestic Violence as a Physical, sexual, emotional, economic, verbal and psychological abuse; intimidation, harassment, stalking; damage to property; entry into the home without permission; and any other abusive, controlling behavior (Park, Fedler, & Dangor, 2000). Though Physical Violence has been the commonly accepted research standard in the area of domestic abuse.

Domestic Violence is quite prevalent worldwide. The prevalence and consequences of male violence towards women has been well-established but the research on violent women is far less-developed. Some research evidence indicates that women are more aggressive and violent than men. The first U.S National Family Violence Survey of 1975 found that women to be as violent as men. Rates of female initiated violence are equivalent to male rates; they include female violence against non-violent males, even when analyzed for level of severity and they have serious consequences for males (Stets &

Straus, 1992; Ferraro & Moe, 2003; Mullings, Hartley, & Marquart, 2004). A meta-analysis of 82 couple-conflict studies by Archer's (2000, 2002) reported that women were more physically aggressive and resorted to violence more often than men. Felson and Cares (2005) found that men are more likely than women to suffer serious injuries and actually use less violence in intimate relationships. Laroche (2005) reports that 83% of men "feared for their life" because they were unilaterally terrorized by their female partner compared to the 77% of women who were unilaterally terrorized.

These datasets have shifted attention to support the existence of "husband battering." Yet male victimization is a widely under-reported phenomenon. For a man to say that he was abused does not go with the macho image we have of men as they are believed to be aggressors. Hence, male victimization is not taken seriously, in part because of the "gender paradigm" and of a cultural belief that men should be able to defend themselves or a disbelief in female violence.

On the contrary research evidence also indicates that women are five times more likely than men to have been the victims of domestic violence (Rennison & Welch, 2000). In a study carried out by Department of Health and Human Resources in the U.S, about 1.5 million women and more than 800,000 men are physically assaulted by an intimate partner (of either gender). This translates into about 47 IPV (Intimate partner violence) assaults per 1,000 women and 32 assaults per 1,000 men (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). It has also been reported that 30% of battered wives had to cease regular activities due to the abuse and 50% of women had to take sick leave from work because of the harm sustained (Garcia, Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, & Watts, 2006).

Domestic violence against women is also grossly underreported as abused women do not come forward. Underreporting occurs for several reasons, such as society's acceptance of violence as normative, lack of confidence in the efficacy of police, difficulties in obtaining convictions, shame felt by women who are victims of violence, dependence on batterers for economic support, only incidents of serious violence, or causing injury and fear of retribution on the part of the abusers (Rossman, Hughes & Rosenberg, 1999). Additional reasons for underestimation of the phenomenon are, forgetting as a coping mechanism, fear of losing one's children, fear of retribution from the abuser, women learning to view their experiences as unimportant, fear of not being believed and understood, and feeling ashamed of the way they are treated by their partner (McGee, 2000).

Various theoretical perspectives have tried to explain partner abuse. Social learning theory, (Bandura, 1977) maintains that

violence is a learned response. The perpetrator may have learned this dysfunctional response from witnessing violence in his family of origin. Also, maybe the attitude prevalent in society expressed often in the media that males have a right to dominate females.

According to Attachment theory (Carden, 1994), the perpetrator may not be able to maintain a relationship of trust and mutuality with his partner because of deficiencies in attachment to significant parental figures that he experienced as a child. This may result in feelings of anger, anxiety and grief over the failures of these earlier relationships that are carried over and expressed toward his partner in their marriage.

Two more widely held theoretical ways of viewing partner abuse, are the feminist and systems perspectives. Feminist perspective asserts that partner abuse is the result of male domination and exploitation of women. The central issue is that of power, which rests in the hands of men, and the function of this power is to control women, identified in the literature as patriarchy (Hester, Kelley, & Radford, 1996).

The systems perspective of partner abuse focuses on the family or marital dyad. All persons in the system in some way influence or contribute to the abuse that occurs and in turn are affected by the abuse (Giles-Sims, 1983; McKeel & Sporkowski, 1993). Factors influencing the abusive behavior occurring between husband and wife may include substance abuse, stress, ineffective communication patterns, having been a victim of violence, and poor impulse control (Finkelhor & Dzuiba-Leatherman, 1994).

Walker (1979, 1994) based on her research with battered women, proposed that male battering can be understood as

occurring in a cycle consisting of three stages. The three stages continue to repeat themselves overtime and may become more intense and frequent unless the couple separates or seeks professional help. The various stages may occur over different lengths of time.

Stage 1 of the violence cycle is the tension-building stage, in which the perpetrator engages in minor abusive incidents with his partner. His wife attempts to “keep peace” in the family or diffuse the situation by denying the seriousness of the incidents or by blaming herself or some external factor for in some way provoking the abuse. The wife’s behavior demonstrates her belief that she is capable of controlling the violence for her husband. The initial tension –building stage may last for weeks, months, or years.

Stage 2 of the cycle is the acute battering incident, in which an external event impacting on the couple or something that the perpetrator is experiencing may provoke loss of control. The incident may be relatively brief, lasting less than an hour, or it may go on for several hours. The wife may be severely injured as a result of her husband’s rage. This second stage represents a critical period for the wife if she wishes the cycle of violence to be broken. She must leave the home and seek shelter elsewhere or to seek professional help for their marriage.

Following the turmoil of stage 2 is the calm period, Stage 3, identified as kindness and contrite, loving behavior. Perpetrator demonstrates contrite behavior for the abuse that occurred: begs for forgiveness, gives gifts to partner, cries, and vows abusive behavior will never again occur. Despite the perpetrator’s promises, the couple gradually over a period of time slips back into stage 1 as life goes on,

disagreements arise, and tension builds. The cycle of violence is about to be repeated (Dutton, 1995; Walker, 1979, 1994).

Other psychologists have also specifically probed into the causes of violent behavior in men and women. Dutton (1995) attributed dangerous violence to physical or mental illness. While Gelles (1997) found that borderline personality disorder (BPD), is marked by a proclivity for intense relationships, fear of abandonment, and proneness to rage, to be strongly associated with male battering of women. Violent men seem to have deficits in processing social information in specific situations- typically, they negatively misinterpret their wives’ behavior, e.g. she pays attention to others. Such situations induce an inner panic because they hint at rejection. While few studies have also reported violent women, 75% of such women were diagnosed cases of Borderline Personality Disorder.

Holtzworth-Munroe, Meehan, Heeron, and Stuart (2000) also see the rejection-jealously issue as one of the keys to domestic violence. Violent men are more preoccupied with the marital relationship and have few friends and a narrower focus on their wife and dependency on them. The thought of wife leaving makes them violent. They also screwed-up relationships with their own parents. They lack the ability to trust, something that comes out of secure early attachment to a parent or other responsive caregiver. As a result, they fear loss, misinterpret neutral situations as threatening; see hostile intent when it doesn’t exist. It is clear from the evidence that most treatments don’t help. Probably they are applied too late, after violence is a set as a behavioral pattern. Once violence is used, it becomes reinforced-because it works. The men get what they want, though they may feel bad about doing it.

Marital Violence, Neil Jacobson (1994) finds, is not just an extreme form of argument. In arguments they are highly emotionally aggressive- they are belligerent, contemptuous, demeaning. They lack empathy for their partners. Anger is shared by both partners in violent relationships. They taunt, demean and hurl contempt at each other even in non-violent arguments. The wives of domestic violence are very feisty. Once an argument is started, they don't back down. They give negative statements with negative responses-what psychologists call negative reciprocity.

Gelles (1995) found that some men who lack financial means and alternative resources might use violence to gain the dominant position in the family. Unemployed men were found to be twice more likely to physically abuse wives than employed men are (Steinmetz, 1987). However, MacMillan and Gartner (1999) emphasized that it is imperative that both spouses, have financial security of being employed in order to decrease violence in the relationship.

Research also suggests that the way couples function currently could be directly or indirectly affected by how their family of origin functioned. Families are often referred to as "training grounds for violence" (Gelles,1995) and abuse tends to happen between multiple members (Straus,1994). The parent who batters a child is more likely to hit his or her spouse as well (Straus,1994). Furthermore, children of abuse can become potential victimizers themselves as adults (Giles-Sims, Straus & Sugarman, 1995), and are as twice as likely to hit their spouses (Straus, 1994).

The impact of violence on women's mental health leads to severe and fatal consequences. Battered women have a high incidence of stress and stress-related illness such as post-traumatic stress syndrome, panic attacks, depression, sleeping and

eating disturbances, elevated blood pressure, alcoholism, drug abuse, and low self-esteem. For some women, fatally depressed and demeaned by their abuser, there seems to be no escape from a violent relationship except suicide. ("Violence against Women", WHO Consultation, 1996).

Domestic violence not only mars women's self esteem, time off work, depression but also men perhaps in a similar fashion. Though levels of violence against wives are significantly higher among husband-dominating patriarchal couples than among egalitarian couples (Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz,1980).

All these factors influence quality of marital relationship and satisfaction. According to Olson and Olson (2000), marital satisfaction with higher relational qualities in couples has a lot to do with sharing egalitarian gender roles.

However some researchers are of the view that interpersonal skills are needed to resolve conflict and foster intimacy between partners which determine successful marital outcomes. However, these skills form part of a greater construct, labeled Emotional Intelligence (EI) which stems from Gardner's (1985) theory of social intelligence. This construct seeks to explain why some people are successful in marital, work and social relationships while others are not and identifying certain innate skills and abilities that account for such social competency. These skills include the ability to regulate ones own emotions as well as the expression of emotion (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). When these skills are applied to various situations, they are believed to produce successful outcomes. The evidence is strongest in the display of EI abilities within the interpersonal relationships (Fitness, 2001; Mayer, 2001). These same results were shown to be significant in understanding effective interpersonal behavior in marriage.



Greater marital satisfaction has been attributed to Emotional Intelligence, when other variables such as intelligence and personality have been accounted for (Fitness, 2001; Mayer, 2001). This can be understood by analyzing the fundamental skills needed in marital satisfaction, namely, intimacy and conflict resolution skills. Intimacy and conflict resolution both appear to benefit from the ability to listen, empathize and understand one's partners emotion. Also the ability to regulate one's own emotions has shown to prevent conflict. Schutte, Malouff and Dornheim (1998) found a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and EI.

As our discussion demonstrates, female perpetrated abuse is as common as male abuse, often extends to the same degree of severity, can result in serious negative outcomes for male and female victims, and seems to reflect a common set of background causes. Violence is not a means of problem solving, although perpetrators often resort to violence when coping with marital problems. Though literature reveals various possible causes of marital violence such as fear of abandonment, proneness to rage, rejection-jealously issue, insecurity, lack of trust, "Family of origin", Unemployment, Dysfunctional beliefs etc. In view of the reported literature if any personality or EQ factors are contributing to such behavior patterns in both men and women affecting their marital harmony perhaps they can be analyzed through some professional help. Hence some interventions like counseling or Family therapy can help to eradicate the myths to support the dominance of men over women and using violence as a method of interpersonal problem solving. Thus keeping in view the need of such a study, the investigators endeavoured to probe into this area.

**Hypothesis:**

It was expected that violent couples would differ from non-violent couples on

personality, EQ and marital satisfaction i.e. violent couples would be high on neuroticism, less conscientiousness, low on EQ, and Marital Satisfaction as compared to non-violent couples.

**Method**

**Sample:**

Total sample comprised 60 couples (30 each violent and non-violent couples) randomly drawn from Patiala city. The age range of the subjects was between 25-45 years and both professionally qualified. The criterion for the selection of violent couples was based on their indulging in physical, verbal as well as psychological abuse. On the basis of structured interview schedule. No prevalence of such abuse in the non-violent couples was reported.

**Measures:**

*Big five inventory* (BFI) (John & Srivastava, 1991). The inventory is designed to measure the Big five dimensions i.e. Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness. It is a short form of a multidimensional personality inventory (44 items total) and items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly).

*Emotional Intelligence scale* (Hyde & Pethe, 2001). This scale comprises 34 items and 10 subscales: self-awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, managing relations, integrity, self-development, value-orientation, commitment and altruistic behavior. Individuals with high score can be considered to have high level of emotional intelligence and are likely to be high performers. Responses are made on a 5-point Likert scale; from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

*Marital Satisfaction scale* (Olson, 1996). This scale comprises 35 items and provides a global measure of satisfaction by surveying important areas of the couple's marriage.

These areas include the marital satisfaction, conflict resolution, communication and idealistic distortion. The items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly).

## Results

**Table 1a. Mean, SD and t-ratios for various dimensions of personality between violent and non-violent husbands**

| Husbands | Extraversion |       | Openness |       | Agreeableness |      | Conscientiousness |       | Neuroticism |       |
|----------|--------------|-------|----------|-------|---------------|------|-------------------|-------|-------------|-------|
|          | VH           | NH    | VH       | NH    | VH            | NH   | VH                | NH    | VH          | NH    |
| Mean     | 24.83        | 29.73 | 25.93    | 35.33 | 25.33         | 33.1 | 26.13             | 30.56 | 29.26       | 19.16 |
| SD       | 4.31         | 4.17  | 2.36     | 4.07  | 3.38          | 3.36 | 3.31              | 6.77  | 3.05        | 3.69  |
| t-value  | 4.46**       |       | 10.93**  |       | 8.907**       |      | 3.22**            |       | 11.54**     |       |

df=58 \*p<.05 \*\*p<.01

**Table 1b. Mean, SD and t-ratios for various dimensions of personality between violent and non-violent wives**

| Wives   | Extraversion |       | Openness |      | Agreeableness |      | conscientiousness |      | Neuroticism |       |
|---------|--------------|-------|----------|------|---------------|------|-------------------|------|-------------|-------|
|         | VW           | NW    | VW       | NW   | VW            | NW   | VW                | NW   | VW          | NW    |
| Mean    | 23.3         | 25.63 | 28.53    | 34.3 | 27.76         | 34   | 26.7              | 30.6 | 24.73       | 17.86 |
| SD      | 4.14         | 4.76  | 3.71     | 3.45 | 3.96          | 4.49 | 5.07              | 6.23 | 4.33        | 4.05  |
| t-value | 2.02*        |       | 6.22**   |      | 5.69**        |      | 2.29*             |      | 6.33**      |       |

df=58 \*p<.05 \*\*p<.01

The Analysis of the obtained data by the application of t-test revealed significant differences between violent and non-violent husbands (Table 1a) and wives (Table 1b) on various dimensions of personality.

It was found that violent husbands scored lower on extraversion ( $t=4.46$ ,  $p<.01$ ), openness ( $t=10.93$ ,  $p<.01$ ), agreeableness ( $t=8.907$ ,  $p<.01$ ), conscientiousness ( $t=3.22$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and higher on neuroticism ( $t=11.54$ ,  $p<.01$ ) as compared to non-violent husbands.

Similar trend was found between violent and non-violent wives i.e violent wives also scored lower on extraversion ( $t=2.02$ ,  $p<.05$ ), openness ( $t=6.22$ ,  $p<.01$ ), agreeableness ( $t=5.69$ ,  $p<.01$ ), conscientiousness ( $t=2.29$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and higher on Neuroticism ( $t=6.33$ ,  $p<.01$ ) as compared to non-violent wives.

These results are in consonance with previous researches. Various theoretical approaches in the existing literature have tried to explain the causes of violence such as Bandura's (1977) social learning theory i.e violence is a learned response. The perpetrator may have learned this dysfunctional response from witnessing violence in his family of origin; Attachment theorists (Carden, 1994), believe that the perpetrator is not able to maintain a relationship of trust and mutuality because of deficiencies (insecurity) experienced as a child. On the other hand, Feminist perspective (Hester, Kelley, & Radford, 1996) asserts that partner abuse is the result of male domination and exploitation of women, identified in the literature as patriarchy. System perspective focuses on the family or marital dyad. It contributes to the abuse that occurs and in

turn is affected by the abuse. Further, some factors influences abusive behavior such a substance abuse, stress, ineffective communication.

As reported by Gelles (1997), male battering of women is strongly associated with Borderline personality disorder and is marked by a proclivity for intense relationships, fear of abandonment and proneness to rage. More recently, Jeannette Norman, (2006) reported that there are some other personality disorders which may be linked with violent behaviors especially those with Explosive personality disorder wherein the individual is unable to control aggressive or violent impulses and once they act out the aggression, the person has a strong sense of relief. Some researchers have attributed violent behavior also to Psychotic and neurotic disorders. They report that persons with paranoid disorder usually have suspiciousness, jealousy and envy & they have a tendency to blame others.

Vestre (1984) is of the view that individual's high on neuroticism exhibit

proneness to experience unpleasant and disturbing emotions and to have corresponding disturbances in thoughts and actions which may be manifested in impulsivity and vulnerability. Such individual's are more prone to violent and negative emotions that interfere with their ability to deal with their problems and to get along with others. Though it's a dimension of personality on which people vary in degree.

It is also possible, as Hara Estroff Marano (1993) suggest that men who are physically violent tend to have deficits in processing social information in specific situations-typically they negatively misinterpret their wives' behavior. Hence it seems that people who are very high on neuroticism (impulsivity and vulnerability) or suffering from personality disorders may also be high on violent behavior.

Violence may also be attributed to family influences, insecure childhood, dysfunctional beliefs, and dominated behavior (patriarchal society) and all these factors very likely also trigger marital discord.

**Table 2a. Mean, SD and t-ratios for various dimensions of Emotional Intelligence between violent and non-violent husbands.**

| Husbands | SA     |       | E       |       | SM      |       | ES      |      | MR      |      |
|----------|--------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|---------|------|---------|------|
|          | VH     | NH    | VH      | VH    | NH      | NH    | VH      | NH   | VH      | NH   |
| Mean     | 9.96   | 16.33 | 9.26    | 16.13 | 14.26   | 23.63 | 7.6     | 15.3 | 6.3     | 13.9 |
| SD       | 3.93   | 1.70  | 2.93    | 2.12  | 2.99    | 2.61  | 2.71    | 1.80 | 2.52    | 2.34 |
| t-value  | 9.16** |       | 10.37** |       | 12.89** |       | 12.95** |      | 12.20** |      |

SA- Self Awareness, E-Empathy, SM- Self Motivation, ES- Emotional Stability, MR- Managing Relations

| I       | SD      |      | VO      |      | C       |      | AB      |      | HT      |       |       |
|---------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|-------|-------|
|         | VH      | NH   | VH      | NH   | VH      | NH   | VH      | NH   | VH      | NH    |       |
| 4.9     | 11.67   | 3.37 | 7.63    | 3.26 | 7.63    | 3.43 | 8.4     | 3.86 | 7.7     | 66.53 | 128.5 |
| 1.64    | 1.24    | 1.38 | 1.02    | 1.33 | 1.21    | 1.22 | 1.19    | 1.54 | 1.14    | 11.53 | 10.64 |
| 17.96** | 12.47** |      | 13.22** |      | 15.93** |      | 10.89** |      | 21.62** |       |       |

df=58 p<.05 p<.01 I-Integrity SD-Self Motivation VO-Value Orientation C-Commitment AB-Altruistic Behavior HT-Husband Total Scores.

**Table 2b. Mean, SD and t-ratios for various dimensions for Emotional Intelligence between violent and non-violent wives**

| Wives   | SA     |        | E       |         | SM     |      | ES   |      | MR   |      |
|---------|--------|--------|---------|---------|--------|------|------|------|------|------|
|         | VW     | NW     | VW      | VW      | NW     | NW   | VW   | NW   | VW   | NW   |
| Mean    | 11.23  | 15.9   | 9.63    | 15.53   | 14.3   | 22.3 | 6.8  | 14.1 | 5.83 | 13.1 |
| SD      | 2.88   | 1.74   | 3.40    | 2.16    | 2.86   | 2.69 | 1.95 | 2.08 | 2.15 | 2.64 |
| t-value | 7.57** | 8.00** | 11.08** | 14.11** | 11.6** |      |      |      |      |      |

  

| I       |      | SD      |         | VO      |        | C       |      | AB   |      | WT    |       |
|---------|------|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| VW      | NW   | VW      | NW      | VW      | NW     | VW      | NW   | VW   | NW   | VW    | NW    |
| 4.96    | 10.7 | 3.4     | 6.96    | 2.86    | 7.4    | 3.13    | 8    | 3    | 7.4  | 65.1  | 121.6 |
| 1.49    | 1.46 | 1.30    | 1.29    | 1.13    | 1.22   | 1.008   | 1.33 | 1.14 | 1.04 | 11.71 | 10.14 |
| 14.99** |      | 10.61** | 14.88** | 15.90** | 15.7** | 19.97** |      |      |      |       |       |

df=58 p<.05 p<.01

Significant difference between violent and non-violent couples (Table 2a) on various dimensions of emotional intelligence revealed that violent husbands showed deficits in certain areas of EQ like Empathy ( $t=10.37$ ,  $p<.01$ ), emotional stability ( $t=12.95$ ,  $p<.01$ ), managing relations ( $t=12.20$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and integrity ( $t=17.96$ ,  $p<.01$ ) as compared to non-violent husband. Similar trend was found between violent and non-violent wives (Table 2b) like Empathy, ( $t=8.00$ ,  $p<.01$ ), emotional stability ( $t=14.11$ ,  $p<.01$ ), managing relations ( $t=11.6$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and integrity ( $t=14.99$ ,  $p<.01$ ) as compared to non-violent wives.

Results reveal that even though the obtained scores of violent couples on various dimensions of EQ are not beyond normal range/norms. Yet they were significantly lower than the non-violent couples in all areas like empathy, emotional stability, managing relations and integrity. Emotional intelligence is the capacity to create positive outcomes in your relationships with others and with yourself. Positive outcomes include joy, optimism, and success in work, school, and life. Increasing emotional intelligence has been correlated with better results in leadership, sales, academic performance, marriage, friendships, and health. Learning

some emotional skills such as expressing emotions, identifying and labeling emotions, assessing the intensity of emotions, managing emotions, delaying gratification, controlling impulses, reducing stress and knowing the difference between emotions and actions can make you successful in interpersonal relations as well as in any aspect of life. (Dalip Singh, 2006).

It appears that within a marriage there is unspoken emotional dialogue whether verbal or non-verbal, a complex processing occurring every interaction between partners. These factors play a significant role in marital relations and satisfaction. Couples may acquire the skills to use and recognize this form of communication, and in doing so, may significantly improve the level of marital satisfaction. It seems, that such skills are lacking in individual's high on violence or aggressive behavior. Perhaps they are deficit in certain areas such as managing relations, emotional stability, self-motivation, empathy. And this can also be attributed to them being high on neuroticism and low on openness and agreeableness. All these factors are closely associated with emotional intelligence and there is a possibility that all they also contribute to marital satisfaction as the results reveal.



**Table 3a. Mean, SD and for various dimensions of Marital Satisfaction between violent and non-violent husbands**

| Husbands | Marital Satisfaction |      | Communication |      | Conflict Resolution |      | Idealistic Distortion |       |
|----------|----------------------|------|---------------|------|---------------------|------|-----------------------|-------|
|          | VH                   | NH   | VH            | NH   | VH                  | NH   | VH                    | NH    |
| Mean     | 28.3                 | 37.6 | 26.7          | 34.3 | 25.53               | 32.8 | 17.1                  | 15.43 |
| SD       | 4.13                 | 2.15 | 3.01          | 4.22 | 2.68                | 3.20 | 2.89                  | 2.88  |
| t-value  | 10.8**               |      | 7.98**        |      | 9.6**               |      | 2.23*                 |       |

df=58 p&lt;.05 p&lt;.01

**Table 3b. Mean, SD and t-ratios for various dimensions of Marital Satisfaction between violent and non-violent wives**

| Wives   | Marital Satisfaction |       | Communication |      | Conflict Resolution |       | Idealistic Distortion |       |
|---------|----------------------|-------|---------------|------|---------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|
|         | VW                   | NW    | VW            | NW   | VW                  | NW    | VW                    | NW    |
| Mean    | 29.13                | 39.03 | 28.           | 36   | 25.43               | 33.23 | 15.73                 | 15.53 |
| SD      | 2.52                 | 3.01  | 2.42          | 4.17 | 1.69                | 3.08  | 2.95                  | 3.95  |
| t-value | 5.70**               |       | 5.26**        |      | 4.64**              |       | 3.46**                |       |

df=58 p&lt;.05 p&lt;.01

Significant difference between violent and non-violent husbands (Table no. 3a) on various dimensions of marital satisfaction revealed that violent husbands scored lower on marital satisfaction ( $t=10.8, p<.01$ ), communication ( $t=7.98, p<.01$ ) conflict resolution ( $t=9.6, p<.01$ ) and idealistic distortion ( $t=2.23, p<.01$ ) as compared to non-violent husbands. A Perusal of Table 3b also reveals similar trend was found between violent and non-violent wives i.e. violent wives scored lower on marital satisfaction ( $t=5.70, p<.01$ ), communication ( $t=5.26, p<.01$ ) conflict resolution ( $t=4.64, p<.01$ ) and idealistic distortion ( $t=3.46, p<.01$ ) as compared to non-violent husbands.

These results are in consonance with previous researches. Larson & Holman (1994), identified three areas of couple interaction processes as key factors of the couple's relational quality and stability. These factors are communication, conflict resolution, and consensus building. Communication facilitated a couple's construction of their unique shared views of their relationship through consensus and

ground rules building. Olson (1997) is of the view that when a couple experiences longstanding abuse, they might create distorted views of how their relationship should and can be. It may never be completely clear whether poor communication and conflict resolution skills contribute to spouse abuse, or the presence of abuse hinders their collaborative consensus building processes. However, it is evident that that at least there is a strong association between the presence of spouse abuse and the couple's inability to communicate and to reach agreement to build an egalitarian relationship.

Researchers have also reported that Non-abusive couples are hypothesized to be those in which both partners are high in assertiveness and self-confidence and low in dominance and avoidance, while abusive couples tend to create the negative cycle of high dominance and avoidance accompanied with low self-esteem and assertiveness (Olson & Olson, 1999). Research has shown that victims of abuse often experience psychological distress such as fear, low self-esteem, depression, guilt and avoidance

(Katz & Arias, 1999; Haj-Yahia, 2000; Olson & Defrain, 2003). Hence there is a possibility that all these factors also influence violent couples in managing their relations, and they lack emotional stability and even high neuroticism thus creating a negative cycle for themselves.

Overall these results imply that violent couples differ from non-violent couples on personality, emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction. Interventions like counseling and Family therapies can help in effectively deal with violent behavior and restore marital harmony.

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