



A Study on Marital Adjustment and Depression of Working and Non-Working Married Women

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Abstract - The sense of one's identity or self is an important dimension of individual's personality giving each one of us unique individuality. Women and depression is holding a relationship of much interest over the last two decades. As more and more women enter the work force, they are increasingly exposed not only of the same work environment as men, but also to unique pressure created by multiple roles and conflicting expectations. The main purpose of the research was to find out the difference in marital adjustment and depression of working and non working married women. The total sample consisted of 100 working and non-working married women (working married women = 50, non-working married women = 50). The Marital Adjustment Questionnaire and Mental Depression Scale were used for collection of data. Obtained data treated with the help of Mean, SD, t and Correlation statistical techniques. Results indicated that employment status affect significantly on depression of married women. Besides it, there was negative correlation found between marital adjustment and depression of working and non-working married women.

keywords - Marital Adjustment, Depression, Married Women, Working and Non-Working.

I. INTRODUCTION:

"A woman is the full circle, within her is the power to create, nurture, and transform" ...Diane

Mariechild

One of the most important relationships between a man and women is marriage. It involves emotional and legal commitment that is quite important in any adult life. Marital adjustment is 'the state in which there is an overall feeling in husband and wife of happiness and satisfaction with their marriage and with each other'. All the marriages are aimed at happiness in one or another way. Most couples marry filled up with expectations. Some of the expectations will be realistic while others unrealistic. This is due to the complex nature of marriage and each individual is as complex as a universe. Therefore, in marriage two universes close together. Marital adjustment calls for maturity that accepts and understands growth and development in the spouse. If this growth is not experienced and realized fully, death in marital relationship is inevitable. A relationship between couples is not instantaneous rather a slow progress. "It is like the undetected cancer that kills silently and softly". A study on 581 couples and 25% of them disclosed that at some time in the adjustment process, they discussed discovering and 18% had seriously considered it.

Depression in a spouse is an issue that most couples will face at some point in their marriage. Depression is a normal and natural response to loss or grief, whether a death, separation from a loved one, job loss, loss of physical health, or relocation. Marital distress and relationship conflict also contribute to depression. Symptoms of depression include feelings of sadness, hopelessness, helplessness, anxiety, irritability, agitation, fatigue, low energy, and a reduced activity level are common, and there is also withdrawal from social contact and loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities. There may be changes in appetite, weight or sleep patterns, memory problems or difficulty concentrating. Often there are feelings of worthlessness or inadequacy and a lowered sense of self-esteem. In more serious cases there may be suicidal thoughts or a feeling that "life is not worth living". Married women have higher rates of depression than unmarried women, but the reverse is true for men. Marriage seems to confer a greater protective advantage on men than on women. Marital adjustment and depression are strongly related. In a research, collected data on 695 women and 530 men and then re-interviewed them up to 1 year later. During this a number of participants separated from or divorced their spouses though the majority reported stable marriages. Approximately 21% of the

women who reported marital split during the study experienced severe depression, a rate three times higher than that from women.

There is a robust link in the couple's literature that the experience of depression in an individual, which is linked to marital satisfaction and marital dissatisfaction. For instance, Herr, Hammen, & Brennan (2007) compared rates of depression of both married men and women and found that, regardless of gender, those classified as currently depressed also reported significantly lower marital satisfaction. Strikingly, the same study also found that those classified as formerly depressed also reported significantly lower current marital satisfaction, highlighting the strong and lasting link between depression and marital satisfaction. The association between depression and marital satisfaction is further bolstered by the finding that in couples in which the wife is depressed, both husband and wife report higher levels of marital dissatisfaction.

Evidence also suggests that the relationship between depression and marital satisfaction may be bi-directional. For example, in a longitudinal study Time 1 marital quality predicted Time 2 depression in both the depressed individual and his/her spouse, suggesting that lower marital satisfaction may negatively affect an individual's rate of depression. On the other hand, there is also evidence to suggest that depression may inhibit positive relationship interactions, causing lower satisfaction. Further, individuals who have experienced depression during adolescence experience more marital dissatisfaction later in life. This preponderance of evidence suggests that not only are depression and marital satisfaction linked, but this association is long lasting, affects both members of the dyad, and is a complicated bi-directional relationship.

There is also an association between betrayals and marital satisfaction which suggests that couples who have and have not experienced a betrayal may differ on a variety of relationship factors. Newlyweds asked to rate the likelihood they would experience infidelity over the course of their relationship, for example, gave higher ratings when marital satisfaction was lower. There is additional evidence that experiencing a betrayal alters the relationship between depression and marital satisfaction. For example, women who had been betrayed reported not only higher levels of negative relationship associations, but also reported depressive episodes. Cano and O'Leary (2000) found that depression was significantly correlated with marital satisfaction when a humiliating life event, such as infidelity, was experienced. These studies suggest that not only are depression and marital satisfaction linked in general, but that the presence or absence of a betrayal within the relationship can affect the strength of the link between depression and satisfaction.

Most non-working mothers are full time housewives who spend most of their time at home attending to their children, husband and domestic chores, they have the freedom to go about their day at will and can come home whenever they like to attend to their home, this is where they differ from working class women/mothers who are under the authority of a boss at work hence, cannot go home at will. According to Rogers and May (2003), the quality of marriage and job satisfaction is inter-related; increase in marital happiness is significantly related increase in job satisfaction and increase in marital unhappiness significantly related to decreasing job satisfaction. Nathawat and Mathur (1993) found that in respect of marital adjustment, working women reported significantly better marital adjustment and subjective wellbeing than housewives; they also scored higher than housewives in general health, life satisfaction and self-esteem measures. Lloyd (1980) found that socioeconomic status is a contributing factor to marital adjustment, they believed that the higher the income, the lower the chance of a divorce. Within the working class women, in a study of personality traits and socioeconomic status as predictors of marital adjustment in working women discovered that the difference between marital adjustment of working women of low, middle and high socioeconomic background was not statistically significant thus, it can be deduced that marital adjustment of working class women was not dependent on their socioeconomic background, rather the personality trait of the woman was a factor in her marital adjustment.

The purpose of this study is in Indian context the phenomenon of marital adjustment and its related variable i.e. depression need a great deal of research. This research would be so helpful in knowing the difficulties faced by working and non-working women just to spend a simple married life. Because our society is male-oriented society, women have to face all problems. If they are working they are supposed to perform all duties at office as well as at home.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Rotz, (2016) conducted a research on why have divorce rates fallen and the role of women's age at marriage. In this article, he used four different experimental methods, to show that age at marriage is the major close reason of the decline in divorce for married people. He derived the facts suggesting that the exact, contributory relationship between a woman's age at marriage and her future possibility of divorce cannot be significantly weaker than suggested by uncorrected estimates.

Kim (2012) conducted a study on the relationship between the quality of marital adjustment and depressive symptoms in Korean American couples. Results from linear regression indicated a negative relationship between marital adjustment and depressive symptoms at a significant level for wives and near significant for husbands. The model explained 15% of the variance in wives' depressive symptoms.

Herr, Hammen, & Brennan (2007) compared rates of depression of both married men and women and found that, regardless of gender, those classified as currently depressed also reported significantly lower marital satisfaction. Strikingly, the same study also found that those classified as formerly depressed also reported significantly lower current marital satisfaction, highlighting the strong and lasting link between depression and marital satisfaction. The association between depression and marital satisfaction is further bolstered by the finding that in couples in which the wife is depressed, both husband and wife report higher levels of marital dissatisfaction. Some studies have focused on indicators that co-vary with depression. The concomitance between depression and marital distress has been emphasized, and there has been a long-standing recognition that both variables are likely to co-occur. This association has been demonstrated within several community-based and clinical samples. The overlap between marital distress and depression in these samples is approximately 50%, regardless of whether depression is construed as a variation in symptoms or as a diagnosable disorder, in samples selected for marital problems or in samples selected for depression.

Trevino, Wooten and Scott (2007) examined the relationships between the relationships between depression and marital adjustment. Correlations for the total group between depression and overall marital adjustment and the subscales of marital adjustment were significant.

Kouros, Papp and Cummings (2008) researched on newlywed couples and investigated longitudinal associations between marital satisfaction and depressive symptoms in a community sample of 296 couples in established relationships with children. Support was found for reciprocal relations between marital satisfaction and depressive symptoms in couples with established relationships.

Lehrer (2006) conducted a study on Age at Marriage and Marital Instability: Revisiting the Becker Landes-Michael Hypothesis. The hypothesis stated that marriage in early age has a high risk of failure and break up. Up till now it has been suggested that after attaining a mature age, the relationship between age at marriage and marital instability might become positive, the reason is that as unmarried women become mature mentally and physically, they can choose their partners realistically and in a better way. The result indicated that the relationship between age at marriage and marital instability is strongly negative up to the late twenties, and curve goes down after this age.

Samantha Litzinger and Kristina Gordon (2005) examined the association between communication and sexual and marital satisfaction. Their analyses revealed that married individuals who were satisfied with their sexual life and, at the same time, had difficulty in communicating, and enjoyed greater marital success. According to the authors, sexual satisfaction may partially compensate for problems in communication on marital satisfaction. This finding is consistent with earlier results by Linda Ade-Ridder (1990) who concentrated on the connection between marital satisfaction and sexual activity. He concluded that couples who continued their sexual interest and relations maintained a high-quality marriage in later life.

Lilly Dimitrovsky et al. (2002) compared women who had not experienced pregnancy and women in the last trimester of their first pregnancy (both married). They did not find a difference in a level of marital satisfaction between the two groups.

Norm O'Rourke et al. (2001) examined older married adults. They found that perceived health contributes significantly to marital satisfaction. It is noteworthy that a low rating of subjective physical well-being contributes to improved marital satisfaction. Moreover, heightened self-deception may enhance perceived marital success among those men who perceive that their health is getting worse. Interestingly, the connection between perceived health and marital satisfaction is not driven by selective recall of one's marital history. Instead, a significant gender difference in self-deception may be associated to this paradoxical connection between perceived health and marital satisfaction.

James L. Campbell et al. (1998) conducted a survey on female and male clients from outpatient counselling centres for alcoholics. Participants expressed a wide range of mental health concerns. The authors indicated that family-of-origin functioning was positively associated with marital satisfaction, i.e., higher perceived levels of family-of-origin functioning were associated with higher reported levels of present marital satisfaction). Moreover, spouses with alcoholic parents (brought up in an alcoholic home) declared lower family-of-origin functioning, and a relation between gender and parental alcoholism was found for respondents' marital satisfaction. That is, women with history of parental alcoholism declared lower levels of marital satisfaction than men without such history. These findings are consistent with results of previous research which indicated that a level of marital satisfaction was relatively lower in spouses with adverse experiences in their families of origin (e.g., parental divorce) (Booth & Edwards, 1989; Wamboldt & Reiss, 1989). Campbell et al. (1998) concluded that, although family-of-origin functioning was connected to marital

satisfaction and that parental alcoholism was associated with family-of-origin functioning, there was no direct correlation between marital satisfaction and parental alcoholism.

Akhani et al. (1999) conducted a research on marital adjustment and life satisfaction among the women of early and late marriage. Their research also wanted to explore the relationship between marital adjustments on life satisfaction. The sample of their study was one hundred married women. The findings of their study proved their hypothesis, that women's age at marriage hold significance in the marital adjustment. The women who marry with an advance age have better marital adjustment than women of early marriage. The research also showed that the financial position of the family played an important part in deciding the level of marital adjustment as the women of high earnings shows more life satisfaction than the women of low earnings.

Lynn Sussman and Charlene Alexander (1999) in their study concentrated on the association between religiosity and marital satisfaction in Jewish-Christian couples (in their first marriage). They demonstrated that parental participation in daily life and other family members' interfaith marriages were associated only with husbands' marital satisfaction. Moreover, according to these authors, ethnic identity, religiosity, and other-group orientation failed to predict the marital satisfaction of spouses in an interfaith marriage.

Michael J. Anthony (1993) conducted a study which was based upon 400 marital dyads from major Protestant denominations (Baptist, Evangelical, Independent, Free, and Congregational). The results of this investigation showed that individuals who manifested intrinsically oriented religiosity experienced the highest levels of marital satisfaction. Nonreligious individuals enjoyed significantly higher marital satisfaction than those who were extrinsically oriented. Anthony explained that these people supported their marital relationships without maintaining traditions and strict standards. Indiscriminately pro-religious individuals had the third highest level of marital satisfaction. Moreover, the findings indicated that there was no statistically significant relationship between marital satisfaction and the variables of income, age, religious homogamy, children, or premarital cohabitation.

Patricia J. Morokoff and Ruth Gilliland (1993) conducted a survey which examined the correlation between sexual functioning, stress, and marital satisfaction. They found that satisfied spouses engaged in sexual intercourse more frequently than unhappy ones. Moreover, their study showed a strong association between sexual and marital satisfaction. It is interesting that frequent sexual activity was not a prerequisite for marital success (some couples were happy with little or no sexual interaction). Additionally, marital satisfaction was not significantly correlated with any aspects of stress. Besides, their results indicate that frequency of sexual relations was negatively associated with marital satisfaction only for men, but frequency of sexual intercourse of women and men was positively associated with their marital satisfaction. Furthermore, for women who had unemployed partners, a low level of marital satisfaction were related with husbands' erectile dysfunction).

Randal Collins and Scott Coltrane (1991) identified the most important characteristics of successful marriages. These were as follows (in order from most to least important): faithfulness, understanding, a good sex life, and children, common interests, sharing household chores, having enough money, and sharing similar backgrounds.

Lawrence Kurdek (1991) found that three personality variables: motives to be in the relationship, psychological distress, and satisfaction with social support were associated with success in marriage.

Robert H. Lauer et al. (1990) studied couples that had been married more than 45 years. They identified the key characteristics of happy marriages as: (a) They were married to someone they liked, b) they had a sense of humour, c) they had a commitment to the person as well as to the marriage, and (d) they were able to reach consensus (i.e., agreement).

Władysław Tatarkiewicz (1990) proposes the evaluation of the quality of life in the past, present, and future perspectives. The author makes an assumption which states that a person's quality of life encompasses their past events, which bind them to the present, and, at the same time, determine the trends for future actions. An outlook onto the past makes it possible to understand the experience having been accumulated by the person.

Hansen (1989) has conducted a study on assessment of factors in marital adjustment. Based upon questionnaire responses from 209 young, married subject, the present study continues this line of inquiry by examining the impact of a variety of variables, in addition to reward levels, on adjustment Finding indicated that more factors are significantly related to adjustment for urban than for rural subjects and that they are better predictors for the urban group. Rural /urban differences exist in the related importance of the variables in predicting adjustment, with fairness issues being more important for rural respondents. The model explains 31.8% more of the variance in adjustment for urban than for rural subjects (75.1% vs.43.3%).

David et al. (1987) conducted a study on the effects of early marriage on marital dissolution. The focal point of this study was an analysis of a path model which includes the estimated effects of background of

early marriage, early marriage and education on the possibility of separation. A result using the General Social Surveys support research that indicates that early marriage is the most significant variable effecting divorce. Further they also concluded and measure through education a small influence of the early marriage.

Bahr et al. (1984) conducted a study on Teenage Marriage and Marital Stability. Theoretically, the marriages which made in earlier age have more possibility to break up, but the cause of this failure is still uncertain. A longitudinal study of a group of two hundred fifty nine married couples indicated that those who made their marriages in later ages and get more education, and did not face any financial uncertainties found more expected to stay in long and stable marriages.

Lee (1977) conducted a study on Age at Marriage and Marital Satisfaction: A Multivariate Analysis with Implications for Marital Stability. He took the sample of seven hundred eighty eight married people. In this study he investigated the relationships between age at marriage, the marital role performance, and marital satisfaction. The purpose of the study was to test the hypotheses related to age at marriage and marital instability which was depicted from a theory. His findings indicated the presence of little positive relations between the constructs.

The analysis of the literature on marital satisfaction from a *health* perspective suggests that people confronted with a serious illness (e.g. cancer patients) felt less satisfied in comparison to those with healthy spouses. Besides, it was found that when partners of patients felt equitably treated in their relationship; they were most satisfied with their relationship (Kuijer et. al., 2002). Similarly, literature on marital satisfaction from a “religious” point of view suggests that there is a positive correlation between marital satisfaction and particular aspects of religiosity. Some researchers suggest that sharing religious orientation is the most important value (Craddock, 1991; Schumm, 1985). Some research has found that religious homogamy between spouses is associated with higher marital stability, marital satisfaction, and marital quality (Glenn, 1984; Heaton, 1982; Lehrer & Chiswick, 1993; Ortega, Whitt, & William, 1988).

Objectives

There are three main objectives studied in this paper:

1. To measure the marital adjustment of working and non-working married women.
2. To assess the depression of working and non- working married women.
3. To know the relationship between marital adjustment and depression of married working and nonworking married women.

Hypothesis

The above aims enable us to formulate following hypothesis:

1. Employment status (working and non- working) will affect significantly on marital adjustment of married women.
2. There will be significant difference in the depression of working and non-working married women.
3. Marital adjustment will affect significantly the depression of working and non-working married women.

III.METHODOLOGY:

Design

A survey research design was used for the study to assess the marital adjustment and depression of working and non-working class women in Balasore and Bhadrak districts of Odisha.

Sample

The sample of 100 married women (50 working and 50 non-working) was taken for this research from Balasore and Bhadrak districts of Odisha. Convenient random sampling was used for this study.

Measures

1. Marital Adjustment Questionnaire: This questionnaire was constructed and standardized by Kumar & Rohatgi (1999). The marital adjustment questionnaire (MAQ) consists of 25 ‘Yes-No’ type items. A ‘Yes’ response is assigned a score of 1 except for items 4, 10 and 19 in which the case is reverse. The sum of these values gives the marital adjustment score. The higher the score, the higher would be the marital adjustment. The reliability index ascertained by split half and test-retest method for the scale was found to be 0.70 and 0.84 respectively.

2. Depression Scale: Depression Scale was constructed and standardized by Hamilton. The scale consists of 21 statements having two alternative answers “yes” and “no”. All the statements are based on the state of mind, when someone is depressed. For yes, 1 mark is given and for No, 0 score is given. Higher the score,

greater is the depression. The reliability by test-retest and split-half method was found .64 and .69 respectively.

Date Analysis

The collected data were classified and tabulated in accordance with the objectives to arrive at the meaningful and relevant inferences by using descriptive and inferential statistics;

- *Descriptive Statistics:* Mean and Standard Deviation
- *Inferential Statistics:* Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and t test.

IV. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION:

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations and t-value of Working and Non-Working Married Women on Marital Adjustment. (N = 100)

Employment Status	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t - Value	Level of Significance
Working	50	20.12	4.74	1.17	Not Significant
Non - working	50	19.28	5.41		

*=0.05 level of significance, **=0.01 level of significance

Table – 1 shows the comparison scores of working and non-working married women on marital adjustment, which shows that there is no significant difference between working and non-working married women with regard to marital adjustment (df = 98, t = 1.17, p = Not Significant). This finding do not support our hypotheses that working married women and non-working married women differ from each other on marital adjustment.

Figure – 1: Means Scores of Working and Non-Working Married Women on Marital Adjustment.

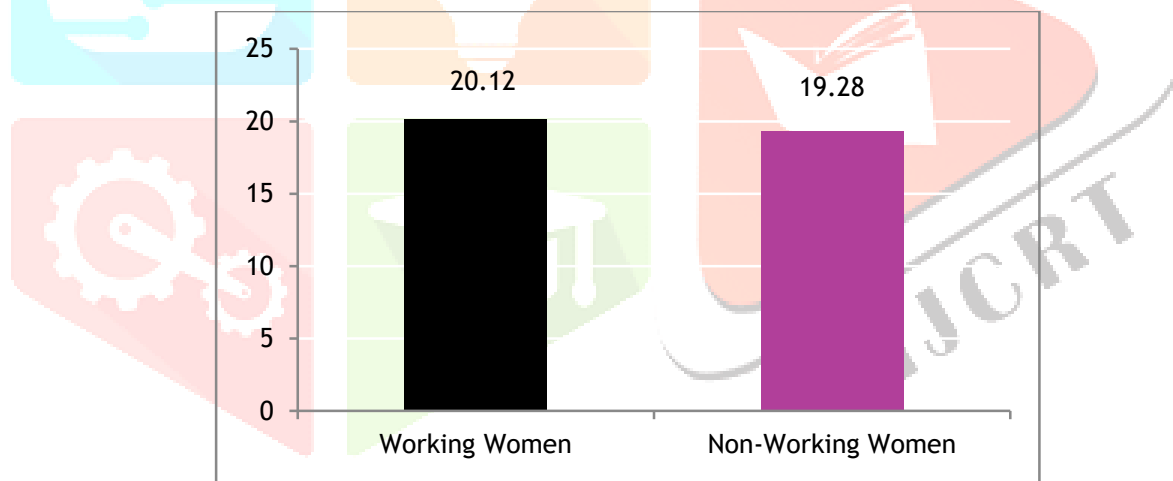
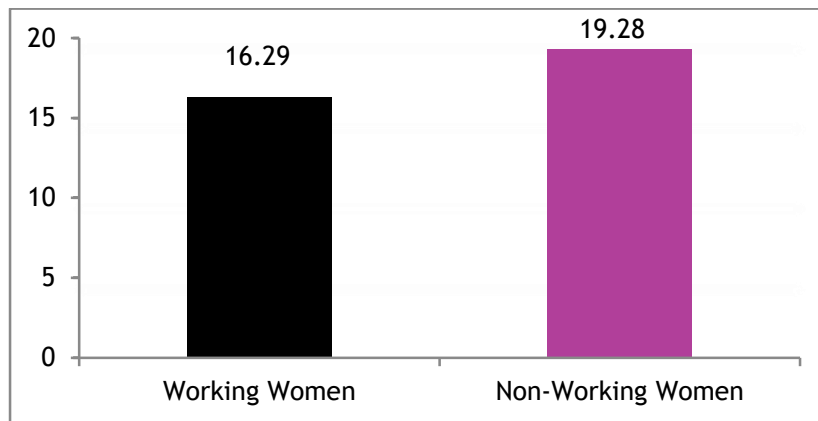


Table 2: Means, Standard Deviations and t-value of Working and Non-Working Married Women on Depression.

Employment Status	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t - Value	Level of Significance
Working	50	16.29	8.14	2.15*	Significant
Non - working	50	19.31	11.46		

*=0.05 level of significance, **=0.01 level of significance

Table – 2 shows that there is a significant difference between working and non-working married women with regard to depression (df = 98, t = 2.15, p<.05). The results show that non-working married women have to face more depression as compared to working women. It indicates that non- working women are more depressed in their daily life and in home task than those women who are employed. Hence, these findings support our hypotheses.

Figure – 2: Means Scores of Working and Non-Working Married Women on Depression.**Table 3: Correlation Matrix of Scores Depression and Marital Adjustment. (N=100)**

	Marital Adjustment
Depression	-.496**

*=0.05 level of significance, **=0.01 level of significance

Table – 3 indicate that there exists a highly significant correlation between Marital Adjustment and Depression, the $r = -.50$, (** $p < .01$). It indicates that if depression is high in married women then their married life will be suffered and vice-versa. Our hypothesis regarding this relationship is supported.

V. DISCUSSION

This research was undertaken to investigate the marital adjustment and depression among working and non-working married women. The study hypothesized that “Employment status (working and non-working) will affect significantly on marital adjustment of married women” and findings reject the stated hypothesis. Working and non-working women did not find significant difference on the variable of marital adjustment. This can be supported by Hashmi, Khurshid and Hassan (2007) studied 150 married women (working married women=75, non-working married women=75). Results revealed non-significant difference between working and non-working married women and their marital adjustment. Non-working women also have many problems like working married women. Jamabo and Ordu (2012) in their study regarding marital adjustment of working and non-working women also found that both working class and non-working class women exhibit no clear difference in their marital adjustment. The educational attainment of women does not affect their marital adjustment. Moore et al. (1984) also failed to find significant differences on marital adjustment amongst working and nonworking women.

The findings support our second hypothesis “There will be significant difference in the depression of working and non-working married women.” Comparison of working women with non-working women found to be significant on depression. The results indicate that non-working married women feel more depression in their married life as compared to working married women. Bhadoria, S. (2013) reported significant differences in level of Anxiety and depression with respect to both working and non working women. Working and non-working women have differ from each other on Apathy, sleep disturbances, pessimism, Fatigability, irritability, self centered, Sadness, Self dislike, Self Acquisition, Self preoccupation, indecisiveness. Dudhatra & Yogesh (2012) found significant difference in depression with respect to both working and non-working women.

The working women had better mental health and reported less depression than the non-working mothers. The most frequently reported source of stress for working mothers was not having enough time to do everything, whereas for non-working mothers lack of social life was a major stressor. Palstam, Bjersing and Mannerkorpi (2012) conducted a study which shows working women have better health than nonworking women in terms of pain, fatigue, stiffness, depression, disease specific health status and physical aspects of quality of life, which represent body functions and overall health status. However, they were equally impaired in tests of physical capacity. Moderate pain levels were compatible with work, while severe pain appeared to compromise work. Fatigue was better tolerated, as women scoring severe levels of fatigue worked.

Another hypothesis of this study is that “Marital adjustment will affect significantly the depression of working and non-working married women”. Results indicated that depressed married woman have to face marital adjustment problems in her married life. She also cannot perform better her married life responsibilities because she is under depression and if a married woman feels depression in her life, it affects her household work, her relationship with spouse and other members of her family. Researchers studied that

women feels more depression after marriage and it affect their married life. Because of depression they cannot tolerate their spouses' behavior and immediately get irritated. This makes their life miserable and leads towards breakup.

Limitations:

The results should be viewed cautiously as our population sample is limited to only Balasore and Bhadrak districts of Odisha state. The second limitation is the cross-sectional research design because the data was collected from various sections of women at the same period of time. Thirdly, the sample collected was also limited and covered only two districts. Thus, the study's result is restricted to a specified sample and not reviewed on a general population. In our study, the response rate was good and every woman had fully marked the answers.

Social/ Educational Implications:

The following steps should be taken at the community workers, family, educationists and social psychologists for the better adjustment of women whether she is working and/or non-working;

1. Programmes at society/ community level should start being modified to better suit the needs of women.
2. To assist and empower women find their buried talents, physical and social activities should be provided.
3. Family and peers should support their woman in cultivating positive and optimistic attitude.
4. Community/ society should offer counselling services to prevent any depressive condition.

Suggestion for Future Research:

The present research was limited to only a small percentage of population, so there is a need to conduct a general population for the generalization of findings in the society. Hence, future research should focus on that aspect.

CONCLUSION

Thus, it can be concluded from the above discussion that there are differences in the working and non-working women. The findings of the study indicate that non-working married women have to face more difficulties in their lives like they experienced more depression as compared to working married women. It concludes that on some aspects non-working married women cannot contribute significantly for the well being of their family and it leads to lower marital adjustment. While measuring relationship among both the variables (marital adjustment and depression), it was found that they both are negatively correlated with each other.

Compliance with ethical standards:**Acknowledgements**

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Statement of informed consent:

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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