

“An Empirical Analysis Of Loneliness And Marital Satisfaction In Couple”

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Abstract

The present study aimed to examine loneliness and marital satisfaction among married couples. Loneliness refers to a subjective feeling of emotional and social isolation, while marital satisfaction reflects the degree of happiness and fulfilment experienced within a marital relationship. A total sample of 80 married individuals was selected for the study, comprising 40 males and 40 females. Loneliness was measured using the Loneliness Scale developed by Praveen Kumar Jha, and marital satisfaction was assessed using the Marital Adjustment Scale developed by B. Hsan & K. C. Bhagat. Standardized tools were used to assess levels of loneliness and marital satisfaction among the participants. To analyse differences between loneliness and marital satisfaction, the independent samples t-test was employed. The findings revealed a statistically significant difference in levels of loneliness ($t=3.99$) and marital satisfaction ($t=3.10$) among couples. Furthermore, the results indicated a significant negative correlation ($r=-0.70$) between loneliness and marital satisfaction, suggesting that higher levels of loneliness are associated with lower levels of marital satisfaction. The findings of the study highlight the importance of emotional connectedness and companionship in maintaining a satisfying marital relationship.

Key Words: *Loneliness, Marital satisfaction, Couple*

Date of Submission: 18-04-2026

Date of Acceptance: 28-04-2026

I. Introduction

Marriage is one of the most significant and intimate interpersonal relationships in adult life, providing emotional support, companionship, intimacy, and a sense of belonging. Traditionally, marriage has been viewed as a protective factor against loneliness, as it offers partners consistent emotional and social connection. However, contemporary research suggests that being married does not automatically guarantee emotional fulfilment. Many individuals experience loneliness even while living with a spouse, indicating that loneliness can exist within close relationships and may strongly influence marital satisfaction.

Loneliness is a subjective emotional state characterized by a perceived gap between desired and actual social or emotional relationships. It is not merely the absence of social contact but rather the lack of meaningful emotional connection and understanding. In the context of marriage, loneliness may arise when partners feel emotionally disconnected, misunderstood, unappreciated, or unsupported by their spouse. Factors such as poor communication, unresolved conflicts, lack of intimacy, role overload, stress, and changing social expectations can contribute to feelings of loneliness within marital relationships.

Marital satisfaction refers to an individual's overall evaluation of their marriage, including levels of happiness, fulfilment, emotional closeness, mutual respect, and perceived quality of the relationship. High marital satisfaction is associated with positive psychological well-being, better physical health, and greater life satisfaction, whereas low marital satisfaction has been linked to emotional distress, anxiety, depression, and relationship instability. Research has consistently shown that emotional connection, effective communication, empathy, and mutual support play a crucial role in determining marital satisfaction.

The relationship between loneliness and marital satisfaction is complex and reciprocal. On one hand, low marital satisfaction may increase feelings of loneliness, as individuals may feel emotionally isolated despite being married. On the other hand, persistent loneliness can erode marital satisfaction by reducing emotional intimacy, trust, and relationship commitment. When partners feel lonely, they may withdraw emotionally, engage in negative communication patterns, or seek emotional fulfilment outside the marriage, further weakening the marital bond.

In modern society, couples face numerous challenges such as work pressure, financial stress, changing gender roles, technological distractions, and reduced quality time, all of which may impact emotional closeness between partners. These challenges make it increasingly important to understand how loneliness operates within marital relationships and how it affects marital satisfaction. Studying this relationship can provide valuable insights for marital counselling, relationship education, and mental health interventions aimed at strengthening couple relationships.

Therefore, the present study aims to examine the relationship between loneliness and marital satisfaction among couples. Understanding this relationship can help identify emotional risk factors within marriages and contribute to the development of strategies that promote emotional connection, relationship satisfaction, and overall well-being among married individuals.

II. Review Of Literature

Weiss (1973) conducted a study to understand loneliness in close relationships, especially in marriage. The main purpose of the study was to explain loneliness as emotional and social isolation. Weiss classified loneliness into two types: emotional loneliness and social loneliness. The results showed that even married individuals can experience emotional loneliness when there is a lack of emotional closeness, understanding, and intimacy with their spouse. The study concluded that marriage alone does not prevent loneliness and highlighted the importance of emotional bonding in couples.

Leavitt et al. (2025) conducted a study to examine loneliness in romantic relationships and its effect on relational and sexual well-being. The purpose of the study was to examine whether gratitude and forgiveness reduce the negative impact of loneliness among couples. The sample consisted of 1,614 newlywed couples. Standardized scales were used and moderation analysis was applied for data analysis. The results showed that loneliness negatively affected relationship satisfaction, while gratitude and forgiveness significantly buffered this effect.

Mund and Johnson (2020) conducted a study to examine loneliness and its effect on the longitudinal course of relationship satisfaction among couples. The purpose of the study was to examine whether loneliness predicts changes in relationship satisfaction over time. The sample consisted of 2,337 stable couples selected from the German Family Panel. Actor–Partner Interdependence Models and dyadic response surface analysis were used for data analysis. The results showed that higher loneliness in oneself or one’s partner was associated with lower relationship satisfaction over time. The study concluded that loneliness negatively affects relationship satisfaction in couples.

Saravana K., Ramesh B., Sachin BS & Rajashekar C. (2023) the purpose of their study was to investigate marital satisfaction among newly married couples in India after the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 150 newly married couples from Karnataka state were selected for the research. The ENRICH Marital Satisfaction (EMS) Scale was used to measure marital satisfaction. Descriptive statistics and ANOVA were used to analyse the data. The results showed that most couples reported low levels of marital satisfaction, indicating significant challenges in early married life post-pandemic.

Sharma N. & Gupta S. (2025) the aim of their study was to compare marital well-being and couple satisfaction between husbands and wives among young married couples. A total of 38 couples (76 individuals) from Hisar, Haryana were selected. Standardized tools including the Couple Satisfaction Index and Dyadic Adjustment Scale were used. t-test was applied to analyse the data. The findings revealed that husbands reported significantly higher marital satisfaction and dyadic adjustment compared to wives.

Tripathi T. & Randhawa K. (2023) the objective of this study was to explore the correlation between emotional intelligence, depression, and marital satisfaction among married couples in Bangalore city. A sample of 120 married couples was selected purposefully. Emotional Intelligence Scale, Depression Inventory, and Marital Satisfaction Scale were administered. Correlation analysis was used for data analysis. The results indicated that emotional intelligence positively influenced marital satisfaction, while depression had a negative impact on marital satisfaction.

Importance of Research:

Loneliness and marital satisfaction are two crucial psychological factors that significantly influence the quality and stability of married life. Although marriage is often viewed as a source of emotional support and companionship, many couples experience feelings of loneliness due to poor communication, emotional distance, role conflicts, or unmet expectations. Studying the relationship between loneliness and marital satisfaction helps in understanding how emotional isolation within a marital relationship can affect partners’ mental health, well-being, and overall marital adjustment. This study is important because it provides insights that can assist psychologists, counsellors, and family therapists in identifying risk factors for marital dissatisfaction and developing effective intervention strategies. Furthermore, the findings can contribute to improving marital counselling programs and promoting healthier, more satisfying marital relationships in contemporary society.

Objectives:

1. To Find out Significant Difference in Loneliness of Couple.
2. To Find out Significant Difference in Marital Satisfaction of couple.
3. To find out Correlation Between Loneliness and Marital satisfaction.

Null Hypothesis:

1. There will be no significant difference in loneliness of couple.
2. There will be no significant difference in marital satisfaction of couple.
3. There will be no correction between loneliness and Marital satisfaction.

III. Methodology

Sample

The sample for the present study consisted of a total of 80 couples selected through the random sampling method. The sample included 40 wives and 40 husbands.

Research Tools

Loneliness

For the measurement of loneliness, the Loneliness Scale developed by Dr. Praveen Kumar Jha was used. This scale consists of a total of 36 items and follows a five-point rating scale. The response options include Strongly Agree, Agree, Uncertain, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Both positive and negative statements are included in the scale. For positive statements, scores of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 are assigned respectively, whereas for negative statements, scores of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are assigned respectively.

The scale shows high reliability, and its validity, assessed through the test–retest method, was found to be 0.87, indicating high validity. The total score on the scale can range from a minimum of 36 to a maximum of 180. Higher scores indicate greater loneliness, while lower scores indicate a lower level of loneliness.

Marital Satisfaction

The Marital Satisfaction Scale (Bhagat & Hasan, 2013) was developed and standardized because, under the Indian cultural setup, no single standardized test of marital satisfaction was available. The scale consists of a total of 40 items. The following dimensions of marital satisfaction are included in the scale: (1) Interaction patterns, (2) Social support, (3) Violence, (4) Spousal mate guarding, (5) Spousal mate value, (6) Children, (7) Attribution towards spouse, and (8) Physiological well-being of the couple.

The scale follows a two-point response format, in which responses are scored as 1 for “Yes” and 0 for “No.” The Test–Retest Reliability coefficient of the scale is 0.822, and the concurrent validity coefficient is 0.618.

Data collection:

According to the objective of the present research, a null hypothesis has been formulated. Appropriate statistical techniques were selected to obtain reliable information. The purpose of this research is to study loneliness and marital satisfaction among couples. For this purpose, the Loneliness Scale developed by Dr. Praveen Kumar Jha was used. Additionally, the Marital Satisfaction Scale developed by Bhagat and Hasan was used for data collection.

A total of 80 couples were selected as the sample for the study.

Research Design:

The purpose of the research was to measure loneliness and marital satisfaction among couples. For this purpose, a total of 80 couples were selected as the sample using the random sampling method. The “t-test” was used to determine the difference between the medians of the two groups. The Karl Pearson correlation method was used to find the correlation between the two

IV. Result And Discussion

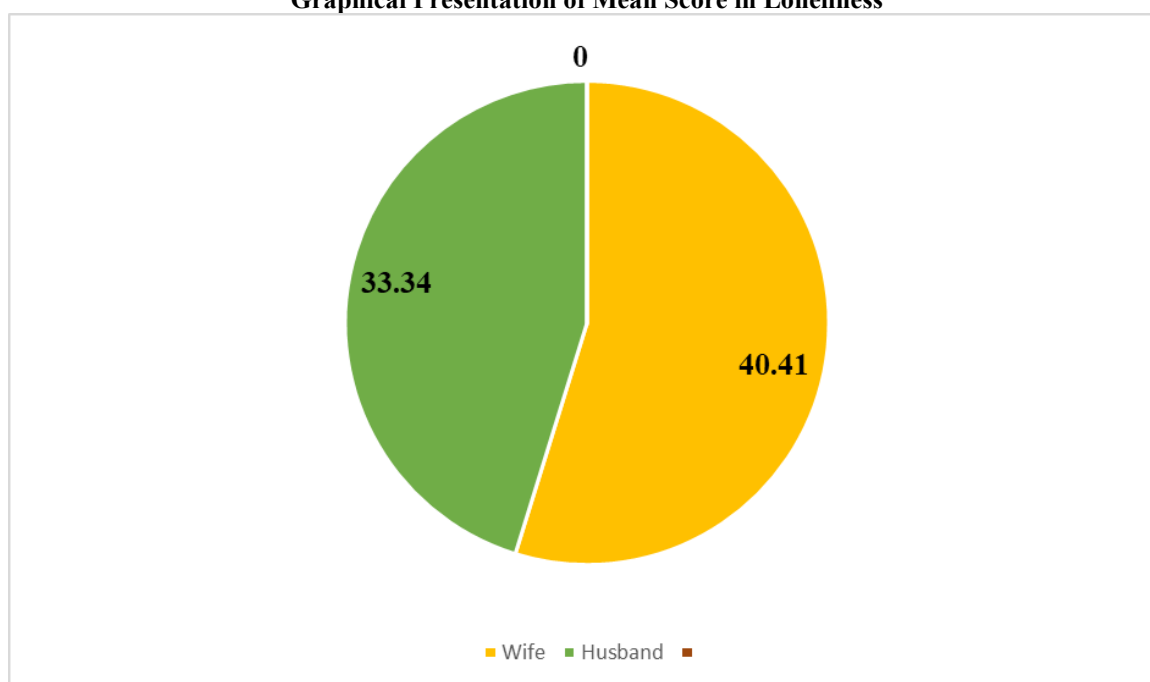
Result Table: 1

Showing the mean and t-values of Loneliness:

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig
Wife	40	40.41	10.10	3.99	0.01
Husband	40	33.34	08.33		

**Significant Level 0.05 = 1.99
0.01 = 2.64**

Graphical Presentation of Mean Score in Loneliness



The results presented in Table 1 show the mean difference in levels of loneliness between wives and husbands. The mean loneliness score for wives (N = 40) was 40.41 with a standard deviation of 10.10, whereas the mean loneliness score for husbands (N = 40) was 33.34 with a standard deviation of 8.33.

The calculated t-value was 3.99, which is higher than the critical t-value at both the 0.05 level (1.99) and the 0.01 level (2.64). Therefore, the difference in loneliness levels between wives and husbands is statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

This indicates that wives experience significantly higher levels of loneliness compared to husbands. The findings of the present study reveal a significant gender difference in loneliness, with wives showing higher mean loneliness scores than husbands. This suggests that gender may play an important role in influencing levels of loneliness.

One possible reason for higher loneliness among wives may be the greater emotional and domestic responsibilities they carry within the family. Women are often expected to manage household duties, caregiving roles, and emotional support for family members, which may lead to feelings of isolation and emotional exhaustion.

Another possible explanation could be a lack of emotional support or communication within marital relationships. Wives may feel that their emotional needs are not adequately understood or fulfilled, resulting in increased feelings of loneliness. Differences in social interaction patterns may also contribute to this result. Husbands may have broader social networks or more opportunities for social engagement outside the home, whereas wives may experience restricted social interaction, especially in traditional or rural settings.

Additionally, societal expectations and cultural norms may limit women’s autonomy and personal expression, which can further intensify feelings of loneliness.

Overall, these factors may collectively contribute to the higher levels of loneliness observed among wives compared to husbands.

Result Table: 2
Showing the mean and t-values of Marital satisfaction:

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig
Wife	40	1.70	00.57	3.10	0.01
Husband	40	03.87	01.29		

Significant Level 0.05 = 1.99
0.01 = 2.64

Graphical Presentation of Mean Score in Marital Satisfaction

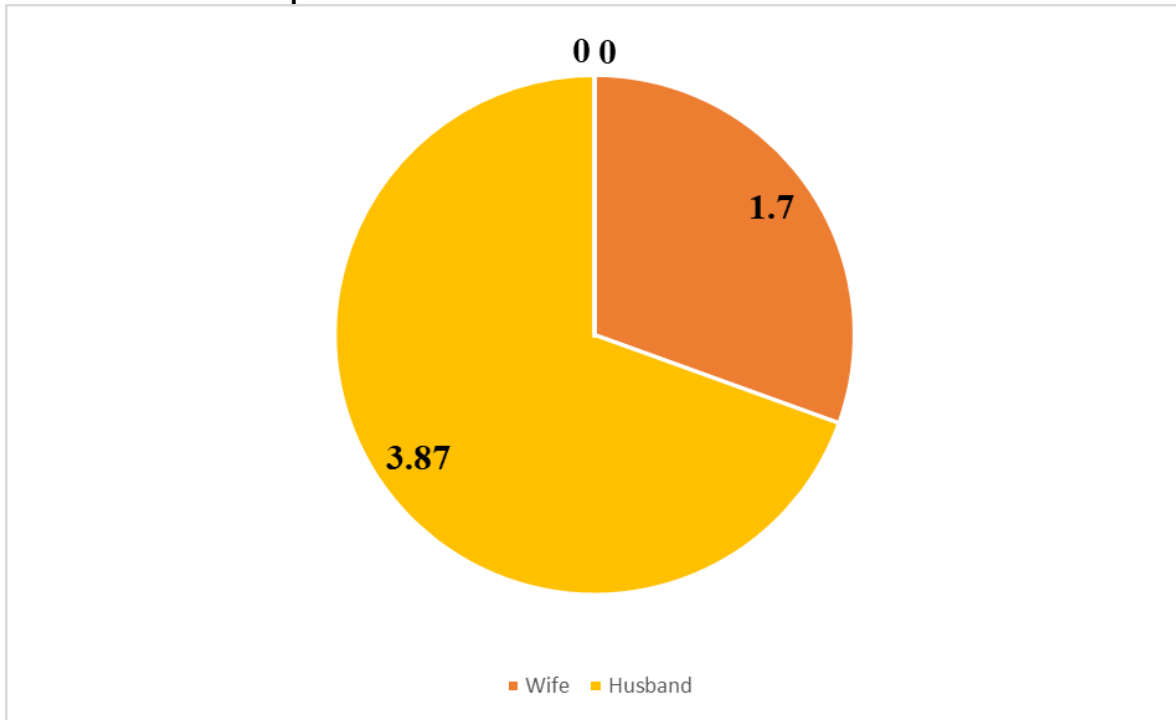


Table 2 presents the mean scores and t-values for marital satisfaction between wives and husbands. The mean marital satisfaction score for wives (N = 40) was 1.70 with a standard deviation of 0.57, whereas the mean marital satisfaction score for husbands (N = 40) was 3.87 with a standard deviation of 1.29.

The calculated t-value was 3.10, which is higher than the critical t-value at both the 0.05 level (1.99) and the 0.01 level (2.64). This indicates that the difference in marital satisfaction between wives and husbands is statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

This clearly shows that husbands report significantly higher marital satisfaction compared to wives.

The findings of the present study reveal a significant gender difference in marital satisfaction, with husbands showing higher marital satisfaction scores than wives.

One possible reason for higher marital satisfaction among husbands may be the unequal distribution of responsibilities within marriage. In many families, wives tend to carry a greater share of household duties and caregiving roles, which can reduce their overall satisfaction with marital life.

Another possible explanation could be differences in expectations from marriage. Husbands may have their emotional, social, and practical needs met more easily within the marital relationship, whereas wives may experience unmet expectations, leading to lower satisfaction.

Communication patterns within marriage may also contribute to this difference. Wives may feel that their concerns, emotions, or opinions are not adequately acknowledged or addressed, which can negatively affect their marital satisfaction.

Additionally, cultural, and societal norms may provide husbands with greater autonomy, decision-making power, and social support, which can enhance their perception of marital satisfaction. In contrast, wives may face role restrictions and societal pressures that lower their sense of fulfilment within marriage.

Overall, these factors may collectively contribute to the higher levels of marital satisfaction observed among husbands compared to wives.

Result Table: 3
Showing the correlation between loneliness and Marital satisfaction:

Variables	N	Mean	r
Loneliness	80	36.87	-0.70
Marital Adjustment	80	02.78	

Significant Level 0.05 = 0.13
0.01 = 0.18

Table 3 shows the correlation between loneliness and marital satisfaction for the total sample (N = 80). The mean score for loneliness was 36.87, and the mean score for marital satisfaction was 02.78.

The correlation coefficient (r) between loneliness and marital satisfaction was -0.70 , indicating a negative relationship. This means that as loneliness increases, marital satisfaction decreases, and vice versa. The strength of this correlation is moderate. The negative correlation between loneliness and marital satisfaction suggests that individuals who experience higher levels of loneliness tend to report lower levels of satisfaction in their marital relationship. Loneliness within marriage may arise due to poor communication, lack of emotional intimacy, or insufficient mutual support, which can reduce feelings of satisfaction and fulfillment in the relationship.

Conversely, individuals who experience higher marital satisfaction are more likely to feel emotionally connected, supported, and understood by their spouse, which helps reduce feelings of loneliness. This finding is consistent with psychological theories that emphasize the importance of emotional closeness and effective communication in maintaining satisfying marital relationships. Strengthening interpersonal communication and emotional bonding between spouses may help reduce loneliness and enhance marital satisfaction.

V. Conclusion

- There was significant difference in loneliness of Couple.
- There was significant difference in marital satisfaction of Couple.
- There was negative correlation between loneliness and Marital satisfaction.

Limitations of the Research

This study had several limitations that can be addressed in future research. First, in the present study, only 80 couples were selected as the sample from a large population; therefore, the findings cannot be broadly generalized.

In the present research, data were collected using only the questionnaire method. Other methods such as observation, interviews, and additional scientific techniques were not employed.

Moreover, no attempt was made to conduct a comparative study by differentiating between couples from rural and urban areas. Therefore, future research should include larger and more diverse samples, use multiple research methods, and consider rural–urban factors to obtain more comprehensive and generalizable results.

Suggestions for future research

In the present research, efforts should be made to obtain more robust results by increasing the sample size so that the findings can be broadly generalized. In this study, data were collected only through the questionnaire method; however, other methods such as interviews, observation, and additional scientific techniques may also be used in future research.

In the present research, only couples were included, whereas future studies may include men and women separately as well. Moreover, comparative studies can be conducted among couples from two different cities and between urban and rural couples. In-depth studies may also be carried out by considering other factors related to marital life.

Additionally, couples from different socio-economic levels—high, middle, and low—can be studied. In the present research, the t -test and correlation coefficient “ r ” were used for data analysis; besides these, other statistical methods may also be employed in future studies.

Acknowledgment

We are thankful to our institution for providing the necessary academic environment and resources that enabled me to conduct this research effectively. This research paper titled “An Empirical Analysis of Loneliness and Marital satisfaction in couple” our appreciation extends to all the respondents who generously shared their time and perspectives by participating in the data collection, making this empirical analysis possible. We would also like to acknowledge our friends and colleagues for their helpful discussions, motivation, and support during the research process.

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