

# A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE AND RESILIENCE AMONG WORKING AND NON WORKING WOMEN

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## ABSTRACT:

Emotional abuse wears away at the victim's self-confidence, sense of self-worth, trust in their own perceptions, and self-concept. Resilience is the ability to move ahead in life in spite of difficulties and to bounce back after crises.

The aim of the current investigation was to compare working and non working women on emotional abuse and resilience. For this purpose, the Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (Gottman & Gottman, 2009) and Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (Connor & Davidson, 2003) were administered to the sample. The sample for the current investigation included 40 subjects, 20 working women and 20 non working women. The age group of the sample was 25 to 35 years. The t-ratio was used for statistical analysis of the results. Emotional abuse was more amongst non working women and resilience was found to be more in working women.

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## INTRODUCTION

Emotional abuse includes verbal attack, dominance, control, ridicule and isolation (Follingstad, Coyne, & Gambone, 2005). Emotional abuse according to Romeo (2011) consists of internal injuries and is more difficult to identify. It includes coercive control and expressive aggression such as insults, humiliation, and name calling. Emotional abuse is considered an important form of abuse because many women report that it is as harmful as or worse than physical abuse they suffer and because of its role in setting up and maintaining the overall abusive dynamic of the relationship.

Common Forms of Emotional Abuse:

- Unreasonable jealousy
- Reduced affection and intimacy
- Frequent mood swings
- Continuous threats
- Extramarital affairs
- Excessive criticism suffered at the hands of your spouse

- Excessive humiliation
- A provoking tendency of your partner
- Miscommunication or refusing to communicate at all
- Sarcastic and taunting comments

Resilience is the capacity to withstand and cope with the life challenges and becoming successful in maintaining balance despite adverse conditions of life (DiCorcia & Tronick, 2011; González-Torres & Artuch, 2014). Factors promoting resilience include positive coping, positive affect, realism, altruism, support of family and community. Emotional abuse victims who have high resilience manage to have good mental health and are able to bounce back after crucial circumstances (Reich, Zautra, & Hall, 2010). Resilience plays the important role of a protective factor, protecting the individual's psychological being and increasing positive changes when coping with stressful situations (Kinman & Grant, 2011).

**HYPOTHESES**

1. It is expected that emotional abuse would be higher in non working women in comparison to working women.
2. It is expected that resilience would be higher in working women in comparison to non working women.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Sample**

The sample comprised of 40 married females (20 working and 20 non - working) in the age group of 25 – 35 years.

**RESULTS**

The results of the statistical analysis are presented in the following tables

Table 1: Showing the Mean, S.D. and t – ratio values on Emotional Abuse

|               | Mean  | S.D. | t - ratio |
|---------------|-------|------|-----------|
| Non – Working | 15.75 | 4.26 | 2.54*     |
| Working       | 12.25 | 2.33 |           |

Table 2 : Showing the Mean, S.D. and t – ratio values on Resilience

|               | Mean  | S.D. | t - ratio |
|---------------|-------|------|-----------|
| Non – Working | 20.65 | 5.50 | 2.18*     |
| Working       | 26.8  | 5.39 |           |

**DISCUSSION**

Table 1 shows the comparison of working and non – working married females on emotional abuse. The results clearly indicate that non working women (Mean = 15.75) have a higher score on emotional abuse as compared to non – working women (Mean = 12.25). The t – ratio value (2.54) is significant at  $p < .01$  level. Thus, the hypothesis (H1) has been supported by the results obtained. The results are in consonance with previous findings.

Unemployed women report greater abuse as compared to their unemployed counterparts

**Tests and Tools**

Following tests were used to test the hypotheses-

1. Gottman Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (Gottman & Gottman, 2009)
2. Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (Connor & Davidson, 2003)

**Statistical Analysis**

The t – ratio values were calculated to check the difference in the working and non – working married women on the variables of emotional abuse and resilience

(Roberts, 2000). Emotional abuse takes place with non working women in forms of rigidly controlling the finances, taking away the credit cards, making accounts for every penny spent (Clift & Dutton, 2011). Barahmand and Nafs (2013) ascertained that non-working women witness more partner abuse whereas working women experience greater marital satisfaction and quality of life.

Table 2 shows the comparison of working and non – working women on resilience. The results clearly indicate that working women (Mean = 26.8) have a higher score on resilience as compared to non –

working women (Mean = 20.65). The  $t$  – ratio value of 2.18 is significant at  $p < .01$  level. Thus, the hypothesis (H3) has been supported by the results obtained. Resilience is more in working women as they have a social support system at their working place apart from the family members and they are more adaptive to various circumstances of life. They can easily bounce back from any crucial situation as compared to non working women (Benard, 2003).

Non working women feel vulnerable and feel difficult to bounce back from depressing emotional experiences (Bonnano, 2004). Working women have higher levels of self esteem and possess occupational prestige. Working women are independent which helps them in bouncing back from monotony, isolation, pressure and pushing towards increasing freshness and flourishing life.

Burke, Koyuncu, & Fiksenbaum (2008) ascertained that the distinctive feature of Indian career women is that strive to balance their work and family and make sure they do not discard their traditional role of being a home maker. Women have inherent qualities of tolerance, courtesy, affection, patience etc which makes them strong enough to handle many things at a time. Managing work and family develops effective coping mechanisms and they are resilient as compared to their non- working women counterparts.

## CONCLUSION

The results clearly indicate that the working women have higher levels of resilience, as these women have a positive feeling about themselves. They feel themselves as contributing members of the family. Non working women, being totally dependent on their partners are more vulnerable to emotional abuse.

Since, in today's world, women who are working are increasing in number every day, it is essential to focus research on their conditions, hardships, and uplifts and we must make sure that non working women are treated equally without considering them a liability and a burden. Proper intervention strategies are needed to curb emotional abuse and to efforts need to be made to foster resilience in women.

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