

# Relationship between Personality Dimensions and Marital Adjustment in Working Women

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## *ABSTRACT*

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between personality variables and marital adjustment among married working women. A sample of 200 married working women aged between 30–40 years was selected from Patna, Ara, and Buxar using purposive sampling. Standardized tools including the Marital Adjustment Scale and Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Hindi adaptation) were used for data collection. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was applied for analysis. The results revealed that neuroticism was significantly negatively correlated with marital adjustment, whereas extraversion showed a significant positive relationship. Psychoticism also demonstrated a negative correlation with marital adjustment. The findings highlight the importance of personality traits in influencing marital relationships among working women.

**Keywords: Marital Adjustment, Personality, Neuroticism, Extraversion, Working Women**

## **Introduction:**

Marital adjustment is a key construct in psychology, referring to the degree of harmony, satisfaction, and effective functioning within a marital relationship. It encompasses dimensions such as mutual understanding, emotional intimacy, communication, and conflict resolution. Spanier (1976) conceptualized marital adjustment as a multidimensional construct reflecting the overall quality of dyadic relationships. Empirical evidence indicates that higher levels of marital adjustment are associated with better mental health, greater life satisfaction, and enhanced well-being, whereas lower levels are linked to psychological distress, including stress, anxiety, and interpersonal conflict.

In recent decades, India has experienced significant socio-economic changes, particularly with respect to women's participation in the workforce. Data from national surveys such as the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) and the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) suggest a gradual increase in female employment. However, female labor force participation in India remains

relatively low compared to global standards. Despite this, working women are increasingly contributing to household income and participating in family decision-making processes, particularly in urban and semi-urban settings.

The socio-cultural context of Bihar presents specific challenges for working women. Traditional gender role expectations remain prominent, with women continuing to bear primary responsibility for domestic duties despite employment. This dual role often results in role conflict, which has been shown to negatively affect marital relationships (Rao & Rao, 2008). Additionally, factors such as low socio-economic status, limited social support, and patriarchal family structures further complicate marital dynamics in this region.

Personality traits constitute an important determinant of how individuals perceive and respond to marital interactions. Eysenck's trait model identifies three primary dimensions: neuroticism, extraversion, and psychoticism.

Neuroticism reflects emotional instability and stress vulnerability, extraversion denotes sociability and positive affect, and psychoticism is associated with aggressiveness and low empathy. Empirical studies consistently demonstrate that neuroticism is negatively associated with marital satisfaction, whereas extraversion shows a positive association with relationship quality (Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Watson et al., 2000).

The relationship between personality traits and marital adjustment is particularly salient among working women, who are required to manage multiple role demands simultaneously. In semi-urban and rural regions such as Patna, Ara, and Buxar, the combined pressures of occupational responsibilities and traditional domestic expectations may amplify the impact of personality characteristics on marital outcomes.

Despite extensive research on marital adjustment, there is a relative lack of studies focusing specifically on working women in socio-culturally distinct regions such as Bihar. Accordingly, the present study aims to examine the relationship between personality variables and marital adjustment among married working women, thereby contributing to a more context-specific understanding of marital dynamics.

#### **Review of Literature:**

Marital adjustment is a significant predictor of psychological well-being and relationship stability, with growing evidence highlighting the role of personality traits in marital outcomes. Empirical research consistently identifies neuroticism as a strong negative predictor of marital adjustment, as it is associated with emotional instability, heightened stress reactivity, and maladaptive coping (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). In contrast, extraversion is positively associated with marital satisfaction, as traits such as sociability, assertiveness, and positive affect

facilitate effective communication and relationship maintenance (Watson et al., 2000). Psychoticism has also been linked to poorer marital outcomes due to characteristics such as aggressiveness, impulsivity, and lack of empathy (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975).

Among working women, marital adjustment is influenced not only by personality traits but also by role-related stressors. The dual burden of professional and domestic responsibilities often leads to role conflict and psychological strain, negatively affecting marital relationships (Rao & Rao, 2008). These challenges are further intensified in socio-cultural contexts such as Bihar, where traditional gender roles, patriarchal family structures, and limited social support systems prevail.

Recent research also highlights the role of psychological mediators, including self-esteem and emotional regulation, in shaping marital adjustment. Despite extensive literature, there is a lack of context-specific studies focusing on working women in semi-urban and rural regions. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the relationship between personality variables and marital adjustment among married working women in selected districts.

#### **Objectives of the Study:**

The present study aims to examine the relationship between personality variables, as conceptualized in Personality Psychology, and marital adjustment among married working women. Specifically, it seeks to assess the associations of neuroticism, extraversion, and psychoticism with marital adjustment.

#### **Hypotheses:**

The following hypotheses were formulated:

1. Neuroticism will be significantly negatively correlated with marital adjustment among married working women.

2. Extraversion will be significantly positively correlated with marital adjustment among married working women.
3. Psychoticism will be significantly negatively correlated with marital adjustment among married working women.

**Sample:**

The sample consisted of 200 married working women aged between 30 and 40 years. Participants were selected from Patna, Ara, and Buxar districts of Bihar using purposive sampling. Only those women who were employed and living with their spouses were included in the study.

**Tools:**

Data were collected using standardized psychological instruments. Marital adjustment was assessed using the Marital Adjustment Scale developed by Kumar and Kanchan (1987). Personality traits were measured using the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Hindi adaptation) developed by Dey and Thakur (1988), based on the theory of Hans Eysenck. The questionnaire measures three dimensions of personality: neuroticism, extraversion, and psychoticism.

**Procedure:**

Participants were approached in community and workplace settings. After establishing rapport and obtaining informed consent, the instruments were administered individually. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. The responses were scored according to the standardized scoring procedures provided in the respective manuals, and the data were prepared for statistical analysis.

**Results:**

Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to examine the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants. The sample consisted of 200 married working women from Bihar.

The mean age of the participants was 35.31 years (SD not reported), indicating that the sample primarily represented women in early to middle adulthood. The average duration of marriage was 11.14 years, suggesting relatively stable marital relationships. The mean level of education was 13.23 years, reflecting that most participants had attained at least a graduate-level education.

In terms of residential background, the majority of participants were from rural areas, followed by those from semi-urban and urban settings. Regarding family structure, a slightly higher proportion of participants belonged to nuclear families compared to joint families. The majority of participants identified as Hindu, and a substantial proportion belonged to a lower socio-economic status, indicating modest living conditions.

These socio-demographic characteristics provide an important contextual framework for understanding marital adjustment among working women.

**Relationship between Personality Variables and Marital Adjustment:**

To examine the proposed hypotheses, Pearson’s product–moment correlation analysis was performed to assess the relationship between personality variables (neuroticism, extraversion, and psychoticism) and marital adjustment.

*Table 1:*

**Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables (N = 200)**

Variable	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Neuroticism	14.20	4.10
Extraversion	16.85	3.75
Psychoticism	8.40	2.95
Marital Adjustment	102.50	12.30

**Table - 2**  
**Correlation between Personality Variables**  
**and Marital Adjustment (N = 200)**

Variable	Marital Adjustment (r)
Neuroticism	-0.41**
Extraversion	0.30**
Psychoticism -	0.18*

\*p < .05, \*\*p < .01

Descriptive statistics of the study variables are presented in Table 1. The mean scores indicated moderate levels of neuroticism (M = 14.20, SD = 4.10), extraversion (M = 16.85, SD = 3.75), and psychoticism (M = 8.40, SD = 2.95), while the mean marital adjustment score (M = 102.50, SD = 12.30) suggested an average level of adjustment among the participants.

As shown in Table 2, neuroticism was significantly and negatively correlated with marital adjustment ( $r = -0.41, p < .01$ ), indicating that higher emotional instability is associated with lower levels of marital harmony. Extraversion was found to be significantly and positively correlated with marital adjustment ( $r = 0.30, p < .01$ ), suggesting that greater sociability and positive emotionality are associated with better marital outcomes. Psychoticism demonstrated a significant negative correlation with marital adjustment ( $r = -0.18, p < .05$ ), indicating that maladaptive traits such as aggressiveness and lack of empathy are linked to poorer marital adjustment.

Overall, the findings support all three hypotheses and demonstrate that personality traits are significant correlates of marital adjustment among married working women.

### **Discussion:**

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between personality variables and marital adjustment among married working women. The findings indicated that neuroticism

was significantly negatively correlated with marital adjustment, whereas extraversion demonstrated a significant positive relationship. Psychoticism was also found to be negatively associated with marital adjustment. These findings are consistent with theoretical perspectives and prior empirical research within Personality Psychology.

The observed negative relationship between neuroticism and marital adjustment supports earlier findings by Benjamin R. Karney and Thomas N. Bradbury (1995), who reported that individuals high in neuroticism tend to experience greater marital dissatisfaction due to emotional instability, anxiety, and ineffective stress management. Individuals high in neuroticism are more likely to interpret situations negatively and respond with heightened emotional reactivity, which can lead to frequent interpersonal conflicts and reduced marital harmony.

The positive association between extraversion and marital adjustment aligns with the findings of David Watson et al. (2000), who emphasized that extraverted individuals typically exhibit better communication skills, higher emotional expressiveness, and greater social engagement. These characteristics facilitate mutual understanding and strengthen marital relationships. In the case of working women, extraversion may also serve as a protective factor, enabling them to manage occupational stress while maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships.

The negative correlation between psychoticism and marital adjustment is consistent with the theoretical framework proposed by Hans J. Eysenck, which associates psychoticism with traits such as aggressiveness, impulsivity, and lack of empathy. These characteristics are detrimental to healthy marital relationships and often result in poor adjustment. Similar findings reported by Hans J. Eysenck and Sybil B. G. Eysenck (1975) further support the maladaptive nature of this personality dimension.

The findings of the present study are particularly relevant in the socio-cultural context of Bihar and India, where traditional gender roles and expectations continue to shape marital dynamics. Working women often face dual role responsibilities, balancing professional commitments with domestic duties. As noted by Rao and Rao (2008), role conflict among working women can lead to increased psychological stress, which may interact with personality traits to influence marital adjustment. Overall, the study underscores the significant role of personality traits in shaping marital relationships, particularly among working women who experience multiple role demands. The interaction between individual psychological characteristics and socio-cultural factors is essential for a comprehensive understanding of marital adjustment.

### Conclusion:

The findings indicate that personality traits are significantly associated with marital adjustment among married working women. Neuroticism and psychoticism were negatively related to marital adjustment, whereas extraversion showed a positive association. These results suggest that personality characteristics are important in understanding marital dynamics, particularly within socio-cultural contexts such as Bihar. Interventions focusing on emotional stability and communication skills may enhance marital adjustment. Overall, the study provides empirical support for the role of personality traits in marital relationships among working women.

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