

Romantic Jealousy, Marital Satisfaction and Self-Esteem in Married Men and Women

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Abstract

*The purpose of this study was to contemplate the relationship between romantic jealousy, marital satisfaction, and self-esteem in married men and women. A correlational design was implemented on the sample of (n=368) married men and women. The sample was collected through the method of purposive sampling from shopping malls, exhibitions, restaurants, parks, and hospitals. The variables were evaluated using assessment measures such as the Romantic Jealousy Scale ($\alpha = .70$), Couple Satisfaction Index ($\alpha = .97$), and Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale ($\alpha = .52$). The correlational analysis revealed there exists a positive correlation between romantic jealousy and marital satisfaction (.31**). There exists a significant inverse correlation between marital satisfaction and self-esteem (-.10). Furthermore, there is another significant positive correlation between romantic jealousy and self-esteem (.27**). The multi-linear regression analysis model reported that romantic jealousy and self-esteem predicted a 12% variance in marital satisfaction in married men and women. The hierarchical regression analysis model demonstrated that marital satisfaction and self-esteem predicted an 18% variance in romantic jealousy in married men and women.*

Keywords: Romantic Jealousy, Marital Satisfaction, Self-esteem, Married Men and Women.

Introduction

An essential part of people's growth was their romantic relationships. Numerous studies confirmed that romantic jealousy has been examined from a variety of perspectives (Boisvert et al., 2023). Jealousy has many facets and dimensions since it was an umbrella term. Many researches were done to look at the factors that affect the quality of marriage. Many individuals have studied the intriguing aspects of intimate relationships. Close relationships were fascinating and appealing since they were sensitive by nature. One of these components was jealousy, which was connected to a wide range of other feelings like rumination, worry, violence, and low self-esteem. Jealousy results from the perception of a real or imagined fear of loss or harm to a key connection because of the involvement of a third party (Branson & March 2021). This led to a negative emotional response that included anger, sadness, and fear (Bosch et al., 2008). According to one study, romantic jealousy was a prevalent emotion in relationships and was frequently brought on by the partner's perceived interest in someone else or by perceived dangers to the relationship

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(Sharpsteen, 2017). According to the study that was carried out by Halford and Vijver (2020) the degree to which a person's relationship conformed to their expectations of a happy and healthy connection was known as couple relationship satisfaction. There existed a strong correlation between self-esteem and marital satisfaction; those with higher self-esteem also typically reported being happier in their marriages (Murray et al., 2017). Research has indicated a correlation between romantic jealousy and self-esteem, which suggests that individuals with lower self-esteem could be more vulnerable to romantic jealousy (Knobloch et al., 2017).

Romantic Jealousy

Romantic jealousy was a momentous component in relationships which was the essence of it generally. Jealousy developed as a defense mechanism to guard important resources such as a partner or potential offspring (Buss, 2000). It could be carried on by insecurity, fear of being abandoned, or the perception of relational dangers (Leite et al., 2024). Jealousy frequently appeared in conjunction with other emotional and psychological elements. Romantic jealousy is characterized by the fear of losing a romantic partner which leads to emotional reactions when a possible rival is perceived as a threat (Dijkstra & Barelds, 2011). Certain scholars proposed that sexual jealousy could be a result of internal fears, which could cause people to perceive unclear circumstances as more alarming (Harris, 2003).

Types of Jealousy

Many obstacles that people in romantic relationships encounter could have a variety of effects on their relationships, a potential obstacle is the development of romantic jealousy (Degiuli et al., 2023). Different manifestations of jealousy revealed our innermost anxieties and insecurities. It was a complex feeling that had fascinated people for ages. In relationships, jealousy could be a double-edged blade. Smith and Kim (2007) stated that studies conducted on jealousy in settings other than romantic relationships had revealed that it was impacted by things like perceived fairness, social comparison, and interpersonal trust. It could, on the one hand, represent concern, care, and attachment to the relationship. However extreme or irrational jealousy caused arguments, mistrust, and eventually the breakdown of the relationship. Maintaining a strong and happy relationship requires identifying and dealing with jealousy in a relationship. Jealousy has the potential to either be a beneficial or harmful factor in relationships. All of it relied on how we decided to deal with it either by setting limits, building trust, exercising empathy, looking for a middle ground, or acknowledging and appreciating accomplishments.

Sexual Jealousy

Perceived fears or threats of sexual infidelity in a romantic relationship gave rise to sexual jealousy, a complex emotional response marked by emotions of anxiety, insecurity, and possessiveness (Harris, 2003). It usually entailed worries or suspicions over a partner's sexual activities, desires, or plans with another person, which caused a variety of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive responses. Feelings of uneasiness arose from the ongoing dread that the partner was seeing someone else.

Risk Factors

Hart and Legerstee (2013) state that jealousy is a state which, depending on the context, can arouse emotions like sadness (loss), anger (treason), or fear or anxiety (loneliness). In romantic relationships, jealousy between spouses is not an unexpected emotion. It's a slow process that results in low self-esteem, insecurity, and mistrust of the spouse. The following are risk factors

that affect relationships that become targets of jealousy: physical appearance, low self-esteem, possessiveness, fear of desertion or abandonment, and mate retention. Because each relationship is distinct, envy can manifest itself in different ways and for different people. Common indicators that your partner may be feeling jealous include the following: isolation due to domineering or possessive behavior, continuous reassurance, tracking your whereabouts and conversations, suspicion or mistrust a lack of limits, heightened volatility (Stiles, 2022).

Physical Appearance

Fear of Abandonment

It seems that foremost source of this jealous issue might be the insecurity and fear of being abandoned by one of the cherished partner due to extra marital relationship (Kanwar et al., 2015). Presumably, one of the most prevalent and harmful concerns is the fear of being abandoned by the loved ones. Individuals who experience abandonment anxiety frequently exhibit actions and thought patterns that negatively impact their relationships (Fritscher, 2022). People become so insecure about their relationships due to fear alone, to the point that they start to wonder if their partner would leave them in the end. As demonstrated by APA PsycNet (n.d.) romantic jealousy research supports the theory that attachment relationship potential risks are a contributing factor in jealousy. Since preoccupied, fearful avoidant, and dismissive attachment styles are all associated with obsessively, interpersonal sensitivity, fear of loss, and low self-esteem, it was discovered that these attachment types may symbolize the structure of jealousy (Marazziti et al., 2010).

Low Self-Esteem

It appears that romantic jealousy and self-esteem are positively correlated, meaning that higher levels of jealousy are linked to lower levels of self-esteem (Rydell & Bringle, 2007). G. L. White's hypothesis of romantic jealousy was tested which holds that losing a romantic partner to a rival results in two types of suffering: losing relationship benefits or expecting to lose them and losing self-esteem (APA PsycNet, n.d.). This may also apply to those who are highly jealous, as people experiencing psychological discomfort frequently exhibit poor self-esteem (Stieger et al., 2012).

Decreased Intimacy

"Intimate relationship" is a broad and ambiguous term that can refer to a wide range of relationships involving family members, friends, and romantic partners (Gillies, 2003). Intimacy in a relationship might be hindered by jealousy. The other partner may feel smothered or cut off from the jealous partner if they become unduly possessive or controlling. Jealousy eventually gives rise to defensiveness and resentment. Additionally, it erodes mutual trust and fuels conflict, particularly when the envious party places expectations and probes the other person nonstop (Stritof, 2023).

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem referred to a mind-set, set of behaviours, and feelings that indicated self-awareness, self-respect, and self-belief (Mullen, 2022). Making wise decisions about yourself and realising that you were deserving of proper self-care was a sign of self-esteem. Self-esteem, respect and self-awareness were fundamental components of an individual's identity, attitudes towards others and society, and therefore their ability to engage with others (Ngina et al., 2024). The degree to which an individual regarded and respected themselves was referred to as their self-esteem. People who engaged with others and evaluated their ideas, abilities, and performance against others' gained a sense of self-worth and self-esteem. Positive or negative effects on self-esteem resulted

from this contact with society. The possessions of others posed a challenge to one's self-worth, and social comparisons which made one feel jealous (Farooq et al., 2020).

Ranges of Self Esteem

Since self-esteem was our perception about ourselves, hence, it shaped our thoughts, relationships, and experiences (Cherry, 2023). While it was normal to feel better about yourself on some days than others, one could have aimed to maintain a healthy range for your overall self-esteem.

High Self Esteem

Being in a mindset that challenged the shortcomings, embraced the strengths, and made people feel good about their lives was known as high self-esteem. Because when people fundamentally respect, cherish, and trust themselves, it enabled them to put everyday highs and lows into perspective (Vanbuskirk, 2023). A person who was primarily focused on oneself, believed they were more valuable or significant than others, and frequently did not even consider how their actions affected those around them was described as narcissistic or arrogant (as cited in Vanbuskirk, 2023).

Low Self Esteem

People who had a distorted perception of themselves and distrust their skills or what they had to offer if they lacked confidence and self-esteem. Individuals' relationships, career, and academic pursuits could be adversely impacted by low self-esteem and insufficient confidence. Without treatments, it could also be detrimental to their bodily and mental well-being (Sissons, 2024). Being insecure goes beyond a poor day or a bad mood. When bad things happen, everyone was depressed, but these emotions usually pass and did not significantly affected one's sense of worth, especially for people who had high self-esteem. Rather, low self-esteem was a persistently poor self-perception that, although it fluctuated depending on the good and bad things that happened in life, generally remained with the people over time, no matter what happened in their lives (Vanbuskirk, 2023).

Causes for High and Low Self-Esteem

Positive experiences, dependable connections, and individual accomplishments which validated one's sense of competence and deservingness contributed to the development of high self-esteem (Baumeister et al., 2003). Feelings of confidence and self-worth were influenced by a variety of factors, which included accomplishments in sports, academics, and the workplace as well as support and affirmation from early careers (Orth & Robins, 2014).

On the other hand, adverse events such childhood trauma, rejection, or criticism lead to poor self-esteem (Orth et al., 2010). Neglect, abuse, or harsh criticism throughout childhood caused someone to internalize self-defeating ideas and developed low self-esteem (Trzesniewski et al., 2006). In a similar vein, persistent failures or setbacks, coupled with unattainable standards and social comparisons, intensified feelings of inferiority and inadequacy and lower one's self-esteem (Kuster et al., 2013).

Marital Satisfaction

The most significant connection in the society was marriage. It has been in use ever since human society first emerged and developed over time (Balderrama-Durbin et al., 2011). A pleasant and comfortable state that was experienced and shared by both individuals in their marriage were known as marital satisfaction (Asghar et al., 2024). There were a lot of researches being done on

the subject of marital satisfaction. Women, in particular, were attempting to find inner satisfaction in relation to many aspects of marital satisfaction (Fincham & Beach, 2010).

Factors Affecting Marital Satisfaction

A state of mind known as "marital satisfaction" occurred when married spouses were content and secure in their marriage (Asghar et al., 2024). Both individuals' physical and emotional well-being are impacted by their level of marital satisfaction. When both spouses were happy in their marriage, they enjoy spending time together and consider themselves grateful. Together, they watch films and enjoy music while hanging out. Together, these marital qualities all added to their overall life satisfaction (Poire, 2006).

Educational Backgrounds

Marital satisfaction appeared to be influenced by women's education levels, with illiterate and elementary-educated women who exhibited higher levels of satisfaction (Bieluga & Zelent, 2021). However, some researches also claimed that couples who were raised in an educated environment were more likely to lead lives that were acceptable in society. Additionally, marital satisfaction was very difficult to achieve if the husband and wife were incompatible (Jose & Alfons, 2007).

Incompatibility from Woman's Perspective

Numerous studies had consistently established results that women required a greater proportion of providing care to children and family and abided by the domestic duties compared to men (Bianchi et al., 2012). Marital dissatisfaction in women may be more prominent if they perceived an inequitable distribution of work in household (Coltrane, 2000). A research by McCarthy and Edwards. (2019) had shown that women mostly reported and felt unappreciated for the efforts they put in the house and for the family and in their relationship. Not enough recognition and inability to show gratitude from the husband end towards the wife resulted in feelings of resentment and displeasure in married women (McCarthy & Edwards., 2019).

Incompatibility from Men's Perspective

According to research, men were relatively less likely to seek emotional support from their partners than women. According to Simon and Nath (2004) partner dissatisfaction was higher among men who perceived an abundance of emotional support (Simon & Nath, 2004). Research showed that marital satisfaction in which men perceived as a challenge to their masculinity or autonomy lead to lack of satisfaction in men among couples. Men who experienced dissatisfaction with their roles in marriage due to the impact of societal norms and beliefs that concerned their masculinity (Hawkins & Booth, 2005).

Theoretical Perspective

Social Cognitive Theory of Jealousy

Christine R. Harris' social cognitive theory of jealousy (2003) provided a comprehensive understanding of the complex relationships between romantic jealousy, marital satisfaction, and married people's self-esteem. Romantic jealousy was a cognitive response which resulted from an individual's evaluation of potential risks to their romantic relationship, such as signs of infidelity or threats to the stability of the marriage. This emotional experience was influenced by the social and relational context-shaped cognitive appraisal process. The concept was closely tied to marital satisfaction, as people assessed their marriages based on their own norms and expectations. If jealousy was disregarded or handled poorly, it negatively impacts marital satisfaction which

caused emotional turmoil and conflict. The theory was highly dependent on self-esteem, as individuals with low self-esteem were more prone to misinterpret unclear situations and exaggerated the dangers to their relationships. Understanding the interactions between relationship dynamics, cognitive processes, and self-esteem was essential for preserving marital satisfaction that boosted self-esteem, and successfully addressed and managed jealousy.

Rationale

Ahmed (2022) revealed in a study that looked at how Pakistani society had developed the idea of marriage and how the concept had evolved overtime. Recent studies highlighted the role of romantic jealousy in Pakistani pretexts and marital satisfaction. In Pakistan, individuals romanticized possessiveness and narcissistic traits, which were admired majorly by the female population. This study could help married couples to identify hidden and unidentified complications that could be sabotaging their relationship, providing guideline that made amends to prevent dissolution of marriages.

Hypothesis

H1: There was likely to exist a relation among Romantic Jealousy, Marital Satisfaction and Self Esteem in Married Men and Women.

H2: There was likely to exist a positive relationship between Marital Satisfaction and Self Esteem in Married Men and Women.

H3: Romantic Jealousy and Self Esteem likely predicted Marital Satisfaction in Married Men and Women.

H4: Marital Satisfaction and Self Esteem likely predicted Romantic Jealousy in Married Men and Women.

Methodology

Research Design

The correlational research design was employed in the current study

Sample

The sample comprised 368 married men and women (N=368), including (n=212) males and (n=156) females. Purposive sampling technique was used for the collection of the data from married men and women according to the following criteria.

Inclusion criteria

Married men and women.

Participants with ages above 18 years were included.

Exclusion Criteria

Participants who were under the process of annulment of marriage were excluded.

Participants with less than 2 years of marriage were excluded.

Participants who wished to withdraw from the questionnaire or the study were excluded.

Participants under the influence of substances were excluded.

Assessment Measures

Following were the assessment tools used in the present research:

Demographic Sheet

The demographic sheet consisted of information such as Age (in years), Gender, Duration of marriage, Number of Children, Marital Status, Family System, and questions including: Does your partner live abroad?, do you work?, and does your partner work?

Romantic Jealousy Scale Zahid and Rafique (2022)

The Romantic Jealousy Scale for married men and women was developed by Zahid and Rafique, (2022). The original version of the Romantic Jealousy Scale initially comprised of 18 items. Through rigorous validation, which included reliability analysis, it was refined to a final scale of 15 items. The scale demonstrated good reliability with a Cronbach' alpha of 0.86. For the current research, the reliability analysis demonstrates good internal consistency (.70). It included two self-report subscales to measure Sexual Jealousy and Emotional Jealousy. This scale offered a valuable tool for exploring romantic jealousy in married individuals, particularly in a Pakistani context. The scoring method for the scale was summative.

Couples Satisfaction Index (CSI-16) Funk and Rogge (2007)

The Couples Satisfaction Index (CSI-16) was developed by Funk and Rogge (2007) and was a 16-item self-report measure designed to assess relationship satisfaction in intact couples. This measure comprised a range of questions that encompass aspects such as the degree of happiness, relationship strength, and the partner's ability to meet one's needs. The CSI-16 demonstrated good internal consistency, the developers reported that the CSI-16 had a mean Cronbach's alpha coefficient of (.98), which made it a reliable instrument for assessing relationship satisfaction (Funk & Rogge, 2007). For the current research the scale showed good reliability (.97). To score the CSI-16, respondents simply summed their responses across all items, with higher scores indicating higher levels of relationship satisfaction. The CSI-16 was freely available for both research and clinical use.

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (SES) Rosenberg (1965)

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was developed by Morris Rosenberg (1965) and was a widely used 10-item self-assessment tool for evaluating individual self-esteem. Respondents rated their agreement with each statement on a 4-point likert scale. The total score was calculated, some items were reverse-scored, with higher scores indicating higher self-esteem. This scale was considered unidimensional and had been frequently employed in research. The scale had good predictive validity, as well as internal consistency (.81) and test-retest reliability, it had been extensively studied in articles (Baumeister et al., 2003). The cronback's alpha of the present research showed good internal consistency (.52). Importantly, it was freely available for use (Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (SES) - Statistics Solutions, 2022).

Procedure

The permission to use the scale for Romantic Jealousy was taken from the author through email, the rest of the scales were free to use. The researcher was provided with an authority letter from COMSATS University Islamabad, Lahore Campus, and Psychology Department. The data collection was done through numerous sources: shopping malls, the parks, public events (book fairs), and hospitals. Each individual was briefed about the purpose of the research and were told that their responses would be kept confidential and that their identities would be anonymous. They were informed of their right to withdraw from the research at any point without any penalty. Though no incentives were provided. The participants had queries and suggestions that were

addressed and entertained by the researcher. The total administration of the scales took 15 minutes. There were a total of 406 questionnaires out of which 38 were discarded leaving with the total number (368) questionnaires. After the data was collected from the sample participants, it was entered in SPSS-20, the items were reverse coded, and the data was analysed. After the reliability, correlational and regression analysis, the results were drawn and were later concluded and discussed. Further analysis was done to test the hypothesis.

Ethical Considerations

The relationship among romantic jealousy, marital satisfaction, and self-esteem was examined in this study, which highlighted the value of doing ethical research. The necessity of informed permission, safeguarding participants' names and private information, and holding a debriefing session after data collection were all emphasized. Throughout the study, participants' well-being was observed, and researchers provided resources or pointers to support services if it was necessary. In order to protect participant's privacy and confidentiality, data security was also a critical ethical concern. In order to conduct research professionally and ethically and build confidence between researchers and participants, certain ethical issues were essential.

Results

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Variables (N=368)

Demographics	M(SD)	f	%
Age	32.83(7.384)		
Gender			
Male	1.42(.495)	212	57.6
Female		156	42.4
Marital status			
Married		350	95.1
Divorced	1.08(.390)	12	3.3
Separated		3	.8
Khula		2	.5
Widowed		1	.3
Duration of marriage	7.17(6.222)		
Family system			
Joint	2	225	61.1
Nuclear		143	38.9

Note: For Gender: Male =1, female =2; Marital status: Married =1, Divorced =2, Separated =3, Khula =4, Widowed =5; Family System: Joint =1, Nuclear =2

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability of Study Variables

Study variables	K	A	M	SD	Range
Romantic Jealousy	15	.70	50.79	9.75	24-69
Marital Satisfaction	16	.97	60.55	18.68	0-81
Self-Esteem	10	.52	22.07	3.68	10-37

Note: K= No. of items in the scale; A= Cronbach alpha; M= Mean; SD=Standard Deviation; Range= Minimum and Maximum scored values

Mean, Standard Deviation, Range and reliability for all the scales were calculated as shown in Table 2. All scales indicated good reliability above .5

The table above provided reliability statistics for three distinct scales: Romantic Jealousy (Romantic Jealousy Scale), Marital Satisfaction (Couple's Satisfaction Index) and Self-esteem (Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale). The reliability of romantic jealousy was good ($\alpha=.70$), as respondents gave a mean 50.79 rating with the deviation of 9.75 for the romantic jealousy scale. It also showed good internal consistency ($\alpha=.70$). Similarly, marital satisfaction showed exceptional reliability ($\alpha=.97$) with 18.68 (60.55) mean and standard deviation. Participants on the Rosenberg self-esteem scale showed moderate cronbach alpha ($\alpha=.52$) with the mean of 22.07 and deviating rate of 3.68.

It was hypothesized that there existed a relation between Romantic Jealousy, Self-Esteem, and Marital satisfaction. The correlation among variables was shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation Table

Variables	1	2	3
Romantic Jealousy	1	.31**	.27**
Marital Satisfaction	-	1	-.10*
Self-Esteem	-	-	1

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < .001$

1 = Romantic Jealousy, 2 = Marital Satisfaction and 3 = Self-Esteem

Table 3 showed that Romantic Jealousy had a significant positive correlation with Self-esteem and Marital Satisfaction ($r=.27$) and ($r=.31$). This suggests that higher levels of Romantic Jealousy indicated significantly higher levels of Self-Esteem and Marital Satisfaction. Hence, the first hypothesis was approved which showed that there existed a relation between the study variables. However, there exists another negative relation that is significant in nature between Self-Esteem and Marital Satisfaction ($r=-.10$) which directed to the idea that higher levels of Self-Esteem correlated with lower levels of Marital Satisfaction.

To show whether Self-Esteem predicted Marital Satisfaction, a Multi-linear regression analysis was performed. The results of the regression analysis was shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Multi-Linear Regression

Variables	B	SE B	β	Adj R^2	R^2	p
Constant	47.34	6.51		.12	.13	.000
RJ	.70	.10	.40			.000
SE	-.10	.30	-.20			.000

Note: Constant=DV= Marital Satisfaction

The multi-linear regression was conducted to predict marital satisfaction on the basis of two predictor's romantic jealousy and self-esteem. The results indicated that the model explained 12% of variance ($R^2=.13$, $p<.001$). Romantic jealousy ($\beta= .40$, $p=.000$) and selfesteem ($\beta= -.20$, $p=.000$) were both significant predictors of marital satisfaction. This indicated higher levels of Romantic Jealousy that were linked with higher levels of Marital Satisfaction. However, the model also indicated that higher levels of Self-Esteem was linked with lower levels of Marital Satisfaction. Furthermore, Self-esteem as the only predictor itself did not show any significance in predicting marital satisfaction in married men and women.

To show whether duration of marriage, self-esteem, and marital satisfaction predicted romantic jealousy, the hierarchical regression analysis was performed. The results of the regression analysis was shown in Table 5

Table 5: Hierarchical Regression

Variables	B	SE B	B	Adj R ²	R ²	t	p
Model 1							
Constant	50.93	.77		-.003	.000		.000
DOM	-.02	.08	-.014			-.26	.80
Model 2							
Constant	22.92	3.36		.175	.182		.000
SE	.78	.12	.30			6.25	.000
CS	.17	.02	.34			7.05	.000

Note: Constant= DV= Romantic Jealousy

The hierarchical regression was conducted which assessed the influence of the predictor variables. In Model 1 duration of marriage accounted for a non-significant variance in the constant. However, in Model 2 when the predictor variables were added, it explained variance of 18.2% (Adj R² =.175, $\Delta f = 26.96$, $p = .000$) in the dependent variable. Both the controlled variables self-esteem ($\beta = .30$, $p = .000$) and couple satisfaction ($\beta = .34$, $p = .000$) were significant predictors in the final model. In spite of that, the Model 2 suggests that both the predictor variable (Self-Esteem and Marital Satisfaction) predicts a 17.5% variance in the outcome variable (Romantic jealousy) the p-value indicates that the Model 2 is statistically significant.

Discussion

The discussion of the findings of the current research aimed to contemplate the relation among romantic jealousy, marital satisfaction and self-esteem in married men and women, it also intended to explore that a relation exists between marital satisfaction and self-esteem. Furthermore, the research assessed whether the self-esteem and marital satisfaction predicted romantic jealousy in married men and women. In addition, romantic jealousy and self-esteem in married men and women were supposed to predict marital satisfaction. Among these romantic jealousy and marital satisfaction had the strongest and a significant positive correlation. According to Culfa and Izgi (2023) there exists a positive correlation between romantic jealousy and marital satisfaction. People who stay emotionally and physically away from their partners may not be content in their marital relationships because they do not get to share their thoughts and feel emotionally committed to them. Through marital control, romantic jealousy has a statistically significant influence on marital stability and satisfaction. Additionally, through emotional expression, romantic jealousy has a major negative impact on stability and marital satisfaction (Khazaei et al., 2022). Contradictory to the findings, another research by Arshad and Imran (2023) stated that marital satisfaction was found to be negatively correlated with romantic jealousy in the presence of partner phubbing. According to the results of the current study there exists a significant positive correlation between romantic jealousy and self-esteem which was backed by a research conducted by Liaquat et al. (2021). The findings showed that there exists a significant positive correlation between jealousy and self-esteem in married adults led by the notion that metacognition is a significant predictor of the two. On the other hand, another research opposing to the previous

findings suggested that to what extent to which relationship-contingent self-esteem (i.e. self-esteem that depends on the relationship) modifies the relationship between the experience of a partner's infidelity and jealousy. The current study made the prediction that infidelity is linked to increased jealousy and decreased self-esteem (Jeuken, 2022). Moreover, results of the study by Go et al. (2021) showed a moderate level of self-esteem and a significantly high level of romantic jealousy indicating a statistically significant inverse correlation between the two variables. The results of the study also stated that the higher the level of self-esteem the participants possessed, the lower the romantic jealousy and vice versa.

The current research aimed to predict marital satisfaction in the light of romantic jealousy and self-esteem in married men and women. Prior research has established that the degree of jealousy on its own is a reasonable predictor of relationship satisfaction (Dugosh, 2000). Which validates the findings of the current study. According to Özgür's (2016) research emotional jealousy and self-compassion were important predictors of relationship satisfaction. In addition to that the findings of a research by Arshad and Imran (2023) showed that romantic jealousy and partner phubbing were significant predictors of marital satisfaction. It has been determined that increased cell phone use causes jealousy, which can harm people's ability to enjoy relationships and their general well-being. It would seem that relationship satisfaction can also be predicted by both self-esteem and the relevance of traits of partners followed by the conclusion that couple's relationship satisfaction was predicted by higher levels of idealisation and self-esteem (Sciangula & Morry, 2009).

The fourth and the final hypothesis was that romantic jealousy was predicted by marital satisfaction and self-esteem in married men and women. An important component of marital satisfaction, increased dependency between couples, is thought to increase the risk of jealousy (Attridge, 2013). This study supported this hypothesis using the Emotion-in-Relationships conceptual model. Advocating the results it was found in another research that self-esteem is a significantly negative predictor of jealousy (Broemer and Diehl, 2003; Goldenberg et al., 2003). The contradiction to the result earlier had occurred due to the cultural aspects in Pakistan. In Pakistan, people actually romanticise possessiveness "Gheerat" and jealousy which gives them another perspective of marital satisfaction due to which married men and women scored high on romantic jealousy scale. Further, demographics such as family systems, duration of marriage, and number of children and proximity of partner had an impact on marital satisfaction as well. Pakistani culture views marriage as a family matter (Ahmed, 2022). There is a fine line between having high self-esteem and possessing traits of narcissism, amongst which pride leads one to show higher feelings of contentment and being intact followed by high self-esteem.

Conclusion

The overall findings conclude that romantic jealousy, marital satisfaction and self-esteem can contemplate the relation among married men and women. The multi-linear analysis model showed that romantic jealousy and self-esteem are predictor variables for marital satisfaction. After that, the hierarchical regression model suggested that both self-esteem and marital satisfaction predicted romantic jealousy in married men and women.

Suggestions

Based on the findings, it is recommended that further researches should be conducted to explore the relation between romantic jealousy and high self-esteem. And how they both predict each

other. Further researches should be conducted exploring the inverse correlation of self-esteem and marital satisfaction. The results of the current study would prove helpful.

Implications

This study emphasizes the significance of managing and reducing feelings of romantic jealousy hence, increasing overall marital satisfaction.

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