# Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Perceived Social Support and Marital Satisfaction in Married Adults

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*Abstract:*
*This study examines the impact of emotional intelligence (EI) on perceived social support (PSS) and relationship satisfaction (RS) in married Indian individuals aged 21 to 35 years. The study employed a quantitative, non-experimental, and correlational research methodology to investigate the influence of emotional intelligence on relationship dynamics. The sample consisted of 141 married individuals from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, evaluated using self-report instruments, including the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT), Lubben Social Network Scale (LSNS-6), and the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS). The results demonstrated a moderate positive association between emotional intelligence and relationship satisfaction (r = 0.473, p < 0.01), corroborating the hypothesis that elevated emotional intelligence correlates with increased relationship happiness. A modest but noteworthy connection was identified between emotional intelligence and perceived social support (r = 0.213, p < 0.05). Regression studies demonstrated that emotional intelligence significantly predicted both perceived social support and relationship satisfaction, exerting a more pronounced effect on the latter. The findings underscore the significance of emotional intelligence in cultivating healthier marriage relationships and the necessity for interventions focused on enhancing emotional awareness, regulation, and communication skills among married individuals. Limitations include the small sample size and reliance on self-report tools, which may introduce biases. Future research should involve larger, more diverse samples and explore longitudinal designs to establish causality and the long-term effects of emotional intelligence on relationship outcomes. This study provides valuable insights into the psychological factors affecting marriage and highlights the need for culturally sensitive research to enhance marital well-being in India.*
*Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Social Support, Marital Satisfaction*

## INTRODUCTION

Humans are social beings that live and thrive in social environments. Their well-being and satisfaction with daily life is significantly affected by the encouragement or support received from their family, friends, spouses and other individuals of their social networks (Nguyen et. al 2016). The perceived support received from relationships is also associated with emotional intelligence and personal satisfaction from the relationships by individuals (Mayer., Salovey, Caruso, 2004). Emotional intelligence helps people to recognize their own emotions and those of others, control their reactions, and handle the demands of life with more resilience. People with higher emotional intelligence often have better control over their reactions, which enables them to have better control of their surroundings and navigate their circumstances more skillfully (Mayer., Salovey & Caruso, 2004).

### Emotional Intelligence

Mayer and Salovey (1995) defined emotional intelligence as an individual's ability to understand their own and others' emotions. It is an essential skill to handle complex emotions and managing relationships. Mayer's (2004) emotional intelligence theory includes four branches: emotion perception, using emotions to facilitate cognition, understanding emotions, and managing emotions. Emotion perception involves recognizing and expressing emotions in oneself and others. Using emotions to facilitate cognition refers to the ability to generate, use, and perceive emotions to enhance thought and decision-making.

Understanding emotional language and the complex relationships between emotions is crucial to comprehending emotions. Personal growth is achieved by effectively managing both our own and others' emotions.Emotional intelligent individuals are driven by their reasoning instead of emotional impulse (Mayer., Salovey, Caruso, 2004). These individuals are great at building relationships, managing emotions and deescalating conflict (Babatunde, Sunday & Adeshina, 2023). Empathy helps them connect with others and improve their social situation. As expected, they are happier and less anxious. Contrary to this, a person with a low emotional quotient (EQ) finds it difficult to navigate social situations and may ignore other individual's emotional signals (Schutte 2002). Which may result in miscommunication and hurtful feelings. Low emotional intelligence also affects an individual's ability to help others manage emotions, which hinders development of strong partnerships or bonds (Gayathri & Vimala, 2020). They had. Previous research suggests this may increase stress and lower well-being.

## Perceived Social Support

Lacky and Cohen Lakey (2000) define social support as an individual's assessment and perception of the availability and suitability of resources from others, particularly regarding their beliefs about the capacity of their social network to provide the necessary types of support. The subjective perception or cognitive appraisal of available support is more significant than the actual receipt of supportive behaviors or interactions. The tangible experience of support from others can enhance an individual's sense of being supported, as opposed to merely contemplating the possibility of others' presence in challenging situations. Perceived social support can vary based on individual experiences and factors such as personality traits, beliefs, family environment, financial status, and significant traumatic events. Individuals lacking reliable support systems often exhibit hyper-independence and may find it challenging to seek assistance or perceive social support. This may also influence their perception of their social circle, including close friends and family, as well as their capacity to trust those in their surroundings. Previous negative experiences can lead individuals to struggle with reliance on others, resulting in a differing perception of social support compared to others. Emotional intelligence is not the sole factor influencing an individual's perceived social support. The rationale for this is that in a country such as India, societal norms and traditions significantly contribute to fostering community cohesion and mutual assistance. Cultural upbringing significantly influences our perception of various situations. Marriage establishes new social connections, introduces distinct responsibilities, and imposes demands that differ from other roles assumed throughout life. A strong sense of perceived support enhances individuals' ability to navigate difficult situations compared to those lacking support or who believe they are alone.

## Relationship Satisfaction

Relationship satisfaction refers to an individual's subjective assessment of their fulfillment and contentment within a relationship. This offers an evaluation of the relationship's overall quality and the extent to which an individual's needs are fulfilled. Each individual possesses distinct characteristics, leading to varying perceptions of essential needs for contentment in a relationship. An individual's perception of relationships during upbringing, familial context, past experiences, and personal expectations of self and others contribute to their conception of needs. Individuals from abusive backgrounds or relationships may possess a distinct understanding of relationship satisfaction compared to those raised in healthy environments, where expressing needs is more straightforward. Variations in personality traits, communication styles, and attachment styles among individuals may influence their relationship satisfaction. Individuals exhibiting elevated emotional intelligence demonstrate enhanced capabilities in communication, empathy, and conflict resolution. Individuals are more inclined to recognize their own emotions, comprehend the emotions of others, and assist in navigating the process of problem-solving. Additional factors also influence relationship satisfaction, particularly among married individuals. The duration of the relationship, the degree of empathy possessed by an individual, the familial environment, and cultural contexts, among other factors. The role of individual uniqueness is also significant in this context. Maintaining consistent relationship satisfaction over time is challenging in the face of varying stressful situations. Disagreements and difficulties in compromising within relationships can influence an individual's perceived level of relationship satisfaction.

## Review of Literature

A significant amount of research has examined the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI), perceived social support, and relationship satisfaction. Numerous studies indicate a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and satisfaction in marital or relationship contexts. Lavalekar and Kulkarni (2010) found a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction in a sample of 316 adults aged 25 to 65. Heidari and Kumar (2021) similarly found that individuals with higher emotional intelligence reported greater marital satisfaction in a sample of 304 participants in India. Supporting these findings, S. Devika and V.S. (2019) identified significant associations between emotional intelligence and marital adjustment, highlighting notable gender differences across different family structures; these results were corroborated by Jarsaniya (2021). Perceived social support has been extensively studied concerning relationship quality. Curtona (1996b) found that unsupportive behaviors, including criticism, negatively impacted relationship satisfaction, while supportive behaviors positively contributed to it. Dehle, Larsen, and Landers (2001) identified a positive correlation between perceived social support and relationship quality, as well as an association with reduced depressive symptoms. Baytemir, Sünbül, and Demirtaş (2018) indicated that perceived social support mediates the relationship between interpersonal competence and self-esteem, highlighting its significance for relational well-being.Studies conducted in non-Western contexts have produced similar findings. Samad and Mahmud (2021) identified a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction in a sample of 142 married couples in Malaysia. Nawaz et al. (2014) examined love and arranged marriages, finding that perceived social support was a significant predictor of marital satisfaction in a sample of 360 individuals.While the findings are generally consistent, certain studies present more nuanced outcomes. Zaidi et al. (2022) examined the association between emotional intelligence (EI) and dyadic adjustment in a sample of 205 individuals, finding a weak correlation. They noted that EI generally increased with the duration of marriage, whereas dyadic adjustment showed a decline. Brittany et al. (2022) identified a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and relationship satisfaction through quantitative analysis. Wollny et al. (2019) conducted a study with 136 couples and found that individuals with higher emotional intelligence were more inclined to utilize collaborative coping strategies, which in turn improved relationship satisfaction. Brunstein (1996) emphasized the significance of social support, illustrating its beneficial effects on marital satisfaction and mood.The findings highlight the significance of emotional intelligence and perceived social support as essential factors influencing relationships and marital satisfaction across various populations and relational contexts.

## METHODOLOGY

### Rationale

Marriage serves as a fundamental component of adult life, playing a crucial role in emotional well-being, companionship, and social support. Navigating marital life for Indian adults aged 21 to 35 presents challenges stemming from societal expectations, emotional demands, and life transitions. Emotional intelligence (EI) perceived social support (PSS), and relationship satisfaction (RS) are interrelated constructs that influence the quality of marital relationships. Previous studies have examined these variables either separately or in pairs; however, a gap persists in the Indian context concerning their collective effects within the defined age group. This research investigates the impact of emotional intelligence on psychological safety and relationship satisfaction in married Indian adults aged 21 to 35 years.

### Aim and Objective:

To understand the relationship between Emotional Intelligence on Perceived Social Support and Marital Satisfaction in Married couples

### Research Design

This research utilized a quantitative, non-experimental, and correlational design. Correlational research facilitates the examination of relationships between naturally occurring variables without the

manipulation of conditions. This method was considered appropriate for analyzing the predictive relationship between emotional intelligence and the dependent variables (PSS and RS). Linear regression analysis was employed to assess the predictive capacity of emotional intelligence on the outcome variables.

**Sample Description**

The sample comprised 141 married Indian adults, aged 21 to 35 years, including 99 females and 42 males. Participants exhibited diverse occupational backgrounds, educational qualifications, and family structures, sourced from various states throughout India. Convenience and purposive sampling methods were employed. Participants were recruited through Google Forms, with inclusion criteria that required Indian nationality, marital status, an age range of 21 to 35 years, and basic English literacy. Inclusion was restricted to individuals who met these criteria.

**MATERIAL AND MEASURES USED**

**For Emotional Intelligence**

1. **Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT; Schutte et al., 1998)** The SSEIT consists of 33 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Three items are reverse scored. The scale assesses various aspects of emotional intelligence, including emotion regulation, expression, and utilization.

**For Perceived Social Support**

1. **Lubben Social Network Scale - 6 (LSNS-6; Lubben & Gironda, 2003)** This 6-item scale measures perceived social support from family and friends. Responses are scored from 0 (none) to 5 (nine or more), with higher scores indicating greater perceived support. The maximum possible score is 30.

**For Relationship Satisfaction**

1. **Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS; Hendrick, 1988)** This 7-item measure evaluates satisfaction within romantic relationships using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = low satisfaction to 5 = high satisfaction). Two items are reverse scored. The scale demonstrates strong internal consistency and test-retest reliability.

**Demographic Questionnaire**

Participants provided demographic information including age, gender, occupation, education, years of marriage, family type, and number of children.

**Procedure**

Participants were requested to complete an online survey using Google Forms. The survey comprised a consent form, demographic questionnaire, SSEIT, LSNS-6, and RAS. Before participation, individuals received information regarding the study's objective, confidentiality measures, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. The survey took about 10 minutes to complete. Researchers' contact information and a helpline number were made available for participant support.

**Data Analysis**

Data were analyzed utilizing SPSS. Descriptive statistics were calculated for all variables. The Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests were employed to assess normality, revealing non-normal distributions. Consequently, Spearman's rank correlation was employed to analyze the relationships among variables. Linear regression analyses were performed to evaluate the predictive influence of emotional intelligence on perceived social support and relationship satisfaction. Significance was assessed at the 0.05 and 0.01 levels.

**Ethical Considerations**

The research complied with established ethical standards. All participants provided informed consent and were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. Participation was voluntary and conducted without deception. The sample did not include vulnerable populations, and the research was conducted exclusively for academic purposes. Participants were made aware of their rights, including the right to withdraw at any point without repercussions.

## RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

### 1. Descriptive Statistics

Table 1.1 presents the demographic distribution of the sample. A total of 141 participants were included in the study, comprising 99 females (70.2%) and 42 males (29.8%). With regard to family structure, 100 participants (70.9%) belonged to nuclear families, while 41 (29.1%) were from joint families.

**Table 1.1 Demographic distribution across gender**

| Gender | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Male | 42 | 29.8 | 29.8 | 29.8 |
| Female | 99 | 70.2 | 70.2 | 100 |
| Total | 141 | 100 | 100 | |

**Table 1.2 Demographic distribution family structure**

| Family Structure | Frequency | Valid Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|------------------|-----------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Nuclear | 100 | 70.9 | 70.9 | 70.9 |
| Joint | 41 | 29.1 | 29.1 | 100 |
| Total | 141 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

## INFERENTIAL STATISTICS

### Correlation Analysis

Spearman's rank correlation was conducted to examine the associations between emotional intelligence, perceived social support, and relationship satisfaction. The results are presented in Table 2.1.

- Emotional intelligence was positively correlated with perceived social support (r = .213, $p < .05$) and relationship satisfaction (r = .473, $p < .01$).
- A significant positive correlation was also found between perceived social support and relationship satisfaction (r = .203, $p < .05$).

These results suggest that higher levels of emotional intelligence are associated with greater perceived support and higher satisfaction in marital relationships.

**Table 2.1. Spearman's rank correlation between emotional intelligence, perceived social support, and relationship satisfaction**

| | | | Emotional intelligence | Perceived social support | Relationship satisfaction |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spearman's rho | Emotional intelligence | Correlation Coefficient | 1 | .213* | .473** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | 0.011 | 0 |
| | | N | 141 | 141 | 141 |
| | Perceived social support | Correlation Coefficient | .213* | 1 | .203* |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.011 | . | 0.016 |
| | | N | 141 | 141 | 141 |
| | Relationship satisfaction | Correlation Coefficient | .473** | .203* | 1 |

| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0 | 0.016 | . |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | | 141 | 141 | 141 |

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

**Regression Analysis**
**Emotional Intelligence and Perceived Social Support**
A simple linear regression was conducted to determine whether emotional intelligence significantly predicted perceived social support. The regression model was statistically significant, indicating a weak yet meaningful predictive relationship.

**Table 2.2. Linear Regression Analysis: Emotional Intelligence Predicting Perceived Social Support**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .258a | .066 | .060 | 4.55529 |

*a Predictors: (Constant), Emotional intelligence*

A second regression analysis was performed to assess whether emotional intelligence predicted relationship satisfaction. The results indicated a moderate, statistically significant relationship.

**Table 2.3. Linear Regression Analysis: Emotional Intelligence Predicting Perceived Social Support**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .432a | .187 | .181 | 6.33774 |

*a Predictors: (Constant), Emotional intelligence*

These findings demonstrate that emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of both perceived social support and relationship satisfaction, with a stronger predictive relationship observed for relationship satisfaction

**DISCUSSION**
This study analyses how emotional intelligence influences social support and relationship happiness in married Indian adults aged 21–35. The sample included 141 people from around the country—99 women and 42 men. The self-report questionnaire data was non-parametric. The hypotheses were tested using Spearman's rank correlation and linear regression. Results indicate a moderate positive connection between emotional intelligence and relationship satisfaction ($r = 0.473$, $p < 0.01$). More emotionally intelligent people are happier in their marriages. Malouff et al. (2013) found a moderate connection between trait emotional intelligence and relationship satisfaction with a R value of 0.32. The correlation between emotional intelligence and marital quality is moderate to substantial, according to Batool (2011). The results show that emotional intelligence is a key predictor of relationships. Family environment, personality qualities, empathy, forgiveness, conflict resolution, and marriage duration affect relationship happiness.Research indicates a weak association between emotional intelligence and perceived social support ($r = 0.213$, $p < 0.05$). Social support recognition and usage are weaker than relationship satisfaction, although emotional intelligence can improve both. This supports Montes-Berges and Augusto-Landa (2014), who found a slight connection ($r = 0.19$) between emotional intelligence and social support in professional nurses. Attachment style, communication, family background, personality qualities, and coping methods affect this relationship. Due to their effects on support and relationship experiences, marital duration and age may have increased variability. Participants may have interpreted self-report items differently, causing response bias.These findings were validated by linear regression. Emotional intelligence predicted felt social support weakly but statistically ($R = 0.258$), supporting

Hypothesis 1. Emotional intelligence affects perceived social support, although other characteristics may be more important. The Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test identifies unique emotional functioning, suggesting that self-awareness, self-expression, and emotion control may considerably impact social support views. Personal expectations, cognitive biases, and past experiences affect perceived support. If they have had bad or inconsistent support experiences, some people may struggle to perceive or accept support.Using linear regression analysis, emotional intelligence was strongly correlated with relationship satisfaction (R = 0.432), supporting Hypothesis 2. This suggests a moderate effect, with more emotional intelligence leading to happier partnerships. Malouff et al. (2013) and Brackett et al. (2005) found a moderate effect of emotional intelligence on romantic relationships. Through greater communication, empathy, and emotional regulation, emotional intelligence improves relationship satisfaction and helps manage conflict. Personality and living circumstances affect relationship pleasure. Trauma, health concerns, familial disputes, and self-esteem substantially impact relationship perception and experience.This study's tiny sample size and self-report measures may have caused social desirability bias or low self-awareness. Lack of stringent controls on marital duration or kind (arranged vs. love) may have affected results. The findings suggest larger, more diverse samples, longitudinal designs, and other mediating variables for future research. Both predictions were confirmed: emotional intelligence, perceived social support, and relationship happiness are positively correlated in married individuals in India. Relationship strength varies; emotional intelligence affects satisfaction more than social support. The findings show that emotional skills are crucial to happy, supportive partnerships.

**CONCLUSION**
This study evaluated how emotional intelligence affects social support and relationship happiness in married Indian people 21–35. Standards self-report measures were used to analyse 141 people, 99 females and 42 males. Statistically significant but small positive connection between emotional intelligence and perceived social support supported Hypothesis 1. Emotional intelligence affects social support perceptions, although communication styles, attachment patterns, and cultural environment also matter. Emotional intelligence moderately positively affects relationship satisfaction, validating Hypothesis 2. This supports previous research demonstrating emotional abilities including self-awareness, emotional regulation, and empathy greatly improve marital satisfaction. Contextual aspects like marriage duration, family relationships, health difficulties, and coping mechanisms must be considered. This study is insightful yet has some drawbacks. Limited, non-random samples decrease generalizability. Social desirability and self-awareness biases may have been introduced by self-report assessments. A larger, more diversified sample from different cultural, regional, and socioeconomic backgrounds should be included in future study. Controlling demographic variables and using multi-method approaches like partner reports or behavioral observations may yield more nuanced and generalizable results. This research improves our understanding of emotional intelligence and marriage outcomes in young Indian individuals. This emphasizes the need for rigors and culturally sensitive research on psychological factors affecting modern marriages.

**LIMITATIONS**
The current study sheds light on emotional intelligence, perceived social support, and relationship happiness in married individuals; however, it has numerous drawbacks. The sample size of 141 participants is sufficient for preliminary analysis, but it may be too small to generalize the findings. The study's participants were 21–35 years old and recruited via non-probability sampling, which may have caused selection bias. To strengthen external validity, future research should include larger, more demographically varied samples with a wider range of ages, marriage durations, cultural origins, and socioeconomic positions. The study used only self-report tools, which are biased. Social desirability bias and insufficient self-awareness can affect response accuracy, especially when assessing emotional intelligence. The study did not account for marital duration beyond one year. Participants' support and satisfaction may have been affected by relationship duration, age, shared experiences, and life pressures. The discovered variables may mediate or moderate the observed associations and require more rigors of

control in future research. The study's cross-sectional nature prohibits causality. Longitudinal designs are useful for studying relationship direction and emotional intelligence's long-term consequences on marriage.

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