

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL MALADJUSTMENT AMONG EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED WOMEN**

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### **Abstract**

In the modern era, nevertheless the employed and unemployed women have to face certain adjustments to the demands of our society. They may have inadequate conformity due to the inability or lack of motivation to change their feelings or attitudes to adjust to the demands of their environment. The present study focuses on the psychological maladjustment of employed and unemployed women. The subjects were 60 women (30 employed and 30 unemployed). The tool used for the present study is Mathew Maladjustment Inventory developed by Dr. V. George Mathew. The analysis was done in SPSS and t test was the main statistical technique employed. The results showed that the unemployed women are more anxious and paranoid when compared to employed women.

**Keywords: Maladjustment, Employed, Unemployed, Women.**

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## Introduction

In different parts of the country, studies were conducted on the prevalence of mental illness in the community in rate per thousand. It shows that, there is a higher prevalence among women. However, a comparison between males and females in the occurrence of severe and common mental disorder shows a prevalence of higher mental illness in females. Here, severe mental illness is classified as problematic behavior such as that found in schizophrenia, depression, psychoses, mania, epilepsy, mental retardation and organic brain syndromes, whereas common mental illness includes major depression, hysteria, obsessive compulsive disorder, anxiety, phobia and somatization disorder. Hierarchy in Indian females would ensure that women mental health needs are neglected. It is seen that symptom rate for all these diseases is mere with being married women than with being single. Being widowed, separated/ divorced also linked with higher symptom rate.

Studies have examined the effects of unemployment on people and have found unemployment to be associated with enhanced vulnerability and thus to elevated rates of abnormal behavior. (Dew and Bromet, 1991; Penkower, 1988; Catalano and Dooley, 1977) recessions and inflation coupled with high unemployment are sources of chronic anxiety for many people. Unemployment has placed a burden on a sizable segment of our population, bringing with it both financial hardships, self- devaluation, demoralization and emotional distress. In fact, unemployment can be as damaging psychologically as it is financially. Adverse effect on mental and physical health typically accompany periods of extensive unemployment. In particular, rates of depression, marital problems and somatic complaints increase during periods of unemployment, but usually normalize during re employment. It is not simply that those who are mentally unstable tend to lose their jobs. These effects occur even when mental health status before unemployment is taken into account. The psychological and physical health problems are more severe in lower socioeconomic groups. The wives of unemployed men also are adversely affected with higher levels of anxiety, depression and hostility which seems to be at least partially caused by the distress of the unemployed husband. For women, unemployment can have serious long term effects.

In the case of employed women, there are many reasons for their adjustment in every situation. When women are unable to find jobs suited to their abilities, training and expectations, they feel frustrated. This militates against good adjustment to their work and to their co-workers and their supervisors. If they are forced to take what they are considered “sex- appropriate” jobs instead of jobs in areas where their interest and abilities lie but which are regarded as men’s work, then their frustration increases. Many women resent having to carry a double workload, one in the work world and one in the home. They may feel guilty because they may neglect many of the home making duties other women perform or rely on their children or outside help to assist them. They are not getting time for recreational activities with their children and family members. As a result of these feelings their home life may be far from satisfactory for the whole family. These can add to the adjustments problems arising from the work itself. In an effort to become a super professional, super wife and a super mom, most of the women are falling victims to stress and related disorder. This chronic rush contributes to physical illness including ulcers, heart attacks, digestive problems, immune disorders and mental problems like stress, anxiety, depression, inferiority, mania, paranoia etc.

Maladjustment is the inability of the individual to develop pattern of behavior making for success in his environment (Chaplin, 1975). Though the term applies to a wide range of biological conditions, it often implies an individual’s failure to meet social or cultural expectations. Maladjustment have different aspects, the five major aspects of maladjustment are anxiety, depression, mania, inferiority and paranoia. Anxiety is the feeling of impending doom, fear, worry of future, perspective, palpitation, tremor and being upset. Depression includes worry, suicidal thoughts, disinterest, feelings of guilt, sense of failure. hopelessness, despair and emptiness. Mania includes restlessness, lack of self-control, lack of restraint, over activity, quick temper, getting into trouble, over talkativeness and impulsivity. Inferiority includes feelings of smallness, sensitiveness, shyness, self-consciousness, lack of self-confidence and easily hurt. Paranoia includes suspiciousness, feeling of being persecuted, exploited and misunderstood, not trusting others and getting into quarrels.

## **Objective**

1. To find out the significant difference between the employed women and unemployed women in maladaptive behavior.

## **Hypotheses**

2. There will be significant difference between the employed women and unemployed women in maladaptive behavior.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The participants of this study consists of 60 women (30 employed and 30 unemployed). Employed women includes women holding government jobs such as doctor, head nurse and advocates and private jobs such as teachers, typist and insurance advisor. The samples were selected from Ernakulam district through purposive sampling method.

### **Instruments**

1. Mathew Maladjustment Inventory- This inventory was developed by Mathew (1987) to measure five major aspects of maladjustment namely anxiety, depression, mania, inferiority, and paranoia. The test is applicable to anybody aged above 15years. Split-half reliabilities corrected for alteration and found to satisfactory. Since the test measures somewhat comprehensively, different types of maladjustment, the test can be said to possess a high degree of content validity. The reliability varies from 0.57 to 0.93.

2. Personal Data Sheet- Personal information like age, sex, religion, employed or unemployed, type of job, marital status, of the participants was collected using personal data sheet.

### **Procedure**

The investigator gives the questionnaire to both employed and unemployed women. The participants were explained about the aim of the study and the procedure prior to collecting the data. The subjects are requested to put a '+' mark in the cell against that question if they think that they possess the characteristic more than the average individual. Similarly, they are

requested to put a ‘-’ mark in the cell against that question if they think that they possess the characteristic at least a little less than the average individual. If the subject does not understand the question or if the investigator was unable to decide whether the subject has the characteristics to a larger or smaller degree, then a ‘?’ mark is provided. After completion the research instruments were collected back and checked for incompleteness. Scoring was done as per the manual and entered into a spread sheet for further statistical analysis.

## Results and Discussion

The objective of the study was to find out the significant difference between the employed women and unemployed women in maladaptive behavior. To find out the significant difference, descriptive statistics was calculated and the results are presented in the following table.

Table 1

*Means, standard deviations and t value relating to the significance of the difference between the employed women and unemployed women on maladjustment.*

Variables	Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t- value
Anxiety	Unemployed	30	3.5833	3.2724	2.042*
	Employed	30	2.0333	2.5661	
Depression	Unemployed	30	5.1167	3.9077	1.053
	Employed	30	4.0500	3.9421	
Mania	Unemployed	30	3.9667	2.3486	1.395
	Employed	30	3.0667	2.6416	
Inferiority	Unemployed	30	4.8833	3.3262	1.597
	Employed	30	3.5667	3.0562	
Paranoia	Unemployed	30	3.9833	3.3822	2.296*
	Employed	30	2.3167	2.0906	
General	Unemployed	30	6.0833	4.0918	1.713
	Employed	30	4.2500	4.1972	

\*\* Indicates significance at 0.01 level

\*Indicates significance at 0.05 level

Table 1 gives the means, standard deviations and t value relating to the significance of the difference between the employed women and unemployed women on maladjustment. The results indicate that there is no significant difference in depression, mania and inferiority. There is significant difference in the case of anxiety and paranoia at 0.05 level.

It can be seen that unemployed women have greater anxiety (3.5833) when compared with the employed women (2.0333). the result was also found to be significant at 0.05 level. This may be because of their fear or worry about future. They may spend most of their times worrying about their future and may get more free times to engage with unwanted thoughts. Unemployed women have greater paranoia (3.9833) when compared with the employed women (2.3167) at 0.05 level. This may be because unemployed women are not getting social exposures, spouse's free and close relationship with colleagues may perceive it as unethical, illegal and they are doubtful. Paper news regarding maladaptive behavior within office and work place may also create doubtful nature. So unemployed women perceive everything in a doubt full manner and cause paranoid feeling.

There is no significant difference in the case of depression, mania and inferiority among the both groups. Hence the above results indicate that there is no significant difference between employed women and unemployed women in the level of maladaptive behavior. It can be seen that the mean value for depression, mania and inferiority among unemployed women is almost similar to the mean value obtained for employed women. This could be because, the unemployed and employed women may experience similar depression, mania and inferiority during their daily life. They seem to adjust to this characteristic much in the same way, because they may face almost with the same kind of issues in their daily life.

When it comes to the general or taking the total maladjustment, it also shows that there is no significant difference in the maladjustment of employed and unemployed women. The unemployed women's are more maladjusted. Many researches have demonstrated various negative and mental health consequences of unemployment. Unemployment leads to an increase in alcohol intake, anxiety and depression. Each women may perceive herself as what she would like to be and what she expect herself to be which include some sense of power or control over

her being. If she feels unable to fulfill her expectation she may feel powerless. Therefore a women who have negative concept about herself may more vulnerable to develop emotional illness.

### **Conclusion**

In every society women plays a crucial role in every aspect of human life. The adjustment behavior and tolerance of women has helps every family to maintain a better and peaceful life. Women's patience adjustment is rendering fuel to the smooth functioning of society. If a women is psychologically maladjusted, it can affect their social interaction and interpersonal behavior inthe day to day affaires. The results of the study can bring out some lights in the adjustment patterns both physically and mentally for the employed and unemployed women. It can also contribute to the more understandingof the psychology of women.

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