



Determinants of Marital Flourishing among Married Individuals: An Asian Perspective

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ARTICLE DETAILS	ABSTRACT
<p>History Revised format: February 2019 Available Online: March 2019</p> <hr/> <p>Keywords Marriage, Flourishing, Emotion Expressivity, Communal Orientation, Gender</p> <hr/> <p>JEL Classification: D91, J10, J12, J16</p>	<p>Marital flourishing is a concept used to assess optimal quality of a marital relationship. Despite abundance of research to understand the factors underlying a happy and satisfying relationship, the determinant of a flourishing marital bonding remains limited. The present study focuses communal and emotional processes as possible causes underlying beneath a flourishing marital relationship. A data from 569 wives and 433 husbands from Pakistan was collected and analyzed through regression analysis. Findings demonstrated that expression of emotions negatively predicts relationship and individual dimension of marital flourishing. Moreover, positive communal orientation positively predicts individual dimension of flourishing. While, negative communal orientation negatively predicts relationship dimension of marital flourishing but positively predicts individual dimension of relationship flourishing. Gender wise analysis of the study variables exhibits that Asian wives are high in marital flourishing as compared to Asian husbands. Asian husbands show high level of negative emotional expressivity and negative communal orientation as compared to the Asian wives. The study signifies the determinants of marital flourishing thereby, highlighting the role of emotional and communal processes within Asian marriages. Findings of study are being discussed examining possible universal and culture-specific aspects of marital flourishing from indigenous Asian perspective.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">© 2019 The authors, under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0</p>

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1. Introduction

Researchers have become progressively attracted in the construct of flourishing (Diener et al. 2010; Keyes 2002; Huppert & So, 2013; Seligman, 2011). Regardless of the fundamental focus on flourishing in positive psychology research (Rose 2008; Seligman 2011), merely handful of researches have explored predominance of flourishing within intimate relationships. In spite of the fact that relationship scientists have demonstrated a number of studies explaining the factors underlying marital happiness and marital satisfaction, the concept of marital flourishing, however, integrates a more elaborative concept of relationship well-being and happiness (Fowers & Owenz, 2010).

As stated by Fowers & Owenz, (2010), flourishing marriage is characterized by husband's and wife's meaningful activities not comprising of just seeking satisfaction but also meant to attain understanding, development and positive expression of self. Marital flourishing has also been conceptualized as an intimate relationship

characteristic of relationship surviving as well as relationship flourishing ingredients. For instance according to one research, communication patterns, support for the partner and quality time spent together has been regarded as key factors to influence husband's and wives' flourishing ((Beach, et al., 1996; Blanchard et al., 2009). Similarly, Gottman (1999) has found that together with specific interactional styles, the way a couple manages conflict is central for marital success and satisfaction. Ziv and Gadish, (2010) found that the ability to use humor and affection might result in higher marital satisfaction than if there was lack of humor or affection during conflict. However, indigenous conceptualization of flourishing (Psychological Flourishing Scale; PFS) integrates multiple determinants of marital flourishing including gratitude (Gordon, Arnette, & Smith, 2011), capitalizing on positive events (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Watkins et al., 2003), received social support from the partner (Barry, Bunde, Brocke, Lawrence & 2009), emotional sensitivity for the spouse (Driver & Gottman, 2009), appreciation and acknowledgement (Mirgain & Cordova, 2007), forgiveness for the partner (Askari 2016), sexual intimacy and communication patterns (Hana Yoo, Bartle-Haring, Day & Gangamma, 2014).

2. Emotional Expressivity and Communal Orientation as Determinants of Marital Flourishing

Within monarchy of empirical evidences studying relationship happiness, role of emotions and communal tendencies has been highlighted by numerous relationship researchers. Expression is an integral characteristic of emotions and functions as a communicative purpose (Guerrero, Andersen, & Trost, 1998). Possibly due to significance of expressivity of emotions, there exist numerous verbal and non-verbal networks for emotional expressivity. Profusion of emotional words in various languages highlights the implication of verbal communication of emotions. Emotions could also be expressed through nonverbal mediums such as body language, facial expressions and vocal articulations (Planalp, 1998; Gross, 1999).

Substantial body of research has rendered mixed findings regarding expression of emotions within married relationship. Several relationship scientists have illustrated that spouses' nature of emotional expressivity is significantly correlated with the narrations of their marital happiness (Carstensen, Gottman, & Levenson, 1995; Gill, Christensen, & Fincham, 1999). On the other hand, according to Rauver & Volling, (2005), expression of positive emotions has limited impact on marital functioning. Similarly, Yediri & Hamarta, (2015) has found no significant impact of positive emotions on marital functioning. While, another study exhibits that negative correlation exist between verbal expression of positive emotions and relationship satisfaction among married individuals (Simon & Nath, 2014). The fact is worth mentioning here that most of the literature on emotions has been predominantly focusing western cultures and depicting contradictory findings in terms of emotion expressivity and quality of marital relationship.

As the preceding discussion implies, communal orientation speculated as the determinant of marital flourishing, is referred by Cark et al., (1987) as the predisposition to be considerate to the problems of others and to help them predominantly in response to their needs and out of concern for their wellbeing, tends to be amongst the most important determinants of satisfaction in variety of relationships (Jones, & Vaughan, 1990; Thompson & Deharrport, 1998). Individuals with enhanced level of communal tendencies are dispositional to offer care to individuals extending from those within their close relationships to strangers (Bryan, Hammer, & Fisher, 2000; Williamson & Schulz, 1990). Communally oriented individuals demonstrate numerous interpersonal abilities that enable better social bonds, including being emotionally expressive within close relationships (Clark & Finkel, 2005). To date, however, there is scarcity of scientific evidences that focus on communal orientation as determinant of flourishing among married individuals. Little experiential researches are present that inspects whether a dispositional tendency to care is really related to experiencing higher quality relationships across marital context or not. Hence, in the present research, we examined whether communally oriented people do really live through married relationships high in flourishing or not.

Nevertheless, the literature mentioned above predominantly concentrates on marital flourishing from the reference of Western contexts. In latest ages, however, there is increasing interest in marital quality and its determinants from non-Western angle. This extension of empirical studies on marital quality into non-Western settings rears new challenges and prospects for research on marital flourishing.

2.1 The Present Investigation

The present exploration is, hence, an empirical contribution towards the development of research on marital quality into non-Western settings by discovering the determinants of marital flourishing within Pakistan. In this study, we observe the determinants of flourishing within marital relationship, in a national representative sample of husbands

and wives in Pakistan. We examined how distinct patterns of emotional expressivity (positive and negative) and multiple communal orientation characteristics are associated with marital flourishing. Studying this discrepancy is important related to the influence of positive and negative expression of emotions on marriage because the two have been found to have very different associations with the marital relationship. Moreover, the study also aimed to address the inconsistent findings regarding nature of emotions expressed and pattern of communal orientation in terms of marital flourishing of individuals belonging to Asian background. In present study, we, likewise, intend to expand our understanding of communally oriented people's experiences across their marital relationships by focusing their emotional communication with their partners. Diminutive array of studies has observed emotions, beyond general positivity and negativity related with having a communal orientation and subsequently having an impact on marital flourishing. We, therefore, anticipated a stronger relationship between expression of emotions and communal orientation as predictor of marital flourishing.

Thus, structuring upon existing body of empirical literature, we derived a number of hypotheses that were tested to explore the role of proposed determinants in influencing marital flourishing. We anticipated that communally oriented people would experience enhanced positive emotion in daily life, which consecutively combine to influence the level of marital flourishing among husbands and wives. Finally, we explored dissimilarities and likenesses regarding gender, marital flourishing expression of emotions and communal orientation between husbands and wives. Moreover, according to our latest knowledge, this is the leading study to examine the relationship between the emotional and communal processes as key variables that could influence the flourishing of married relationship.

To recapitulate, the science of flourishing, particularly the marital flourishing is still in its early stages in Asian societies. Thus, the purpose of the current investigation is to contribute to the science of relationship flourishing by gauging the factors underlying marital flourishing of Asian married sample.

The Key Objectives of the Study are;

- To analyze the role of Emotion Expressivity and Communal Orientation affecting the level of Marital Flourishing among Asian married individuals.
- To analyze gender differences in terms of marital flourishing, emotion expressivity communal orientation among Asian married individuals.

Hypothesis of the Study

- H 1 Positive Emotion Expressivity positively predicts relationship dimension of Marital Flourishing.
- H 2 Positive Emotion Expressivity positively predicts individual dimension of Marital Flourishing.
- H 3 Negative Emotion Expressivity negatively predicts relationship dimension of Marital Flourishing.
- H 4 Negative Emotion Expressivity negatively predicts relationship dimension of Marital Flourishing.
- H 5 Positive Communal Orientation positively predicts individual dimension of Marital Flourishing.
- H 6 Negative Communal Orientation negatively predicts relationship dimension of Marital Flourishing.
- H 7 Negative Communal Orientation negatively predicts individual dimension of Marital Flourishing.
- H8 Husbands and Wives would differ in their level of Marital Flourishing and Expression of Emotions.

2.3 Method

2.3.1 Participants

Our participants consisted of 433 (43.2%) husbands and 596 (56.8%) wives between the ages of 20 to 70 years. All the participants of the study were volunteers and were not paid for their participation. Participants met the following inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Inclusive Criteria (a) having married for not less than one year (b) living together with the spouse; c) having finished high school, and (c) having minimum one child either son or daughter.

Exclusion Criteria (a) married once but no longer living with the spouse; (b) divorced or separated; (c) having no child.

2.3.2 Instruments

Materials of the study included self-report measures to assess marital flourishing, expression of emotions and communal orientation of married individuals. Both emotional expressions and communal orientation were primary independent variables whereas, marital flourishing was dependent variables. Materials included the following

scales.

Assessment of demographic variables: Demographic variable were assessed through demographic data sheet that required the information about Husbands' and wives' age, years of education, professional experience, duration of marriage (in years), family system, number of children, age of the youngest child, nature of marriage, and general health.

Psychological Flourishing Scale (PFS; Fahd & Hanif, 2017), a 39 item questionnaire measuring flourishing ingredients of the married relationship. PFS is developed for use with married individuals to assess the level of their relational flourishing. The questionnaire consists of two subscales that measures psychological flourishing of husbands and wives in terms of two dimensions; relationship dimension (21 items) and individual dimension (18 items). Relationship dimension of PFS includes questions about mutual understanding for the spouse, friendly relations with the partner, appreciation for the partner, capitalizing on positive events etc. whereas, the individual dimension includes items about one's personal qualities like sense of humor, level of self-confidence, emotional stability, optimism etc. Each item is scored as 5 = strongly agree, 4= agree, 3= neutral, 2= disagree, 1= strongly disagree. Responses are summed up to get a total score. High level of marital flourishing is illustrated by high scores on the scale. The two subscales of PFS have shown good reliability (relationship dimension, $\alpha = .86$ and individual dimension, $\alpha = .80$).

Berkeley Emotion Expressivity Questionnaire (BEQ, Gross & John, 1995) comprises of 16 questions. Three subscales of BEQ measured positive expressivity, (4 items), negative expressivity (6 items), and strength of Impulse reactivity (6 items). In the present study, BEQ evaluated multiple facets of husbands and wives affective dimensions. The BEQ produces a total score in addition to 3 subscales measuring Impulse Strength, Positive Expressivity, and Negative Expressivity. Instances of items from measure include: "I sometimes cry during sad movies;" "I've learned it is better to suppress my anger than to show it"; "My body reacts very strongly to emotional situations." BEQ have been translated in Urdu for the use in current research following Chen & Boore, (2010) translation guidelines. The data of the present study have illustrated internal consistencies of three subscales of BEQ ranging between $\alpha = .65$ to $\alpha = .80$.

Communal Orientation Scale (COS; Clark et al., 1987): 14 items of COS evaluates inclination to be responsive and sharing with the partner. Scale was translated into Urdu language. Subscales were articulated for the present research, named as communal orientation positive (COP) and communal orientation negative (CON). Item 3,4,6,9,10,12,13 measured the negative communal orientation and item 1,2,5,7,8,11,14 measured positive communal orientation. Reliability of the two subscales, computed through Cronbach Alpha (α) reliability yields satisfactory reliability (COP=. 71 and CON=. 72) on data of current study.

2.3.3 Design and Procedure

The research design of this study was cross sectional in nature. Each independent variable had two levels (positive emotional expressivity and negative emotional expressivity; positive communal orientation and negative communal orientation) and whether each variable was manipulated within subjects as well as between subjects.

All the research protocols were met. Recruited participants were provided with informed consent and were debriefed about the study purpose and all ethical considerations were met. Participants were also informed that all the personal information that they would provide would be kept confidential and would be utilized for the study purpose only. The participants were selected from professional institutes, social gatherings, teaching setups, and family units. Participants were requested to participate in the research and data collection gatherings were arranged for responding of the research tools. Each gathering was commenced with the description of the study's purpose and formal acceptance of forms stating informed consent. Married males and married females separately and individually filled research instruments; viz, it wasn't the condition that both partners should take part in the research. Henceforth, married males and females joined the study, but not essentially both spouses. After the completion of surveys, the researchers debriefed the participants and communicated them that the study was actually looking for the expression of emotions and communal orientation predicting marital flourishing. The participants were then asked if they had any questions and thanked for their cooperation.

2.3.4 Sampling Technique

Convenient sampling technique was used in the present research and sample of husbands and wives consisted of

stratum owning specific attributes (see Table 1).

2.3.4 Informed Consent

Informed consent of the participants was obtained through Informed Consent Form comprising of information about procedures, advantages and risks of participating, a description how to attain the results of research, volunteer participation, and contact information of the researchers. The objective of the current exploration was also mentioned on the informed consent form.

2.3.5 Ethical Considerations

Present research was permitted by the Institutional Review Committee at National Institute of Psychology (IRC-NIP) and all the existing ethical strictures were met.

3. Analysis of Data

Scores of the measures were organized in line with their corresponding instruction booklet and later were arranged in logs in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS- 22 Version). Following analysis was executed (adopting $p < .05$).

- 1 Frequencies and Descriptive for demographic features related to the study sample (Table 1).
- 2 Correlation to explore patterns of relationship among study variables (Table 2).
- 3 Linear regression to explore the prediction of emotion expressivity and communal orientation (hypothesis testing) in predicting marital flourishing (Table 3-9).
- 4 Independent sample t- test (Table 10) to explore gender differences related to marital flourishing, expression of emotions and communal orientation among husbands and wives.

4. Results

Results of the present research show that expression of emotions and communal orientation are significant determinants of marital flourishing of Asian married Individuals. Moreover, husbands are high in expression of negative emotions and tend to display negative communal orientation within their married bond. On the other hand, Asian wives exhibit high levels of relationship and individual aspects of marital flourishing as compared to Asian husbands.

Table 1: Socio Demographic Characteristics of Wives and Husbands

Characteristics	Wives			Husbands		
	Mean	SD	Frequency (%)	Mean	SD	Frequency(%)
Age(in yrs)	35.52	9.58		40.88	10.73	
20-30			226(39.7)			72(16.66)
31-40			209(36.7)			174(40.2)
41-50			98(17.2)			111(25.6)
51-60			26(4.6)			55(12.7)
61-70			10(1.8)			14(3.2)
71-80			6 (0.6)			6(1.4)
Education	3.27	1.27		3.14	1.32	
Matric			86(15.1)			80(18.5)
Intermdite			60(10.5)			51(11.8)
Bachelor			105(18.5)			72(16.6)
Masters			250(43.9)			187(43.2)
M.Phill			52(9.1)			29(6.1)
Ph.D			10(1.8)			9(2.1)
Profession	1.98	1.06		3.41	0.77	
Housewife			215(37.8)			
Teacher			213(37.4)			77(17.8)
Business			17(3.0)			97(22.4)

	Job			93(16.3)			250(57.7)
FamilySys		1.49	0.55			1.53	0.5
	Nuclear			271(47.6)			186(43.0)
	Joint			247(43.4)			210(48.5)
YofMarri		12.28	9.57			14.08	10.5
	1 to 10			309(54.3)			207(47.8)
	11 to 20			150(26.4)			115(26.6)
	21 to 30			80(14.1)			76(17.6)
	31 to 40			20(3.5)			27(6.2)
	41 to 50			6(1.1)			5(1.2)
TyofMarri		1.34	0.65			1.39	0.64
	Love			423(79.4)			289(66.7)
	Arrange			88(15.5)			98(22.6)
GenHealth		3.94	0.79			4.1	0.72
	V poor			5(.9)			
	Poor			10(1.8)			4(.9)
	Normal			133(23.4)			76(17.6)
	Good			275(48.3)			206(17.6)
	v good			134(23.6)			126(29.1)

Note: FamilySys= Family System; YofMarri= Years of Marriage; Tyofmarri= Type of Marriage; GenHealth= General Health

Table 2: Bivariate Correlations among study variables (N=1002)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
Flourishing (R)	1	.648**	-.250**	-.173**	.234**	-.086**
Flourishing (I)		1	-.356**	-.254**	.414**	.175**
Expressivity (P1)			1	.500**	-.300**	-.025
Expressivity (N1)				1	-.271**	-.115**
Communal (P2)					1	.229**
Communal (N2)						1

**p<.01, Note: R= Relationship Dimension; I= Individual Dimension; P1= Positive emotionality; N1= Negative Emotionality; P2 = Positive Orientation; N2 = Negative Orientation.

The table above demonstrates the relationship among marital flourishing and its determinants. All the variables are significantly correlated with one another. Positive emotion expressivity show negative association with marital flourishing (Relationship dimension= -.25** & Individual dimension = -.17**). Negative Emotion expressivity also show negative correlation with marital flourishing (Relationship dimension = & Individual dimension =). Communal positive orientation is negatively correlated with positive emotional expressivity(r = -.30**). Communal negative orientation is significantly negatively correlated with negative expressivity (r = -.11**).

Table 3: Linear Regression Analysis of Positive Emotion Expressivity as Predictor of Marital Flourishing (Relationship Dimension) N=1002

	R	R2	B	Psychological SE	Flourishing(I) β	t	F
CO (N)	.25	.063	-.79	8.77	-.25	7.59	66.36

***p<.001, CO(N)= Communal Negative orientation; I= Individual Dimension of Flourishing.

Table 4: Linear Regression Analysis of Positive Emotion Expressivity as Predictor of Marital Flourishing (Individual Dimension) N=1002

				Psychological	Flourishing(I)		
Predictors	R2	R2	B	SE	β	t	F
CO (N)	.35	.127	-1.12	8.70	-.35	11.99	143.84

***p<.001, CO(N)= Communal Negative orientation; I= Individual Dimension of Flourishing.

Table 5: Linear Regression Analysis of Negative Emotion Expressivity as Predictor of Marital Flourishing (Relationship Dimension) N=1002

				Psychological	Flourishing(I)		
Predictors	R	R2	B	SE	β	t	F
CO (N)	.17	.03	-.55	.10	-.17	-5.55	30.88

***p<.001, CO(N)= Communal Negative orientation; R= Relationship Dimension of Flourishing.

Table 6: Linear Regression Analysis of Negative Emotion Expressivity as Predictor of Marital Flourishing (Individual Dimension) N=1002

				Psychological	Flourishing(I)		
Predictors	R	R2	B	SE	β	t	F
CO (N)	.25	.065	-.81	.09	-.25	-8.29	68.83

***p<.001, CO(N)= Communal Negative orientation; I= Individual Dimension of Flourishing.

Table 7: Linear Regression Analysis of Positive Communal Orientation as Predictor of Marital Flourishing (Individual Dimension) N=1002

				Psychological	Flourishing(I)		
Predictors	R	R2	B	SE	β	t	F
CO (N)	.41	.17	.75	.05	.41	14.36	206.35

***p<.001, CO (N)= Communal Positive Orientation; I= Individual Dimension of Flourishing.

Table 8: Linear Regression Analysis of Negative Communal Orientation as Predictor of Marital Flourishing (Relationship Dimension) N=1002

				Psychological	Flourishing(I)		
Predictors	R	R2	B	SE	β	t	F
CO (N)	.08	.007	.14	.05	-.08	-2.73	7.47

***p<.001, CO (N)= Communal Negative orientation; R= Relationship Dimension of Flourishing.

Table 9: Linear Regression Analysis of Negative Communal Orientation as Predictor of Marital Flourishing (Individual Dimension) N=1002

				Psychological	Flourishing(I)		
Predictors	R	R2	B	SE	β	t	F
CO (N)	.17	.30	.29	.05	.17	5.60	31.39

***p<.001, Note: CO(N)= Communal Negative orientation; I= Individual Dimension of Flourishing.

Table 10: Mean Differences of husbands and wives in terms of Marital Flourishing, Emotion Expressivity and Communal Orientation

Variables	Husbands, (N=433)		Wives (N= 568)		t	P	95%		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			UL	LL	
CO(N)	19.77	5.68	18.16	5.07	4.22	.00	.94	2.28	0.29
Flou(R)	91.79	9.76	94.10	8.34	-4.02	.00	-3.43	-1.1	0.25
Flou (I)	69.81	9.69	71.93	8.35	-3.70	.00	-3.23	-.99	0.23
Emo (N)	8.13	2.76	7.75	2.83	2.10	.00	.72	.02	0.24

Emo(N)= Emotional Negative Expressivity. UL= Upper Limit; LL= Lower Limit, ** $p < .00$

Mean differences and t-test significance indicates that magnitude of negative communal orientation and negative emotional expressivity is higher among married males as compared to married females. On the other hand, married females appear to demonstrate high levels of both the dimensions of flourishing within the marital relationship.

3. Discussion

The present investigation was aimed to observe the impact of emotional expressivity and communal orientation on marital flourishing. In doing so, we extended upon empirical knowledge of how husband's and wife's expression of positive and negative emotions in alliance with positive and negative communal orientation differentially predicts multiple dimensions of marital flourishing.

3.1 Positive Expressivity and Marital Flourishing

The results of the current study rejects the discrepancy former relationship scientists have found between positive and negative expression of emotions (Searle & Meara, 1999; Cartensen et al., 1995) as both positive and negative expressivity negatively predicts marital flourishing. Existing literature identify favorable role that positive emotional expressivity may play in influencing spouses' marital happiness. Relationship scientists have constantly found that high levels of spouses' positive emotional expressivity were related with better marital happiness (Feeney, Noller, & Callan, 1994; Feeney, 2002). In contrast to the previous findings, we found astonishingly negative associations between positive expression of emotions and marital flourishing. Despite the fact that numerous researchers reveal that higher positive emotional expressivity were associated with enhanced marital satisfaction (eg. Feeney et al., 1994), we found that expression of positive emotions within the marital relationship negatively predicts marital flourishing.

Although husbands' and wife's flourishing within their married relationship has previously found to be positively affected by the emotions of appreciation and acknowledgement that they express to their partners (eg. Adler & Fagley, 2005), findings of the current investigation demonstrated that expression of positive emotions seem to impact marital flourishing in the negative direction. As the results currently stands that husbands and wives who express their positive emotions to their partners do not appear to experience flourishing within their married relationship. In contrast this positive expressivity seems to reduce the level of flourishing (Relationship Flourishing $\beta = -.25$ and Individual Flourishing $\beta = -.35$; $p < .001$).

However, results of the current study are in line with a few empirical evidences demonstrating that expression of positive emotions has either limited or no impact on functioning of married relationship (Rauver & Volling, 2005; Yediri & Hamrta, 2015). Therefore, the hypotheses (1 & 2) concentrating upon the role of positive expressivity and marital flourishing has been rejected by the data of the present study and seems to depict that components of flourishing such as communication patterns, compromises within the relationship, conflict resolution, encouragement for the spouse, friendly relations, trust on each other are likely to worsen among Asian husbands and wives as the result of their expression of positive emotions within the married relationship. Beyond this it could be hypothesized that flourishing of the married individuals would be more likely to be affected by the expression of emotions depending on the variety, intensity and magnitude of the emotions expressed. Hence, despite previous researches lucidly explaining the beneficial nature of positivity of emotions (Fardis, 2007), the present investigation invites a new debate for the scientists working on emotions as relationship flourishing factor within married relationship.

3.2 Negative Expressivity and Marital Flourishing

Speculating the link between negative expression of emotions and marital flourishing of husbands and wives (hypotheses 3 & 4), this link is in line with numerous studies documenting the relationship between negative expression of emotions and decreased levels of marital satisfaction (Feeney et al., 1994; Roberts & Krokoff, 1990; Cartensen et al., 1995; Halberstadt et al., 1995; Feeney, 2002). Overall, there appears to be sustenance for the empirical connection between negative emotional expressivity and declining levels of marital happiness, such that less martially satisfied couples involve in more negative expression of emotions. Therefore, data of the present study strengthens existing body of knowledge and found that negative emotional expressivity negatively predicts marital flourishing among husbands and wives. It has become apparent from the current findings that negative emotional expressivity is a strong determinant of flourishing (Relationship Flourishing $\beta = -.17$ and Individual Flourishing $\beta = -.25$; $p < .001$) and tend to reduce the level of marital flourishing. It could be interpreted from

findings of the current study that husbands and wives who indulge in the expression of negative emotions like anger, anguish, and dislike for the partner seem are less likely to show intimacy, trust, compromise and conflict resolution skills within their marital relationship thereby, exhibit decreased level of marital flourishing.

3.3 Communal Orientation and Marital Flourishing

With regard to the wife's and husband's repertoire of communal tendencies linked with their marital satisfaction, we point out two categories as positive communal orientation and negative communal orientation as determinants of marital flourishing. We speculated that positive communal orientation positively predicts marital flourishing and negative communal orientation negatively predicts marital flourishing.

Data of the current study supported the scientific assumptions regarding communal orientation as the determinant of marital flourishing (Individual Flourishing $\beta = .41$ and Relationship Flourishing $\beta = -.08$; $p < .001$). The findings are also in consonance with those described by Clark & Finkel, (2005); Crocker & Canevello, (2008), Canevello & Crocker, (2010); whose studies illustrated that communal orientation could lead towards the promotion of flourishing relationships through better interpersonal closeness, responsiveness, and social support & encouragement for the partner within the romantic relationship. Moreover, communal behaviors between spouses could reinforce the relationship, engendering feelings of trust, intimacy, gratitude and forgiveness for the spouse. Because married individuals with high level of positive communal orientation are more focused to interpersonal needs of their partners, it would not seem improbable that they possess high level of marital flourishing. Hence, disposition of communal orientation nourishes relationship building and relationship flourishing ingredients within married bonds of Asian couples.

However, statistical figures from present study rendered partially unexpected results regarding H7 which stated that negative communal orientation negatively predicts individual dimension of marital flourishing thereby demonstrating that negative communal tendencies positively predicts marital flourishing. This finding leads to the interpretation that for husbands and wives, lack of care and responsiveness do not necessarily decrease the level of marital flourishing. Conversely, it appears that even when married individuals choose to be communally negative oriented, it could enhance the factors like intimacy, acknowledgement, capitalizing on positive events, trust, compromise, respect for the individual differences and forgiveness for the partner. Hence, contradictory to current literature on interpersonal benefits of communal orientation (Clark & Finkel, 2005), the current findings present a unique finding from the spectrum of Asian husbands and wives.

3.4 Study Variables in terms of Gender Differences

The present investigation was intended to broaden the understanding of the relationship among married individual's emotion expressivity and communal orientation and their marital flourishing. For the reason that we aimed towards exploring impact of positive and negative emotional expression and communal orientation, on various aspects of marital flourishing (relationship and individual dimensions), and because we had self-reports responses from both husbands and wives, we were also able to address gender variances on the proposed study variable.

Several researchers have found that expression of emotions differ in males and females, females generally are found to be more expressive in terms of various emotions comprising of happiness, fear and sadness (Kring & Gordon, 1998; Brody & Hall, 1993; Cartensen et al., 1995). Further evidences comes from the studies by Gross & John, (1998); Fujita et al., (1991) who exhibit that women tend to express positive and negative emotions more than men. However, findings of the present study show no significant differences between wives and husbands in expression of positive emotions, while in terms of negative expression, Asian husbands are high in expressivity as compared to wives. The difference appeared statistically significant yet very small between husbands and wives. It gives the impression that in our society, men enjoy more acceptances to be angry and anguish as compared to women, whereas women are more encouraged to express sadness as compared to men.

With respect to positive communal orientation, no gender dissimilarities were observed between wives and husbands. However, significant dissimilarities were noticed in terms of negative communal orientation whereby illustrating Asian husbands to be high in negative communal orientation as compared to wives. As a common observation in a non-western society, it could be stated that Asian men appear to nonresponsive, less sensitive and less caring within their interpersonal relationships. Nevertheless, as shown by the current findings, the negative communal orientation partially does not seem to influence marital flourishing. The findings are, however, inconsistent with existing literature that states that there are no gender variations in the exhibition of communal

orientation among males and females (e.g. Buunk & Dreu, 2006).

In terms of marital flourishing, a survey conducted at national level on married adults in United States in 2000's, have found that on average women indicated lesser levels of marital quality as compared to men (Amato, Booth, Johnson, & Rogers, 2007). Other scientific resarches, though, have found no gender variances (Kurdek, 2005). Conversely, in the Asian culture we found that wives are significantly high in both Relationship Flourishing as well as Individual Flourishing as compared to husbands. Extending this notion we can interpret that Asian wives are more compromising, sacrificing, respectful towards their counter parts, friendly, encouraging for the partner and forgiving. The wives also appear to possess numerous personality traits like humor, confidence, emotional stability conflict resolution skills and effective communication patterns that serves to enhance their relationship flourishing.

Hence, the theoretic significance of the contemporary research lies not only in advancing the knowledge about the role of expression of emotions and communal orientation in influencing level of flourishing within marital frameworks, but also in contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the role of gender variations from Asian perspective. Numerous authors have questioned the extent to which expressive and communal determinants are pertinent in intimate relationships, and have speculated if being expressive and communally available sensitive to the husbands and wives for attaining a high level of marital satisfaction. (Murstein et al., 1977; Mills & Clark, 1982, 1994). Our empirical investigation offers certain clues and scientific evidences that expressivity and communal orientation in its all forms are distinctively associated with marital flourishing of Asian husbands and wives. Finally, we draw upon the experimental exploration signifying that facilitating partner leads people to experience positive emotion (Williamson & Clark, 1992), to posit it, it could probably be stated that communally oriented people feel positive emotions through caring for others and in return feel motivated to act communally towards the partner.

4. Conclusion

Key contribution of the contemporary paper is that it is paramount to show explicitly that in intimate relationships, alliance of communal dispositions and expression of emotion significantly predicts level of marital flourishing. The data received offers a considerable yardstick for understanding variables in the domain of flourishing predominantly in terms of marital relationships. Data, based on cross-sectional design and sampled in major cities of Pakistan appeared to be useful for discovering association among expression of emotions, communal orientation and marital flourishing among Asian married individuals. Current data may open future paths to tune novel research methodologies to evaluate echelons of flourishing among married sample of non-western societies.

Several limitations must be acknowledged, regardless of study's pertinent findings. These limitations identify potential innovative researches in arena of interpersonal relations. Even though importance is being given to ethical concerns intricate within close relationships, research data gathered through self-report scales is not without potential biases. Henceforth, corresponding researches utilizing other techniques, i.e., multimodal valuations, is obligatory. Another drawback, inherent to adopted approach, is lack of relationship variables playing mediator and moderator roles that could possibly influence the direct relationship between predictors (emotion expressivity and communal orientation) and outcomes (marital flourishing). Thirdly, the data should have been collected from other countries of Asia representing eastern culture. Moreover, a qualitative exploration of the variables used in the study could possibly have rendered a more detailed understanding of marital flourishing. We should also bear in consideration that current empirical work focused on the interpersonal characteristics of marital flourishing. Supplementary variables, however, (e.g., partners' physical and psychological health and other personal factors) should not be overlooked as significant features involved in marital flourishing. Current research, hence, does not exhaust the investigation of the determinants of marital satisfactions, but indicates aspects that could be regarded as aspects that encourage psychological flourishing of married individuals both theoretically as well as empirically. Hence, the upcoming researchers interested to explore the determinants of marital flourishing could benefit in a way that could facilitate an empirical understanding of marital flourishing in every possible way.

Study is important for its implications for married individuals, mental health professionals and family counselors. Findings of the study are vital in explaining the importance of emotion expressivity and communal orientation to promote the flourishing of married individuals. Current empirical investigation provides hope that if mental health professionals, health psychologists, relationship scientists and counselors could successfully improve intimate relationships through scientific study of variables that makes a marital life flourishing, family well-being would progress, and children dwelling with partnered couples may find themselves in families marked by less

disturbances and mental problems.

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