

Comparative Personality Sketch of Middle Aged Male and Female Counterparts Highlighting Its Effect On Anger Expression, Narcissism And Happiness

Sraboni Chatterjee* and Payel Dey**

*Assistant Professor, Bijoy Krishna Girls' College, Howrah

** Student of Indira Gandhi Open University

ABSTRACT: The aim of the present study is to make a comparative personality profile in the light of anger expression, narcissism and happiness among middle aged males and females. A sample of 100 middle aged individuals (50 males and 50 females) was selected. The variables selected for the study were anger expression, narcissism and happiness. Results indicate that happiness and narcissism both are positively correlated and basically self-love is found to be a basic source of happiness for both subsamples. Moreover, significant differences were found in case of anger expression and overall narcissism. Male counterparts were positioned at the top point of narcissism and anger expression and lack anger control but females have more anger out, anger reaction, superiority and vanity than male ones which pinpoints the fact that females tend to invest a great deal of energy in maintaining and preventing the experience and expression of anger. While controlling anger is certainly desirable, the over-control of anger may result in passivity, withdrawal and depression.

Key words: Anger expression, happiness, narcissism, self-love, depression

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's world, society is facing extremely tough challenges in the form of global warming, natural disasters, economic recession, unprecedented homelessness, terrorism and the draining continuation of war with all this sadness and horror, where in the world does a science based on testing happiness, wellbeing, personal growth and "the good life" fit into the modern day agenda? Positive psychology focuses on wellbeing, happiness, personal strengths, wisdom, creativity, imagination and characteristics of positive groups and institutions, positive thinking and positive emotions. Furthermore, the focus is not just on home to make individuals happy, thereby perpetuating a self centered, narcissistic approach, but on happiness and flourishing at a group level as well.

Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi describe positive psychology in the following way: "We believe that a psychology of positive human functioning will arise that achieves a scientific understanding and effective interventions to build thing in individuals' families and communities".

Happiness is as important to us, both as individual and as a world, primarily because happiness is really all there is. As human beings, although we possess cognitive abilities and are highly "thought" oriented the quality of our lives is ultimately entirely determined by our emotions.

Happiness does not just make you enjoy life move, it actually affects how successful you are in both your personal and professional lives. Happiness makes people more sociable and altruistic, it increases how much they like themselves and others, and it strengthens their immune system. The cumulative effects means that people have satisfying and successful relationship find especially fulfilling careers and live longer, healthier, lives.

The word **narcissism** is derived from a great myth which is about Narcissus, a handsome Greek Youth, who rejected the desperate advance of the nymph echo. As punishment, he was deemed to fall in love with his own reflection in a pool of water. Unable to consummate his love, Narcissus pined away and changed into the flower that bears his name, the Narcissus (Sanyal, 2005). In other words, it relates to an exaggerated self love. However the term may consist of a variety of meaning depending on the orientation.

A narcissist can feel happy when he / she have been helping someone. The source of this happiness is not the fact that the person who received help happy, but the fact that a narcissist was able to appear as someone with a good heart, someone who is causing divine etc, when he / she was helping some else. A narcissist loves the feeling they get when they think they have been helping someone and that this person and also other people are aware that they have been doing "good deeds". So again it all boils down to a narcissist, not to the person who received help. This is natural behavior for these people, who cannot generally care about anyone but themselves.

Middle age is a dreaded period in the life span. It is time of transition and the time when male and female leave behind the physical and behavioural characteristics will prevail. This is the time when male undergo a change in virility and female a change in fertility. It is a time of stress also. Radical adjustments to change roles and patterns of life and lead to a period of stress. Middle age is a “dangerous age” in the life span. Because it is a time when individuals break down physically as a result of overwork, over worry, or careless living. The incidence of mental illness both male and female and it is also a peak age for suicides, especially among the male. In middle age is male and female normally reach their peaks of achievement. Middle age should be a time not only for financial and social success but also for authority and prestige. **Choi (2009)**, made a study on anger expression and mental health in middle aged women. Participants (1442) were classified into 4 types of anger expression by k-mean cluster analysis, 18 participants were recruited. Results indicated high trait anger among middle aged women. Anger out score was more than anger in and anger control was average. So the study commented that middle aged women control their anger effectively and may contribute to the improvement their mental health.

Campbell, Rudich and Sedikides (2002) in another study examined whether or not narcissism and high self-esteem are associated with positive self-view and whether each is associated with positivity with different domains of self. In three experiments 407 subjects completed the Narcissistic Personality Inventory and The Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale. In experiment 1 narcissist rated themselves as extraverted but not as more agreeable or emotionally stable. In experiment 2 narcissists rated themselves better than their romantic partners. In experiment 3 narcissists rated themselves as more intelligent, but not moral, than the average persons. In contrast high self-esteem individuals viewed themselves as more moral and more intelligent.

Lyubomirsky (2006), on in other study investigated theoretically and empirically derived similarities and differences between the constructs of enduring happiness and self-esteem in middle age and older age. Participants were retired employees of a large utility company serving much of southern California. A systematic, computer-driven procedure was used by the company to select a random sub-sample of the names and addresses of individuals from the company’s population of retirees. Self-report questionnaires were applied, 621 participants were recruited. Results indicated that happiness and self-esteem, while highly correlated, presented unique patterns of relations with the other measured variables. The best predictors of happiness were the following : mood and temperamental traits, social relationships, purpose in life, and global life satisfaction. By contrast, self-esteem was best predicted by dispositions related to agency and motivation.

As the above mentioned sample and its characteristics highlight various shades of middle age’s life thus they have been selected for the present venture. The psychosocial changes that take place within this age are numerous. In the present context, this issue is attempted to be verified with regard to the selected set of variables like anger-expression, happiness and narcissism.

1.1 Objectives for the present study are:

Embracing all the categorical discussions, the objectives of the present study are decided to be:

- To locate the difference, if there is any, between middle aged male and female counterparts with respect to their
 - 1) Anger-expression
 - 2) Narcissism
 - 3) Happiness
- To locate, if there is any relation, between Happiness and Narcissism among middle aged male.
- To locate, if there is any relation, between Happiness and Narcissism among middle aged female.

II. METHOD

2.1. Sample and its characteristics:

A total no of 100 middle aged individuals (50 male and 50 female) were selected. The subject will be selected on the basis of the following criteria:

2.1.1. Inclusion Criteria:

- Age - 35-45 years.
- Sex - Male and female.
- Education - H.S to Graduate.
- Socio Economic Status - Upper middle class.
- Religion - Hinduism.
- Mother Tongue - Bengali.
- Working Status-Working in government and non-government offices.

2.1.2. Exclusion Criteria:

- Age - Above 45 years.
- Educational Qualification - Below H.S.
- Working Status - Unemployed were excluded.

2.2. Research Hypotheses:

- There is no difference, between middle aged male and female in terms of Anger expression.
- There is no difference, between middle aged male and female in terms of Narcissism.
- There is no difference, between middle aged male and female in terms of Happiness.
- There is no relation, between Happiness and Narcissism among middle aged male.
- There is no relation, between Happiness and Narcissism among middle aged female.

2.3. Selected Tools:

i) **Information Blank** – consisting information's like name, age, sex, religion, mother tongue, marital status, education, family history, working status, personal hobby, future economic plan, major illness.

ii) **State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory (STAXI) by Spielberger (1996):**

Anger is a more frequent emotional response in childhood. The State –Trait Anger Expression inventory provides concise measure of the experiences and expiration of anger. The expression of anger, as measured by the State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory (STAXI) is conceptualized having two major components – State Trait Anger. State anger is defined as an emotional state marked by subjective feelings that vary in intensity from mild annoyance or irritation to intense fury and rage. Trait anger is defined as the disposition to perceive a particular situation.

iii) **Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) by Raskin and Hall (1979):**

This inventory has been developed by **Raskin and Hall (1979)** for measurement of overall narcissistic behavioural pattern with its related dimensions. Cronbach's α for internal consistency for NPI was 0.81. The NPI has been used widely and shows satisfactory convergent and discriminant validity (**Bushman and Baumeister, 1998; Emmons, 1987; Morf and Rhodewalt, 1993; Rhodewalt et.al, 1998; Rhodewalt and Morf, 1998**).

iv) **The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) by Hills and Argyle (2002):**

This test has been developed by **Hills and Argyle (2002)** for the measurement of overall happiness. The OHQ has high scale reliabilities with values of α (168) = 0.91 respectively. The inter- item correlation for the OHQ ranged from -0.04 to 0.65. Highly significant difference ($p < 0.01$) was obtained between high and low group of OHQ score for every item of OHQ (Hills and Argyle, 2002). This indicates that all items of OHQ are making a valid contribution to the measurement of overall happiness.

2.4. Sampling Techniques:

The present research endeavor has employed **purposive sampling** as the technique of selection of subjects.

2.5. Procedure:

Step 1: The middle-aged individuals were selected according to the inclusion criteria mentioned above.

Step 2: Rapport was established with the candidates.

Step 3: Information blank and the above mentioned questionnaires were given to them.

2.6. Precautions:

During the administration of each questionnaire, it was checked by the investigator whether the respondents were relaxed and willing to participate. If there was any tension on the part of any respondent, he/she was not forced to participate for that day, but a second appointment was fixed with her.

b) The respondents were made to sit in a well-lit and airy room and made to feel comfortable. One respondent at a time was given the questionnaire.

c) No time limit was given to the respondents while answering the questionnaires. However, it was found that most of the respondents covered the questionnaires within scheduled time.

d) It was noted that each individual being tested should interpret the questions for themselves. The investigator answered questions about any particular item.

e) It was assured to the respondents that the results of tests would be treated in strict confidence.

III.RESULTS

The data obtained from the subjects were systematically arranged and properly tabulated with respect to each of the variables considered in the present study. The presentation of the data has reflected the measures of the obtained selected study variables and their statistical distributions on the basis of which suitable statistical techniques were applied to analyze and to find out necessary information to serve the objectives of the study. The processed data are as follows:

The first section deals with the descriptive statistics in terms of mean and standard deviation for two different study groups (male and female) of middle age group.

Table: 3.1 represent the means (M) and standard deviations (S.D) of male and female participants of middle age group with respect to the selected variables.

Variables	Male (N=50)		Female (N=50)	
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
State Anger	13.74	3.30	13.74	2.96
Trait Anger	16.10	5.38	16.14	4.86
Anger/In	14.14	3.35	14.46	3.39
Anger/Out	12.92	2.91	13.08	2.62
Anger Temperament	6.68	2.49	6.34	1.97
Anger Reaction	7.00	3.07	7.50	2.99
Anger Control	19.72	7.18	21.82	7.11
Anger Expression	24.30	3.67	22.76	3.48
Authority	4.82	1.22	3.50	.97
Self-Sufficiency	3.00	.63	2.84	.73
Superiority	2.62	.72	2.86	.94
Exhibitionism	3.96	1.49	2.88	1.11
Exploitativeness	1.54	.86	2.04	.60
Entitlement	2.80	.85	1.98	.82
Vanity	1.90	.54	2.22	1.05
Narcissism	20.64	3.12	18.18	4.18
Happiness	140.92	15.14	140.60	12.82

Table 3.1 shows the means (M) and standard deviations (S.D) of male and female participants of middle age group with respect to the selected variables.

Males have higher mean magnitude than female counterparts on

- Anger Temperament
- Anger Expression
- Authority
- Self-sufficiency
- Exhibitionism
- Entitlement
- Overall Narcissism

Females have higher mean magnitude than male counterparts on

- Anger-Out
- Anger Reaction
- Anger Control
- Superiority
- Vanity

Table: 3.2 Means (M), standard deviations (S.D) and t values of males and females corresponding to anger expression and their respective dimensions

Variable and its dimensions	Male (N=50)		Female (N=50)		t-values (df=98)
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
State Anger	13.74	3.30	13.74	2.96	1.00
Trait Anger	16.10	5.38	16.14	4.86	.039
Anger/In	14.14	3.35	14.46	3.39	.474
Anger/Out	12.92	2.91	13.08	2.62	.289

Anger Temperament	6.68	2.49	6.34	1.97	.756
Anger Reaction	7.00	3.07	7.50	2.99	.824
Anger Control	19.72	7.18	21.82	7.11	1.46
Anger Expression	24.30	3.67	22.76	3.48	5.96**
Authority	4.82	1.22	3.50	.97	5.96**
Self-Sufficiency	3.00	.63	2.84	.73	1.15
Superiority	2.62	.72	2.86	.94	1.42
Exhibitionism	3.96	1.49	2.88	1.11	4.08**
Exploitativeness	1.54	.86	2.04	.60	3.35**
Entitlement	2.80	.85	1.98	.82	4.88**
Vanity	1.90	.54	2.22	1.05	1.90**
Narcissism	20.64	3.12	18.18	4.18	3.22**
Happiness	140.92	15.14	140.60	12.82	.114

*p<0.05 level of significance

**p<0.01 level of significance

Table: 3.2 indicates mean, standard deviations and significant mean differences for middle aged male and female individuals with respect to anger expression, narcissism and their respective dimension and happiness. Here significant mean differences were found only in case of anger expression, where male counterparts possess higher mean magnitude than female subsample. Comparing the mean magnitude, it was also found that female counterparts have higher mean magnitude in anger control, anger reaction and anger out than male ones but male possess higher mean magnitude only in case of anger temperament but no significant difference was found for the above mentioned dimension between these two sample. Significant mean differences were also found in case of authority, exhibitionism, Exploitativeness, entitlement, vanity and overall narcissism. Male subsample possesses higher mean magnitude in case of authority, self-sufficiency, exhibitionism, entitlement and overall narcissism than female ones. On the other pole female have higher scores on vanity, exploitativeness, superiority than their male counterparts. Considering happiness no significant mean differences was between the two subsamples.

Table: 3.3 Means (M), standard deviations (S.D) and the co-efficient of correlation for male middle aged individuals between narcissism corresponding with its related dimensions and happiness

Variables	Male Group (N=50)		Co-efficient of Correlation between narcissism and happiness (df=48)
	Mean	S.D	
Authority	4.82	1.22	.623**
Happiness	140.92	15.14	
Self-sufficiency	3.00	.63	-.171
Happiness	140.92	15.14	
Superiority	2.62	.72	.036
Happiness	140.92	15.14	
Exhibitionism	3.96	1.49	.521**
Happiness	140.92	15.14	
Exploitativeness	1.54	.86	-.241
Happiness	140.92	15.14	
Entitlement	2.80	.85	.387**
Happiness	140.92	15.14	
Vanity	1.90	.54	.021
Happiness	140.92	15.14	
Overall Narcissism	20.64	3.12	.510**
Happiness	140.92	15.14	

*p<0.05 level of significance

**p<0.01 level of significance

Table 3.3 shows that a significant positive correlation exists between authority, exhibitionism, entitlement, overall narcissism and happiness for male middle age group.

Table: 3.4 Means (M), standard deviations (S.D) and the co-efficient of correlation for female middle aged individuals between narcissism corresponding with its related dimensions and happiness

Variables	Female Group (N=50)		Co-efficient of Correlation between narcissism and happiness (df=48)
	Mean	S.D	
Authority	3.50	.97	.201
Happiness	140.60	12.82	
Self-sufficiency	2.84	.73	.234
Happiness	140.60	12.82	
Superiority	2.86	.94	.249
Happiness	140.60	12.82	
Exhibitionism	2.88	1.11	.015
Happiness	140.60	12.82	
Exploitativeness	2.04	.60	.188
Happiness	140.60	12.82	
Entitlement	1.98	.82	.275
Happiness	140.60	12.82	
Vanity	2.22	1.05	.568**
Happiness	140.60	12.82	
Overall Narcissism	18.18	4.18	.382**
Happiness	140.60	12.82	

*p<0.05 level of significance

**p<0.01 level of significance

Table 3.4 shows that a significant positive correlation exists between vanity and overall narcissism along with happiness for female middle age group.

IV. DISCUSSION

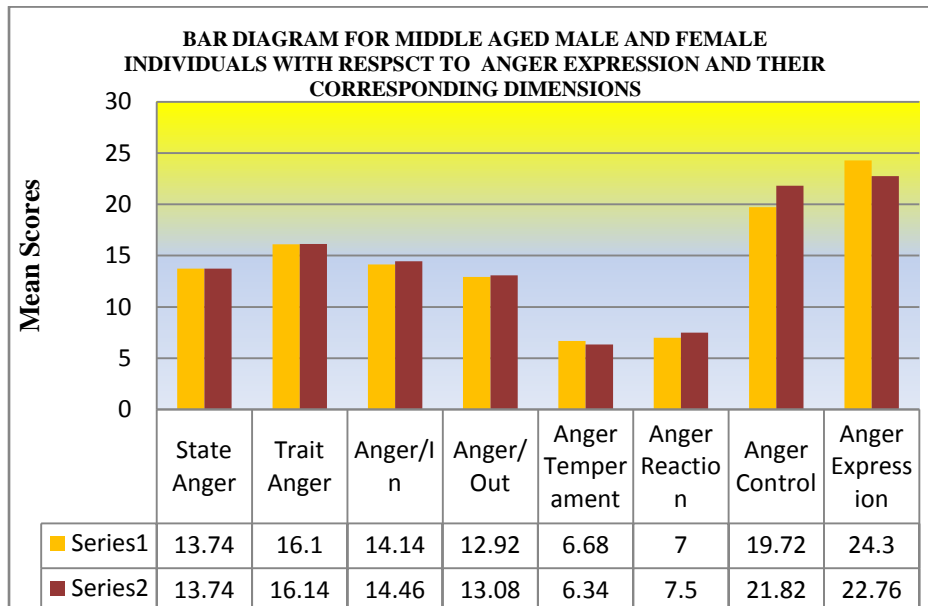
The total set of data was analyzed in terms of the descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviations of all the selected groups of samples. The significant differences and the relationship between the variables were obtained from t-test and co-efficient of correlation in many instances of the selected variables of the present study.

In the present study, significant differences were found to exist between the selected groups (i.e. middle aged male and female) in terms of variables like anger-expression, authority, exploitativeness, entitlement, exhibitionism, vanity and overall narcissism. On the other hand, significant positive correlation exists between happiness and narcissism among two groups namely male and female.

4.1. Anger expression:

Statistical analysis indicates significant mean differences were found only in case of anger expression (Table: 3.1 and 3.2)

Here male (Mean=24.3 S.D=3.67) counterparts possess higher magnitudinal trend than female subsample (Mean=22.76 S.D=3.48). The reason may be that in our societal context, males experience intense angry feelings, which may be suppressed, expressed in aggressive behaviour. Sometimes they manifest anger in many facets of behaviour and are likely to experience extreme difficulty in interpersonal relationships (Spielberger, 1996). Further analysis indicates that, middle aged male individuals also have high score in anger temperament dimension which means that they are quick tempered and readily express their angry feelings with little provocation but they are not necessarily vindictive in attacking others, may be authoritarian and use anger to intimate others (Spielberger, 1996).



Females on the other hand, have lower score in anger expression but higher magnitude in anger control, anger-in and anger-out. The rationale behind such findings pinpoints the fact that this sample tend to invest a great deal of energy in maintaining and preventing the experience and expression of anger. While controlling anger is certainly desirable, the over-control of anger may result in passivity, withdrawal and depression (Spielberger, 1996). Literature also suggests that, those who have high anger control must have low score in anger out dimension (Spielberger, 1996). The findings of the present study actually indicate reverse result. In both dimensions anger in and anger out female subsample possess higher score than male one but as the difference is not significant so it can be commented that in some situation due to societal learning female tend to suppress their feelings but in some situations they may express their anger (Spielberger, 1996).

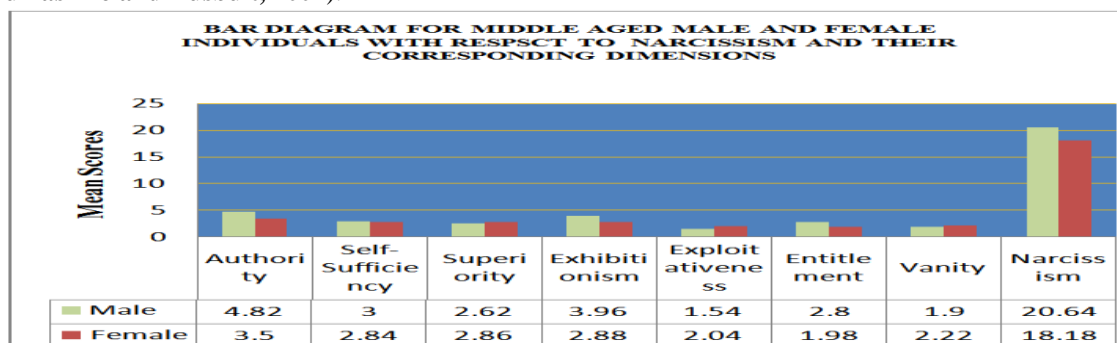
Considering anger reaction it can also be pinpointed that as female possess higher score in this dimension so they are highly sensitive to criticism, perceived affronts, and negative evaluation by others. They may experience intense feelings of anger under such circumstances (Spielberger, 1996).

Lastly, from the viewpoint of state and trait anger it can be said that both male and female middle aged individuals are positions at the similar point.

4.2. Narcissism:

Statistical analysis indicates significant differences in terms of gender variation with respect to narcissism (Table: 3.1 and 3.2). Here significant mean differences were found in case of authority, exhibitionism, exploitativeness, entitlement, vanity and overall narcissism. Male subsample possesses higher mean magnitude in case of authority, self-sufficiency, exhibitionism, entitlement and overall narcissism than female ones. On the other pole female have higher scores on vanity, exploitativeness, superiority than their male counterparts.

Middle aged males (Mean=20.64 S.D=3.12) possess higher scores on narcissism than females (Mean=18.18 S.D=4.18). Tendency to dominate others, being the major earners in the family tends to maximize and protect self-esteem resulting in general feelings of self-worth, intimacy and commitment towards partner (Robins and Beer, 2001). Basically, need for appreciation and admiration from others reduce the level of anxiety, depression and increase subjective well-being among them (Sedikides, Rudich and Gregg, Kumashiro and Rusbult, 2004).

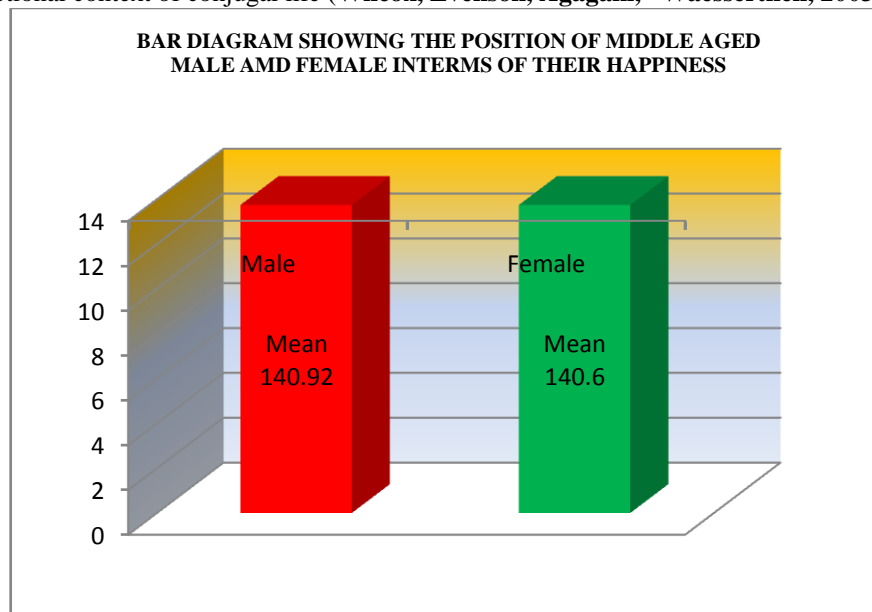


Their concern about social dominance (**Brown and Zeigler-Hill, 2004**) and admiration suggest that they possess high levels of self-esteem that would be positively associated with competition and family support (**Morf, Weir and Davidov, 2000; Ryckman, Thornton and Butler, 1994; Watson, Morris and Miller, 1997**).

4.3. Happiness:

Statistical analysis indicates no significant mean difference between middle aged male and female with respect to happiness (**Table: 3.1 and 3.2**).

Data indicate similar position in subjective well-being for both groups namely, male and female middle aged individuals (Mean=140.92 and S.D=15.14 for males and Mean=140.60 S.D=12.82 for females). Actually, their involvement in life circumstances such as friendships and work status help them to carry on stability in conjugal relationships and erase the negative effects from their core lives (**Easterlin, 2003**). Positive perspective in the emotionally involved life context helps them to have a feeling of bliss in the emotional context of conjugal life (**Wilcox, Evenson, Agasaki, Waassertheil, 2003; Prakash, 1998**).



Basically, marriage for both samples is found to be a source of love, affection, securing romantic fulfillment and companionship (**Cox, 1960**), as a result of which they appear to have higher loading of happiness (**Bowman, 1974**).

4.4 Analysis of Co-efficient of Correlation for the Specific Subsample corresponding to the Selected Variables

Correlation between happiness and narcissism for middle aged male and female sample (Table: 3.1, 3.3 and 3.4)

Results indicate that a positive significant correlation exists between narcissism and happiness in case of both male and female middle aged individuals. The meaning of such findings highlight the fact that self-love is a source of creating happiness in lives. Theoretically, people going for marriage expect fulfillment of certain personal and social needs. A more or less satisfied marital life prompts them possibly to have the sense of security, definitely a sense of high self-esteem, giving rise to the positive terms of conjugality. A happy married life is expected to erase the negative concomitants of personality, like exploitativeness, dysfunctional relationship orientation etc. Middle aged individuals after covering a long pathway in marital relationships are able to enjoy the fragrance of satisfaction of both lives personal and others and this self love, satisfaction actually prompts them to reach the core centre of happiness (**Lewis, 2011**).

V. CONCLUDING COMMENTS:

Middle aged males have higher mean magnitude than female counterparts on

- **Anger Temperament**
- **Anger Expression**
- **Authority**
- **Self-sufficiency**

- **Exhibitionism**
- **Entitlement**
- **Overall Narcissism**

Middle aged females have higher mean magnitude than male counterparts on

- **Anger-Out**
- **Anger Reaction**
- **Anger Control**
- **Superiority**
- **Vanity**

5.1 IMPLICATIONS OF THE PRESENT STUDY:

1. The present findings are of immense value in understanding the mental profiles of two groups of middle aged individuals.

2. The findings are also helpful for individual counseling in particular and family counseling in general if and when they are in requirement.

3. The findings seem to provide general awareness regarding specific socio-emotional status of two groups of middle aged individuals that would prompt us to take certain resolution to help them in required social direction in life, so that nature of their stay will improve qualitatively in the long run.

5.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

No research study is complete in itself. Despite whole hearted efforts, hardly any research in social sciences remains completely free from flaws and short comings. Therefore, it is evident and expected that the present investigation has too left enough room for improvement in the areas of its short-comings. Some of the short- comings as noted by researcher herself are now being discussed:

1. In the context of present investigation, it would have been ideal to conduct a longitudinal study rather than a cross-sectional one to see the changes in certain psychosocial dimensions associated with middle age. However, limitation of funds and time hindered such plans.

2. Another limitation of the study is that besides the urban population, the rural population, too, could be studied in order to obtain an overall perspective of middle aged individuals in different cultures as well as in societies.

3. Besides, the variables of anger expression, happiness, narcissism, personality dimensions, and certain other variables could also be considered for the present investigation. Variables such as depression, loneliness, adjustment, life-satisfaction, locus of control, value system associated with middle aged individuals could be interesting grounds for the investigation.

4. The sample included in this study involved working individuals; if a reasonable segment of house-wives could have been included then the specific findings would have borne more socio-emotional relevance in our culture-specific situation.

5. A larger sample size would have been better to warrant generalizations of the present findings as the present study essentially supports the idiographic research.

6. A number of questionnaires were used in this study. However, questionnaires may invite falsification and faking behaviour on the part of the subjects.

5.3 AREAS OF FUTURE RESEARCH:

After a thorough investigation on the problems and different aspects of the psychology of middle aged individuals, the researcher is of the opinion that the present study seems to have opened newer avenues in the field that remain to be explored.

1. Further research studies in this area may highlight on other aspects of the personality (e.g. locus of control, resilience, emotional intelligence, relationship profile, aggression, value profile) to attain a global psychosocial picture of middle aged individuals.

2. Longitudinal studies may be conducted using the same variables to yield an in depth picture.

3. Middle aged belonging to different socio-economic status may be taken up for future investigation to yield further trend of results in this light.

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