



Commentary

## **Cultivating a strong emotional efficacy and favourable attitude towards marriage: Trajectory to fulfilling sexual wellbeing among married couples**

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**Abstract**

Mental health, as well as sexual pleasure and wellbeing, are vital for having a happier life in marriage. Sexual wellbeing, fuelled by emotional efficacy and a positive attitude, stimulates and supports the abolition of violent sexual behaviours and the adoption of more secure sexual practices. They are at ease with their sexual identity. As a result, it is a cognitive and emotional appraisal. There are several paths to cultivating sexual wellbeing in married couples. Evidence suggests that negative shifts in emotional experiences could bring dissatisfaction in sexual experiences and gradually decrease sexual health. It is not solely the spouses' responsibility; society should adopt steps to promote effective emotional wellbeing and a positive attitude towards marriage. Couples must develop a quality life. According to studies, there is reciprocal functioning connected to attitudes and sentiments about marriages for creating sexual wellbeing. As a result, these articles shed light on cultivating a positive attitude and dealing with emotional components to increase sexual wellbeing.

**Keywords:** Emotional efficacy, Attitude towards marriage, Sexual wellbeing, Young couples

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**Introduction**

When couples marry, they begin their lives with many hopes and calculations.<sup>[1]</sup> They would also search for sustainability and stability in married life, or, in other words, it could be termed as young couples' marriage expectations.<sup>[2,3]</sup> That includes planning for having children and other considerations regarding the welfare of their family. However,

psychological research shows that in order to attain all of the goals mentioned above, a couple's sexual health is just as crucial as their overall health.<sup>[4]</sup>

The Indian community always gives marriages importance to build relationships, and it is a popular social custom to nest a family.<sup>[5]</sup> Socially, most people consider marriage a stepping stone to mark the arrival of adult responsibilities and sexual independence. Also, sexual relationship within marriage is the foundation of a strong marital relationship.<sup>[3]</sup>

However, youngsters, most of the time, before getting into marriage, do have many apprehensions regarding their sexual lives. Even today, openly talking about sex or related aspects before marriage is considered taboo.<sup>[6]</sup> Remember, such perspectives shape their attitudes, beliefs, and affect related to their sexuality.<sup>[7]</sup> The requirement for a favourable way of managing emotions and attitudes towards marriage in order to lead to a happier and healthier marriage has been acknowledged in several research studies in the past.<sup>[8]</sup> Similarly, pleasant feelings about properly managing emotions and favourable marital attitudes impact sexual wellbeing.

Sexual wellbeing is not achieved through one path alone; there are many essential multiple approaches to a healthier sexual life.<sup>[9]</sup> So, with this article, an effort is made to discuss how emotional efficacy and a favourable attitude towards marriage to achieve sexual wellbeing among couples. It adds a new perspective to propagate sexual security and essential behavioural patterns to enhance sexual wellbeing. Also, this article focuses attention on the essential trajectories to accomplish sexual health.

### **How important is sexual wellbeing among young couples?**

Sexual wellbeing, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), is a cornerstone of a person's wholesome health.<sup>[6]</sup> They

continued by stating that sexual health is a must for any country's or people's advancement in society and the economy. It is also an individual's right to experience safe sexual experiences without any force, destruction, or discrimination. WHO rightly quoted that "sexual wellbeing means the eradication of negative consequences about sexual relationships and promoting healthier sexual practices".<sup>[6,8]</sup> To be able to get fruitful sexual wellbeing there should be an environment which promotes sexual wellness, sexual education, quality sexual information, and finally, the ability to access sexual health care.<sup>[9]</sup>

Having mentioned the other aspects of negative thoughts regarding sexual wellbeing, there are many positive advantages to sexual wellbeing among married couples.<sup>[10]</sup> That is as follows:

- i) To feel confident about the marriage's sustainability
- ii) To develop beliefs in their respective partners.
- iii) To increase mutual understanding between partners and avoids violent behaviours towards partners.
- iv) To maintain intimacy.

In the case of married young couples, to lead healthier lives, knowledge on sexual education, quality sexual information and sexual health care is crucial.<sup>[6]</sup> Solely, if individuals are sexually healthy, they propagate a sexually healthy society. Lack of sexual wellbeing increases emotional trauma; they would not be able to forgive themselves for past sexual experiences.<sup>[4]</sup> So, propagating the awareness of sexual wellbeing increases the sustainability of marriage and, more importantly, sustains mental health. Such knowledge is even helpful in keeping away from sexually transmitted diseases.<sup>[11]</sup> Therefore, the promotion of sexual wellbeing is very important for the welfare of young couples.

### Important features of emotional efficacy among couples

Emotional efficacy is referred to as the capacity to properly understand one's own and other people's emotions while also knowing how to manage emotional situations.<sup>[1]</sup> In order to prevent disputes and vulnerabilities, this state of mind reinforces each other's emotional wellbeing.<sup>[12]</sup>

Whereas cultivation of emotional efficacy among couples should be encouraged as it sustains a fine-fettled life. As we know, any relationship formed on the basis of an emotional bond requires the proper execution of emotional behaviours.<sup>[12]</sup> Otherwise, it could lead to relationship disharmony. Most couples get into disputes due to a lack of emotional regulation and no knowledge about their emotional self-concept.<sup>[13]</sup> Such couples cannot even resolve issues among themselves. After that, this would eventually transfer into a disrupted family environment and slowly start engulfing the smooth functioning of their family life.<sup>[14]</sup> In such scenarios, whoever is associated with their family, such as other family members, gets offended, and couples' relationships with other family members also get endangered.

### Reciprocities of emotional efficacy and sexual wellbeing

As mentioned above, emotional liabilities among couples are an essential feature of successful marriages and the wellbeing of couples. One should know how to execute emotional expressions and manage emotional reactivity to avoid possible damage. In the same way, if a person shares a good sexual rapport in marriage, avoid discord. So, here, a chance of reciprocity could take place regarding the functionalities of a marital relationship about emotional efficacy and sexual wellbeing. To have a long-term sexual relationship with their respective partners, it should be well maintained and regularly

practised. That would eventually end up with a good emotional vibe. It may also be due to emotional wellbeing.<sup>[14]</sup> People with a good emotional understanding of their partners would have mutual respect. Then, they would improve communication between the partners. If they get to know each other through nonverbal cues, they don't even require verbal language. If they can regulate their emotions, they will have resilience, sexual comfort, sexual determination, sexual safety, and sexual self-esteem. This mind set allows them to appreciate their partners and avoid any retaliation within their capabilities.<sup>[6]</sup> Sexual experience would bring satisfaction in cases where openness to understanding each other exists.<sup>[15]</sup> This results in an emotional experience. Also, having emotional efficacy implies being more cooperative with sex. The individual would then be honest with their partners about their sexual feelings.<sup>[16]</sup> Therefore, both emotional efficacy and sexual health affect a person's well-being equally, and vice versa.<sup>[14]</sup>

### Cultivation of emotional efficacy to build sexual wellbeing

According to 'Mckay and West in 2016', a couple should follow four steps to improve emotional efficacy among themselves.<sup>[11,13]</sup> They are as follows:

- i) Firstly, whatever emotional situation comes, just consciously be receptive and take it with both hands; in other words, accept it.
- ii) Secondly, they should recognize emotions related to the situation or emotional consciousness.
- iii) Thirdly, the couple should consciously adapt to the emotional situation.
- iv) Fourthly, they should emotionally consider the situation and then give it importance.

These steps mentioned above would help

individuals cultivate effective ways to handle emotional situations fruitfully.

### **Important features of attitude towards marriage among couples**

Attitude towards marriage is nothing but how an individual thinks, feels, and behaves in relation to marriage, which is driven by certain perceptions, experiences, and ideologies about marriage.<sup>[17]</sup> However, conventional thoughts about marriage have undergone changes, and the total number of marriages is lesser compared to the olden days. Yet 80 % still prefer to get married before they are 40 years of age.<sup>[3]</sup> Both couples would have had an attitude towards marriage prior to their marriage. Once they are in the marriage, widened personal experience would make additions and deletions to the perspective of marriages. Such beliefs would have sharpened their outlooks on marriages.<sup>[17]</sup> So, the fate of any marital relationship mostly depends on the positive self-beliefs about the success of one's marriage. That is nothing but having a favourable attitude towards marriage. A person with a favourable attitude towards marriage also feels comfortable towards their spouse and free from any insecurity towards marriage.<sup>[18]</sup> Intentions would also turn positive, and they work in the progression of a successful marriage. It also predicts the person's and couple's characteristics within marriages.<sup>[19]</sup> This would enable people to move their relationship forward. According to Willoughby, Hall, and Luczak's unrealistic positive view, marriages negatively impact marriages. In such scenarios, the couple could come to a halt with a divorce.

### **Reciprocities of attitude towards marriage and sexual wellbeing**

Here, as well, just like emotional efficacy, there is a mutual reaction between attitudes towards marriage and sexual wellbeing. Most individuals expect monogamy in their sexual relationships.<sup>[20,21]</sup> Their attitude makes them

look for intimacy in marriages, which is the basis of any strong relationship. The essential features of sexual wellbeing, like sexual expression, sexual orientation, and gender identity, are built on the attitudes they formed prior to and within marriages.<sup>[4]</sup> It is believed that sexual frequency deteriorates as time passes. However, marital expectations affect sexual frequency. Nonetheless, a favourable attitude towards marriages restores lost legacies of sexual frequency. Interns having a healthier sexual relationship bring positive sensations towards marriages. Hence, a reciprocal effect happens between attitudes towards marriage and sexual wellbeing. Therefore, to improve sexual wellbeing and bring harmony among couples it is important to cultivate a favourable attitude towards marriage.

### **Cultivation of attitude towards marriage to build sexual wellbeing**

To have an upbeat mindset towards marriage, one should begin to feel good about their union despite flaws, accept the circumstances, and take action if opportunities arise.<sup>[21]</sup> Second, take steps to improve the fruitfulness of marriages.<sup>[22,23]</sup> Instead of constantly looking for negatives in a marriage, consider all the positive aspects that might contribute to it.

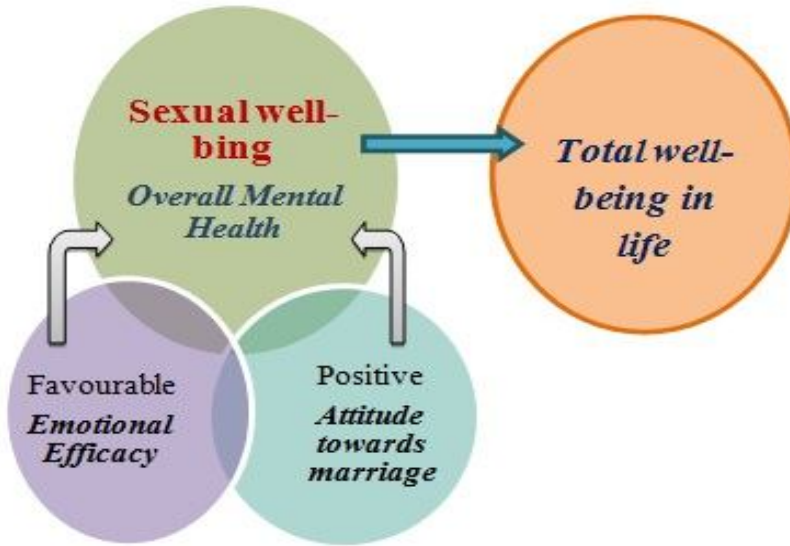
### **Conclusion**

There are several distinct pathways that one might take to achieve sexual wellbeing. Two of these paths are attitudes towards marriage and emotional efficacy. Couples should educate themselves on the advantages of developing positive emotional efficacy and attitudes towards marriage. Although there should be realistic expectations and proper sentiments about marriages<sup>[24]</sup>, unless this produces issues in the married lives of couples, there are clear methods to nurture attitudes and emotional components relevant to marriages. Following these recommendations with prudence could boost sexual wellbeing as well.

In conclusion, there is a considerable interdependence between these three variables: sexual wellbeing, emotional efficacy,

and attitude towards marriage. This topic, which may be explored, may enable future investigations. Figure 1 illustrates this.

Figure 1: Trajectory to sexual wellbeing



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