
CAUSES OF MARITAL DISCORD AMONGST INDIAN COUPLES

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Abstract: The definition of marriage varies in various cultures, but it can be called an institution in which interpersonal relationships (usually intimate and sexual) are acknowledged by the state, by religious authority, or both. Landis writes “marriage and family are not optional; they are necessary, they meet man’s deepest needs, marriage provides a person an opportunity for a secure and a protected satisfaction of his needs for companionship, affection and sexual expression. According to Hinduism, the major religion of India, marriage is not a contract but it is a sacred relationship, being one of the “sanskaras”, it’s the most important transitional point of a Hindu’s life.

But now a days, as the number of divorce cases are increasing day by day, a need to probe into the matter arise. We read people getting divorced on ridiculous issues like squeezing the tooth paste in a particular manner, this obviously a made up reason for that, in the present piece of work an effort was made to find out - the causes and factors for the failure of marriage, the factors that contribute for likelihood of divorce. It was found that amongst the various factors that act as the reason behind the discord- lack of love, mutual respect, emotional maturity, trust and communication- stood out to be the important ones.

Keywords: Causes, factors, Indian couples, marital discor

Introduction: Marriage is the most basic and significant social relationship to humankind. This relationship must be nurtured and maintained for the welfare of all. Without marriage, society will fail. Marriages leads to family, the primary unit of any society, both family and marriage are the pillars on which mankind can survive. Edmund (1955) suggested that marriage should be viewed in terms of the different types of rights it serves; he argued that no one definition of marriage can be applied to all the cultures. He presented a list of ten rights associated with marriage viz. Legalizing the parenthood, cohabitation, cooperation, property rights, etc.

House et al, (1988) writes “marriage and family are not optional; they are necessary, they meet man’s deepest needs, marriage provides a person an opportunity for a secure and a protected satisfaction of his needs for companionship, affection and sexual expression. Although emotionally supportive relationships are strongly and positively associated with physical health and well-being, it is striking that, of all such relationships in contemporary society, marriage as an institution appears to have the greatest positive impact on well-being.

Hinduism sees marriage as a sacred duty, that entails both religious and social obligations. In India, traditionally and from time immemorial, marriage has been hallowed as sacred; and marriage for most Indians is not merely a sacrament but is sacrosanct. Once the couple enters into the bond of marriage, the relationship is considered perpetual—till death does them apart. In other words, marriage used to be for life and it worked as a bulwark against social vulnerabilities. It had an inbuilt system of checks and balances, and roles and priorities were defined by the society for the couple. What distinguished marriage in India from marriage in the West was the sanctity attached to marriage: a sense of perpetual bonding and an element of divinity in it (Jamwal, 2009). A blissful marriage is both stable and peaceful; it abounds with mutual love, compassion and mercy, while disagreement and discord are reduced to a minimum level. It is said that the success of a marriage depends partly on finding the right person and partly on being the right (Ruch, 1970).

Divorce in India is not a new practice but earlier it used to take place in cases of extreme misbehaviours verbal or physical, but now when the scene is changed and such cases have started showing prevalence, we need to talk of why is this happening? Statistics shows that only 1 out of 100 Indian marriages end up to a divorce which is quite low in comparison to America where almost 50% of marriages turning into breakups. The rate of divorce in India was even low in the previous decade, where only 7.40 marriages out of 1,000 marriages were annulled. The divorce rate in Indian villages is even lower in caparison to urban India, (online source), we need to give it a second thought and probe into the matter so that we may put a halt over the increasing rates of divorce.

The reason behind comparative lower rates in the global scenario may be our belief that marriages are said to be made in heaven i.e. we believe they are destined to be the way they are, but then the question is, Is broken marriage a destiny too? The answer lies in our understanding of the relationship, previously marriages lasted for lifetimes because there were better understandings between the people, their lives were balanced and they had whole family to help them adjust, now that we are tuning to be more nuclear families our problems too are turning to be nuclear, no one comes to provide solutions and the things get worsened.

Initially the role of the male and the female counterparts were defined clearly and no confusion of any sort existed, but with increased modernization, westernization, industrialization and increased costs of survival these roles are now overlapping and blurred. Females need to enter the fields of their counterparts and males are required to help their partners to accomplish their dual responsibilities. The problems arise when any one is not doing the required, or may be said expected job, or we may say when expectations from each other are just too high.

The real reason for divorce in many cases is lack of understanding and communication between the spouses. Marriage is an intimate relationship between a man and a woman, if real love and understanding exist between two people difficulties and problems are overcome. Such a union cannot be shattered by temporary problems. Where the husband wife relationship itself is not very deep, problems are magnified and may disintegrate ending in ultimate rupture. The only way to prevent divorce is to encourage a young couple to understand each other and communicate freely so that tensions do not pent up and create irrevocable situations. (Ramachandrappa 2012). Divorce is usually a product of multiple factors - personal, familial and environment at work simultaneously with the changes in legislation, public opinion, weakening of tradition and religion as well as emancipation and economic independence of women, divorces and remarriages are likely to increase.

While trying to find differences amongst urban and rural women of Lucknow district, Fatima (2014) found significant difference among marital adjustment of urban women and rural women. She also found that most of the women (59.0%) having lower socio-economic status had poor marital adjustment while all the women belonging to upper and middle socio-economic status had good marital adjustment.

While tracing the factors behind marital discord in Rajasthan, Chaudhary et al. (2014) found that domestic violence mentally, is the most common factor for divorce, followed by harassment by husband, domestic violence physically, harassment by husband & in-laws, excessive interference of partners, excessive interference of close/distant relatives etc., child and sex were observed as the least accountable factors.

Whatever may be the reason we must try to keep a check on the hiking rate of divorce in our country where marriage is not just another ceremony, but a sacrament, an important samskara of life, this sacred bond should not break just because of small issues. We must learn to respect one another, try to relieve each other of physical or emotional stress, spend more time with each other for better understanding, trust one another, should stand side by side in all the issues whether big or small, we need to avoid it because it's not only two people bonded in the knot, but two families. And not only the lives of two people get effected, but also the lives of parents children and significant others, our children learn lives from us, we need to think multiple times before taking extreme and irreversible actions.

Conclusion: In India marriages are considered a sacred duty, not an opportunity for enjoyment and recreation. It entails religious and social duties for both the partners. It's the sanctity that makes people stay in the relationship- till death separates them. A successful marriage gives love, peace and none the less satisfaction to several needs of both the partners.

Divorce or dissolution of marriage is a legal separation of partners, which is painful, not only for them but, for all other concerned people. It brings emotional turmoil for all, especially for kids (if exist). But it is unavoidable in some circumstances, the observation says likely reasons are role overlapping, lack of understanding and communication, economic independence of women, weakening of traditions, domestic violence(both physical and mental), harassment by husband or in laws, excessive interference, alcoholism, etc.

Learning outcome from this study is that once we know the reasons behind this practice, we may always try to prevent this extreme step. And moreover we 'need' to prevent it as we would never want to face the negative consequences which we have to face after separation, as these have an impact on all the significant people. Thus we should think multiple times before taking extreme and irreversible actions.

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