

# Relationship Among Couples: A Multifactor Analysis

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**Abstract**—Marriage is a partnership of two individuals and this partnership is enriched and enhanced when it allows the personalities involved to grow. Many marriages fail because one partner tries to "swallow" another or when one demands total freedom. We are, therefore, rethinking the conceptual emphasis for the connectors or the communication links which hold people together, that is to say, the meanings, practices and visualizing of quality and stability in long-term relationships. However, there's no single "formula" to a perfect relationship. Many longitudinal research studies undertaken in social psychology have emphasised how people understand their couple relationships as continually developing and lasting agreements (Duck, 2007; Mashek & Aron, 2004). Psychological research more widely has provided very reliable information on relationship satisfaction (Hook, Gerstein, Deterich, & Gridley, 2003).

The present study attempts to study the effective behavioral pattern of couple in their marital relationship. The study aims to find out how far there is understanding between the couples and the impact of their misunderstandings on their marital relationships and satisfaction. The findings have been insightful in the context of Double Income Group (DIG) families where both the husband and wife are busy providing for a comfortable and luxurious lifestyle, and family life balance difficult to sustain, this study could form the basis for a future in depth study.

**Keywords:** romantic behavior, intimacy and assertive conflict resolution, marital satisfaction.

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

In a study from the University of Chicago, researchers found that when a husband has quite a high level of positivity, the probability of lesser conflict in his relationship. Likewise, the way partners respond to each other's good news matters too. In a study published in The Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, researchers found that the way couples react to each other's good news - either with excitement, pride, or indifference—is crucial in forming a strong bond.

Another study offers into how emotional lives are experienced and how everyday, often momentary, 'practices of intimacy' (Jamieson, 1998) combine to sustain relationships. This qualitative dimension of the project draws on data from 50 couples. Fieldwork was completed in summer 2013, with End of Award findings being reported in January 2014.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Changes in personal and sexual commitment are much lauded (Beck & Beck-Gersheim, 1995; Duncombe & Marsden, 1993), vis-a-vis shifts in the configuration of intimacy (Giddens, 1992; Jamieson, 1998), very intimate living and family lives (Jamieson, Morgan, Crow, & Allan, 2006; Williams, 2004) and different relationship-residence formations (S. Duncan & Phillips, 2008; Roseneil & Budgeon, 2004). Binaries traditionally invoked to distinguish between heterosexual and same-sex relationships are no longer fixed (Heaphy, Smart, & Einarsdottir, 2013)

Given that what connects two people together and makes a relationship work is often perceived as 'silent agreements' or 'chemistry', then using this broad spectrum of research senses to listen and hear, to look and see (Back, 2007) is imperative. Decades' worth of research has attempted to pinpoint what, exactly, makes a couple happy. Scientists have followed relationships over the course of years, administered surveys and studied pre-existing data to give the rest of us insightful nuggets of information.

A 2014 Open University study of 5,000 people of all ages in long-term relationships found that childless married and unmarried couples were happiest. A 2012 Cornell University study suggested a strong positive link between waiting over a month to have sex at the beginning of a relationship and perception of long-term satisfaction (at least in women). Of course this does not conclude that it does not happen in men.

## 3. NEED FOR THE STUDY:

Going by the present trends of infidelity, casual attitudes in marriage relationships, it seemed imperative to study the patterns of husband and wife relationship and what makes them tick for many years unlike couples some decades ago.

### 3.1 Objectives of the study

3.1.1 To find out how far there is understanding between the couples.

3.1.1 To find out whether misunderstanding affect their life or marital relationships.

3.1.1 To find out the comfort level of married life in their relationship.

### 3.2 Hypothesis

**Null hypothesis H0:** There is no relationship between the behavioral pattern and marital satisfaction of couples.

**Alternate hypothesis H1:** Younger couples who communicate more, experience higher marital satisfaction.

**Alternate Hypothesis H2:** The behavioral pattern in older couples exhibit higher assertive conflicts.

**Alternate Hypothesis H3:** The romantic behavior of younger couples is higher.

**Alternate Hypothesis H4:** Intimacy levels are lower in couples whose romantic behavior is lower.

## 4. METHODOLOGY.

A Survey has been conducted by stratified sampling method and it was equally distributed to both males and females. It was well explained to the subjects before they filled the questionnaire. The size of the sample is 178 and out of them 89 questionnaires was distributed among married couples for male and 89 questionnaires for female. The questionnaire was an adapted version of Steven's Relationship Questionnaire (SRQ) which contains 78 questions which had to be rated on a Five point scale.

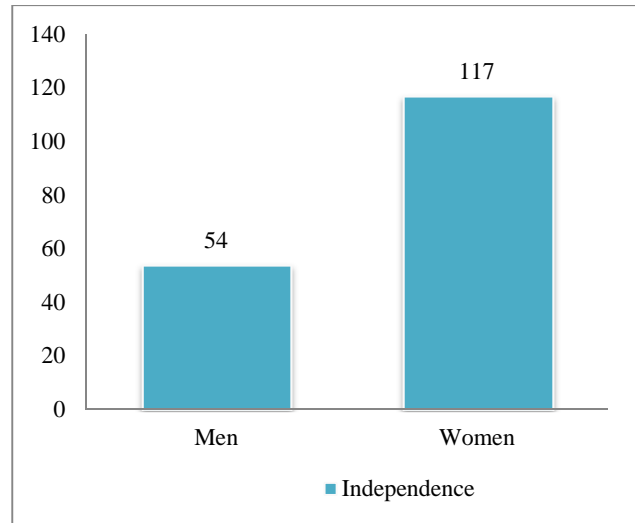
Out of the 78 items 20 were related to I=Independence (Freedom to make decisions and pursue interests and personal growth--with blessing of partner), 4 statements related to E=Equality of Decision-making, etc. 12 statements relating to N=Intimacy (Assertive statements & empathetic listening of feelings, thoughts), 6 statements related to L=Liberated (Non-traditional, "liberated", equalitarian male-female role beliefs and behavior) 23 statements related to A=Assertive Conflict Resolution and 7 statements related to R=Romantic (Attitudes and behavior).

## 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis for the questionnaire on the behavioral pattern of married couples was based on five variables:

1. Independence=I: This scale measures freedom of both partners to make decisions and pursue individual interests and personal growth.

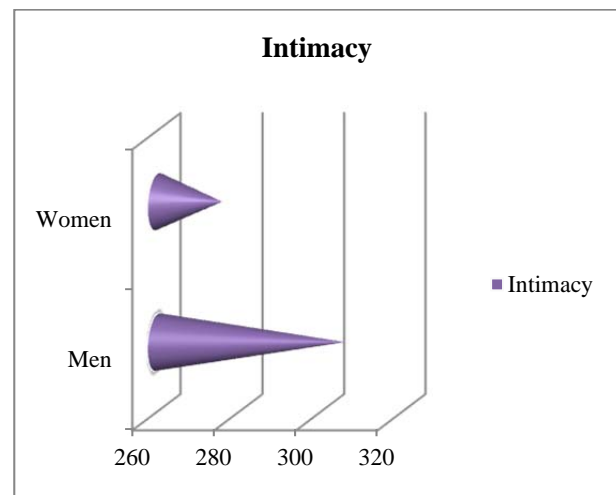
The independence level of the women respondents in the sample is 117 while that of men is 54 showing that women feel freer in taking decisions and pursuing individual interests than men.



**Fig. 1: Exhibiting the independence level among married couples**

2. Intimacy=N: This scale is concerning perceived communication of feelings, self-disclosure, likes and dislikes, and ideas concerning respect, commitment, and common goals.

The analysis for the response of men given to the questions under intimacy category showed 80% and for women it is 72%. This shows that men disclose more about themselves compared to women.



**Fig. 2: Depicting the intimacy level of respondents in their marriage**

3. Romantic Attitudes and Behaviors=R: This scale includes items such as attraction, fantasizing, and special favors.

The result for the romantic attitudes and behaviors criteria is 43% for men and 46% for women. It explains that though the response is almost the same there is a minute difference and that women are more romantic compared to men.

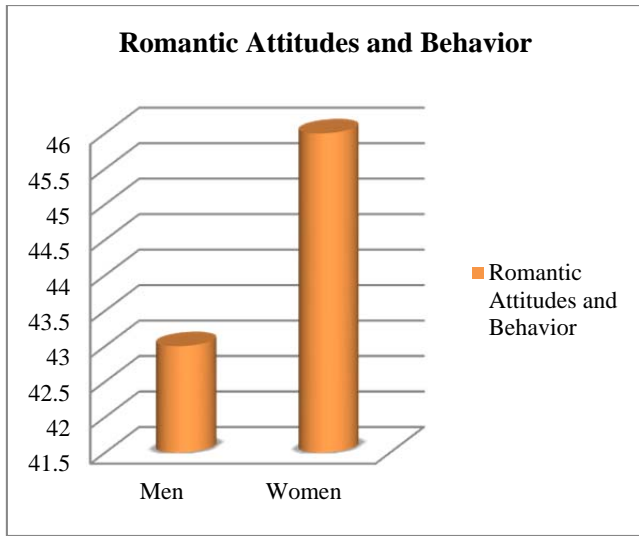


Fig. 3: Explaining the romantic attitudes and behavior of couples.

4. Assertive Conflict Resolution and Communication =A: This scale measures the use of positive, supportive, direct, and empathetic statements during discussions related to various levels of problem resolution. Assertive as opposed to non-assertive or aggressive responses are scored higher. The analysis shows that the response of women for assertive conflicts is 167 and 250 by men. This explains that men tend to be more assertive than women in a marriage relationship.

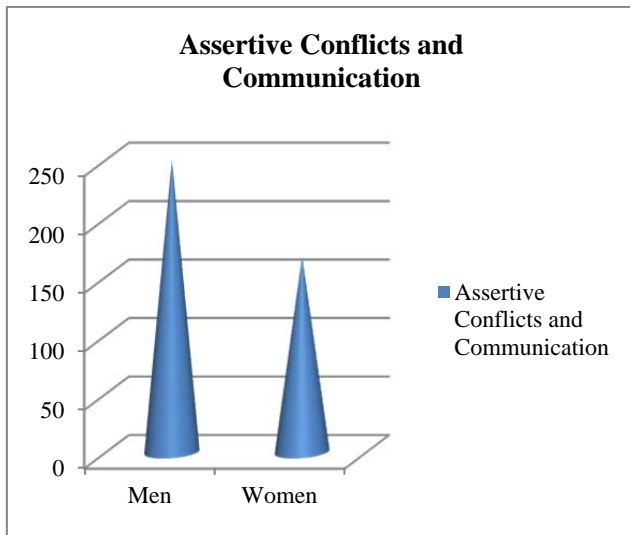


Fig. 4: Showing the Assertive conflicts and Communication levels in married couples.

5. Equality of Decision-Making=E: This scale measures how equal the two partners perceive their decision-making to be.

For this criterion there seems to be a wide variation in the level of equality and decision making because the results for men is 23 and for women is 8.

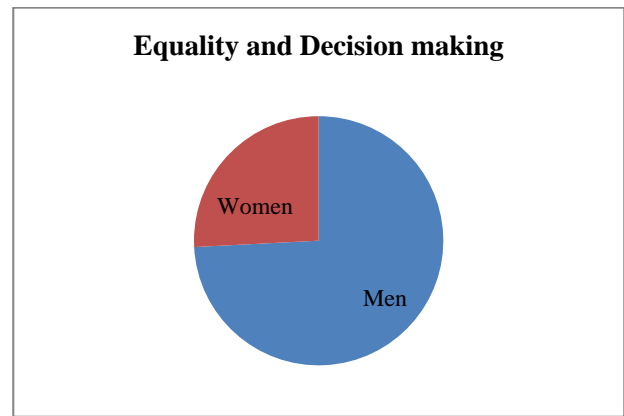


Fig. 5: Exhibiting the Equality and decision making levels in respondents.

6. Liberated Beliefs of Sexual Roles=L: This scale measures non-traditional "liberated", egalitarian beliefs regarding male and female roles within the context of an intimate relationship. It does not include equality of decision-making or communication styles. It focuses upon lack of role specialization. The result concluded from the analysis is 1 for men and -50 for women. This shows that both men and women are not very satisfied with the roles they play as 'men' and 'women'. However, women seem to be more displeased about her sex role.

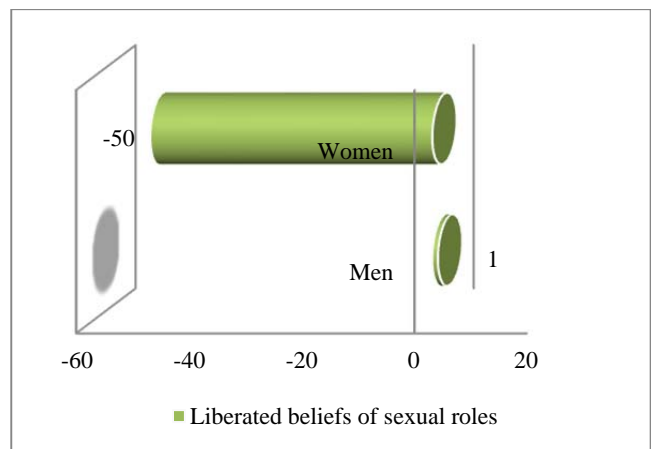


Fig. 6: Depicting the Liberated beliefs and Sexual roles of men and women in Marriage

6. CONCLUSIONS

The present study has thrown light on the behavior roles of couples in marriage. This is supported by very clear evidence in the answers of the couples. Almost all the respondents,

husband and wife, affirmed that they like their life-partners and enjoy spending time with their spouses. But the study, under the independence criteria, proved that most men do not have the same feeling of independence like that of the women. It would seem that the popular view is to have equal independence in marriage, however this seems to address the dependent, or co-dependent spouse's woes and not the larger scope of marriage. Interdependence suits marriage better than independence, co-dependence or dependence. These are varying degrees of dependence, not a measure of equality. One cannot have "equal independence" and interdependence at the same time. And thus it is understandable that men feel less independent.

Another dissatisfied response given was for the questions under the 'liberated beliefs and sexual roles' category. Women's feelings for these questions seem to be lower than the normal. We know that the husband has traditionally held the role of the breadwinner; the wife lived the role of caregiver. However, this scenario has changed today. Today women have the same career opportunities as men, thus the woman must make the decision between pursuing a career or family. Women who pursue a career often have less time for relationships and family. The entry of a child in the family will add to the stress of a woman because men do not face the same choice between career and family and most importantly they are not expected to be the primary caretaker. Thus it becomes more difficult for a woman than a man.

Another remarkable result in the study is the 'equality of decision making' category. It showed that the women are less satisfied with their rights in decision making. We understand that here in India, we still live in a male-dominated society. Though unlike the suppression of the women, today's society leads to women being submissive most of the time.

Women face conflicting desires to be successful, but also to have a family. Factors that may influence their decision include their job satisfaction and personality characteristics. The woman's decision to have a career has an impact, not only on the structure of the marriage, but also the size of the family.

An important point to a happy marriage is to learn to celebrate gender differences, not compete with them. The secret to a happy marriage is selflessness, putting the needs of your spouse ahead of your own needs, helping him or her in little ways.

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