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Marital compatibility, marital satisfaction, family support in arranged marriage and marriage of choice: A comparative study

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Abstract

The study investigated the marital compatibility, marital satisfaction, and family support in arranged marriage and marriage of choice. An exploratory and comparative study was conducted on 200 respondents where 100 couples (50 husbands, 50 wives) living in arranged marriage and 100 couples (50 husbands, 50 wives) living in marriage of choice who were in the age range of 29 to 39 years living at Ananthapuramu district. General information schedule, marital compatibility index (N. K. Chaddha & Vandana Chopra 2012), and marital satisfaction scale (Dr. Kranti K. Srivastava 2020) were used. Results indicated that no significant difference between the couples of marriage of choice and arranged marriage in marital satisfaction and compatibility. Majority of the arranged marriage couples had higher levels of family support than the couples of marriage of choice.

Keywords: Marital compatibility, marital satisfaction, marriage of choice, arranged marriage

Introduction

Marriage is a relatively permanent bond between permissible mates (Robert H. Lowie 1920)^[1]. For ages, our marriage rituals and traditions have been followed and families have embraced the concept of arranged marriages with the impression that 'parents know best'. Because of industrialization, western culture, migration, urbanization, and educational expansion created need and changed direction towards self-choice marriages based on affection and needs which are well-suited for urban living and industrial occupations. These changing trends do not focus on proper foundation of marriage leading to unstable and low quality marital relationships leads to divorce and separation.

This study explores the marital compatibility, marital satisfaction and family support in arranged marriage and marriage of choice. In order to enhance the quality of intimate relationships, strengthen the family system, decrease the divorce/separation studying marital satisfaction and compatibility are very essential.

Methodology

The main focus was to swot on "Marital Compatibility, Marital Satisfaction, Family Support in Arranged Marriage and Marriage of Choice". Purposive random sampling and snowball sampling techniques were selected for the study. The respondents were selected from Anantapuram district, Andhra Pradesh. Total sample consists of 200 respondents, 100 couples living in arranged marriage and 100 couples living in marriage of choice who were in 29-39 years of age and must have completed 3years of married life with or without children.

Results and Discussion

Association between independent variables and dependent variables

From Table 1 the results we observed showed no significant association in age of the couple and marital satisfaction level. Irrespective of age couples in age range of 29-34years showed higher marital satisfaction levels. Alder (2010)^[2] reported that significant relationship was not found between marital satisfaction, age, education levels and courtship. Location of the couple didnot shown any significant association with marital satisfaction levels in couples of marriage of choice which indicates couples living in urban areas showed higher marital satisfaction levels might be because of availability of resources for the couple to lead a healthy lifestyle.

Table 1: Association between independent variables and marital satisfaction in couples of marriage of choice

(N= 100)

S. No		Husband			χ^2	Wife			χ^2
		High	Average	low		High	Average	low	
Age									
1.	29-34 years	22	5	2	0.51 ^{NS}	24	8	2	0.35 ^{NS}
	34-39 years	14	5	2		10	5	1	
Location									
2.	Rural	13	4	0	2.29 ^{NS}	10	7	0	4.14 ^{NS}
	Urban	23	6	4		24	6	3	
Education									
3.	Illiterate	2	0	0	8.58*	2	1	0	6.3*
	Primary	1	0	0		3	2	0	
	Secondary	1	1	1		3	2	1	
	Intermediate	6	1	0		4	3	1	
	Degree	14	6	3		18	5	1	
Postgraduation	12	2	0	4	0	0			
Occupation									
4.	No occupation/ housewife	0	0	0	2.18 ^{NS}	20	4	3	7.23*
	Unskilled	1	0	0		1	1	0	
	Skilled	4	2	1		2	1	0	
	Business	5	2	1		2	2	0	
	Private job	15	4	1		5	4	0	
Government job	11	2	1	4	1	0			
Income									
5.	Below 2lakhs	6	2	1	1.1	14	8	3	6.93*
	2 to 5lakhs	14	5	1		8	4	0	
	Above 5lakhs	16	3	2		12	1	0	
Family type									
6.	Nuclear	26	7	3	0.03 ^{NS}	23	11	2	1.38 ^{NS}
	Joint	10	3	1		11	2	1	
Duration of marriage									
7.	3years	20	4	0	4.77 ^{NS}	18	6	0	3.12 ^{NS}
	More than 3 years	16	6	4		16	7	3	
Family support									
8.	Natal family	24	3	0	10.7**	21	2	1	9.09**
		10	6	4		10	9	2	
		2	1	0		3	2	0	
	In- laws family	16	1	1	7.79*	17	4	1	4.35 ^{NS}
		16	7	1		14	5	1	
		4	2	2		3	4	1	
	Spouse	29	4	0	43.9**	30	6	0	45.2**
		7	6	1		4	6	0	
		0	0	3		0	1	3	

**Significant at the 0.01 level *Significant at the 0.05 level NS – Non-Significant

A positive significant association was observed between education at 0.05 level and marital satisfaction levels. From the data it is evident that husbands and wives who have completed their graduation showed higher marital satisfaction levels compared with other couples. Higher educational levels may increase the communication skills, emotional intelligence, values and shared goals, problem-solving abilities, stable financial situations which impacts the marital happiness. Mihalcea *et.al* (2013) [11] found that married couples of elementary graduates obtained higher score and dyadic adjustments in marriage. The study demonstrated that education levels influences marital status of the couple.

No significant association between occupation and marital satisfaction in husbands and positively significant at 0.05 level in wives of marriage of choice. This implies that couples in private and government jobs were satisfied than unemployed, unskilled, skilled, business and home makers. Financial

stability strengthens the marital relationship. A study by Beegam *et.al* (2017) [3] found contrary results that single working couple have better marital adjustment than dual-working couple where as Gupta and Nafis (2014) [4] found that working and non-working women did not differ from each other on marital adjustments. Income of the couples didnot show any significant association in husbands but showed positively significant association in wives of marriage of choice couples. It was found that women who earned above 5lakhs and men who earned above 5lakhs showed a significant positive relation with their marital satisfaction levels. Similar findings were stated by Renanita and Lukito (2018) [5] found that marital satisfaction in working wives was influenced by financial relations. Wives who earned above 2lakhs had higher marital satisfaction compared to men. No significant association was observed between family type and marital satisfaction of couple of marriage of choice.

Majority of the husbands and wives of nuclear family showed higher marital satisfaction levels than couple from joint family. Contrary to these study findings Inmozhi Mangai (2019) [6] showed couples from joint family as well as nuclear families had higher satisfaction levels indicating no significant difference between the levels of couple's satisfaction in joint and nuclear families. He also found that marital satisfaction score of nuclear family was slightly higher.

Duration of marriage didnot associated with marital satisfaction levels. This implies that couples with three years of marriage duration were more satisfied than other couples. Ghoroghi *et.al* (2015) [8] found no correlation between length of marriage and marital adjustments remained fairly overtime

leading to higher marital satisfaction levels. All the components of family support- natal, in-laws (husbands) and spouse were significantly associated with marital satisfaction levels of couples of marriage of choice. The wives of marriage of choice had no significant association with the marital satisfaction. This implies that higher the parental support, higher the in-laws support and higher the spouse support results higher was the marital satisfaction levels in couples of marriage of choice. Similar findings were found by the Lioe (2023) [7] the study found that marital commitment and family support plays a vital role in marital satisfaction in couples who have been married for more than 5years. Simultaneously, the length of marriage also predicts marital satisfaction.

Table 2: Association between independent variables and marital satisfaction in couples of arranged marriage

(N=100)

S.NO		Husband			χ^2	Wife			χ^2
		High	Average	low		High	Average	low	
1.	Age								
	29-34 years	13	11	3	0.57 ^{NS}	16	9	5	1.29 ^{NS}
34-39 years	13	7	3	9		9	2		
2.	Location								
	Rural	6	8	5	8.009*	5	8	6	10.5**
Urban	20	10	1	20		10	1		
3.	Education								
	Illiterate	0	1	2	29.1**	0	2	4	34.9**
	Primary	1	1	1		0	5	1	
	Secondary	0	2	2		0	2	1	
	Intermediate	2	6	1		4	3	1	
	Degree	15	6	0		20	5	0	
Postgraduation	8	2	0	1		1	0		
4.	Occupation								
	No occupation/ housewife	0	0	0	43.3**	12	10	5	23.3**
	Unskilled	0	0	3		0	0	2	
	Skilled	0	5	1		1	2	0	
	Business	2	6	2		1	3	0	
	Private job	11	5	0		8	1	0	
Government job	13	2	0	3		2	0		
5.	Income								
	Below 2lakhs	0	4	4	21.3**	12	10	7	6.7*
	2 to 5lakhs	9	9	2		10	5	0	
Above 5lakhs	17	5	0	3		3	0		
6.	Family type								
	Nuclear	13	14	6	7.17*	13	14	6	4.5 ^{NS}
Joint	13	4	0	12		4	1		
7.	Duration of marriage								
	3years	10	11	2	2.63 ^{NS}	12	9	2	1.01 ^{NS}
More than 3 years	16	7	4	13		9	5		
8.	Family type								
	Natal family	24	13	1	23.6**	25	9	1	37.8**
		2	5	3		0	9	3	
		0	0	2		0	0	3	
	In –laws family	22	10	1	29.1**	24	7	0	46.9**
		4	8	2		1	11	3	
		0	0	3		0	0	4	
	Spouse	21	12	0	64.2**	22	3	0	66.7**
		5	15	0		3	15	1	
0		1	6	0		0	6		

**Significant at the 0.01 level *Significant at the 0.05 level, NS – Non-Significant

Association between independent variables and marital satisfaction in couples of arranged marriage was reported in the above Table 2. The age of the couples in an arranged marriage was shown to have no significant association with the of marital satisfaction levels. The couples in age range of 29-34 years and 34-39 years showed higher marital satisfaction levels. Location of the couple showed a highly

significant association with marital satisfaction levels. Couples living in urban areas may have better infrastructure, including health care facilities, education and employment opportunities and different life style practices than the couples living in rural areas. A positive significant association was found with the education level of couple in arranged marriage and marital satisfaction. It is evident that husbands and wives

who have completed their graduation and post graduation showed higher marital satisfaction levels compared with other couples. As the educational status influence the marital satisfaction of the couples. Interestingly occupation of the couple showed a significant association with marital satisfaction levels this implies that couples with private and government jobs were satisfied in their marital relationship when compared with unemployed, unskilled, skilled, business and home makers. Interestingly the income of the couples showed a significant association with the marital satisfaction whereas couples who earned above 2 lakhs had higher marital satisfaction than other couples. No significant association was found between husband's family type and marital satisfaction levels but wives had a positive significant association with family type marital satisfaction levels. Wives may prefer independence and autonomy, privacy, flexibility, fewer conflicts with in-laws, to increase their bond with the spouse. It was found that couples of nuclear family showed a higher marital satisfaction levels than couple from joint family. Results related to duration of marriage of the couple in arranged marriage showed no significant association with marital satisfaction levels. The increase in duration of

marriage results more marital satisfaction. The association between family supporting system and marital satisfaction of couples living in arranged marriage had a positive significant association. All the components of family support- natal, in-laws and spouse were significantly related with marital satisfaction levels of couples of marriage of choice. This implies that higher the parental support, higher the in-laws support and higher the spouse support higher was the marital satisfaction levels in couples of arranged marriage. As the wives of the arranged marriage receive more support from natal and in-laws than the spouse support. As the supportive family creates a nurturing environment that positively influences the couples emotional well-being, shared responsibilities, encouragement, social connection, conflict resolution. Badgular C. O. (2014) ^[9] Love marriages wives show high degree of marital love than their husbands. A study by Arif et.al (2015) ^[10] found that both men and women were more satisfied in arranged marriage and marriage of choice with parental acceptance than individuals in marriage by choice without parental acceptance after controlling for their attachment styles.

Table 3: Association between independent variables and marital compatibility in couples of marriage of choice (N=100)

S.NO		Husband			χ^2	Wife			χ^2
		High	Average	low		High	Average	Low	
Age									
1.	29-34 years	22	5	2	2.04 ^{NS}	23	9	2	0.13 ^{NS}
	34-39 years	12	7	2		10	5	1	
Location									
2.	Rural	11	6	0	3.47 ^{NS}	10	7	0	3.34 ^{NS}
	Urban	23	6	4		23	7	3	
Education									
3.	Illiterate	1	1	0	8.23*	2	1	0	5.71*
	Primary	1	0	0		3	2	0	
	Secondary	1	1	1		3	2	1	
	Intermediate	5	2	0		4	3	1	
	Degree	14	6	3		17	6	1	
	Post graduation	12	2	0		4	0	0	
Occupation									
4.	No occupation/ housewife	0	0	0	7.15*	19	5	3	6.08*
	Unskilled	1	0	0		1	1	0	
	Skilled	2	4	1		2	1	0	
	Business	5	2	1		2	2	0	
	Private job	15	4	1		5	4	0	
	Government job	11	2	1		4	1	0	
Income									
5.	Below 2lakhs	4	4	1	5.37*	14	8	3	7.7*
	2 to 5lakhs	13	6	1		7	5	0	
	More than 3 years	17	2	2		12	1	0	
Family type									
6.	Nuclear	25	8	3	0.22 ^{NS}	22	12	2	1.81 ^{NS}
	Joint	9	4	1		11	2	1	
Duration of marriage									
7.	3years	18	6	0	4.04 ^{NS}	17	7	0	2.95 ^{NS}
	More than 3 years	16	6	4		16	7	3	
Family type									
8.	Natal family	22	5	0	8.42*	21	2	1	10.93**
		10	6	4		10	9	2	
		2	1	0		2	3	0	
	In- laws family	15	2	1	6.69*	16	5	1	3.52 ^{NS}
		15	8	1		14	5	1	
		4	2	2		3	4	1	
	Spouse	28	5	0	44.8**	29	7	0	43.93**
		6	7	1		4	6	0	
		0	0	3		0	1	3	

**Significant at the 0.01 level *Significant at the 0.05 level NS – Non-Significant

The results depict that age, location doesn't show a significant association with marital compatibility in couples of marriage of choice. This implies that couples in the age range of 24-34 years living in urban areas showed higher marital compatibility levels. As the cultural backgrounds, social environment, different interests and hobbies, career opportunities may influence the marital compatibility. Education levels, occupational status and income levels of the couples found a positive significant association with the marital compatibility of the couples. Couples having graduation degree, working in government and private job, with the income more than 5 lakhs are showing high marital compatibility levels. Education and occupational status may influence the better financial stability, successful career, communication skills, social networks, shared values and

goals between the couples.

Family type and duration of marriage of the couple's were not associated with the marital compatibility levels. Couples from nuclear families who have been married for below 3 years were showing more marital compatibility levels. Couples who have natal, in-laws, and spouse support were more having marital compatibility levels. A study by Lavner *et al* (2016) [13] studied on compatibility quotient and its relationship with marital satisfaction. The results showed that couples with high consciousness, emotional stability, openness and agreeableness were related to the compatibility. Another study conducted by Zewdu Garma Shifaw (2022) [12] also found that marital communication moderates the relationship between marital conflict, resolution and marital satisfaction.

Table 4: Association between independent variables and marital compatibility in couples of arranged marriage

(N=100)

S. NO		Husband			χ^2	Wife			χ^2
		High	Average	low		High	Average	Low	
Age									
1.	29-34 years	13	11	3	0.52 ^{NS}	13	12	5	0.68 ^{NS}
	34-39 years	13	7	3		8	10	2	
Location									
2.	Rural	6	8	5	8.01*	4	9	6	10.04**
	Urban	20	10	1		17	13	1	
Education									
3.	Illiterate	0	1	2	29.3**	0	2	4	33.4**
	Primary	1	1	1		0	5	1	
	Secondary	0	2	2		0	2	1	
	Intermediate	2	6	1		2	5	1	
	Degree	15	6	0		18	7	0	
Postgraduation	8	2	0	1	1	0			
Occupation									
4.	No occupation/ housewife	0	0	0	43.3**	8	14	5	25.8**
	Unskilled	0	0	3		0	0	2	
	Skilled	0	5	1		1	2	0	
	Business	2	6	2		1	3	0	
	Private job	11	5	0		8	1	0	
	Government job	13	2	0		3	2	0	
Income									
5.	Below 2lakhs	0	4	4	21.2**	8	14	7	9.32**
	2 to 5lakhs	9	9	2		10	5	0	
	Above 5lakhs	17	5	0		3	3	0	
Family type									
6.	Nuclear	13	14	6	7.14*	11	16	6	3.39 ^{NS}
	Joint	13	4	0		10	6	1	
Duration of marriage									
7.	3years	10	11	2	2.63 ^{NS}	10	11	2	1.02 ^{NS}
	More than 3 years	16	7	4		11	11	5	
Family type									
8.	Natal	24	13	1	23.6**	21	13	1	33.3**
		2	5	3		0	9	3	
		0	0	2		0	0	3	
	In- laws	22	10	1	29.4**	20	11	0	40.9**
		4	8	2		1	11	3	
		0	0	3		0	0	4	
	Husband	21	2	0	64.6**	19	6	0	62.01**
		5	15	0		2	16	1	
		0	1	6		0	0	6	

**Significant at the 0.01 level *Significant at the 0.05 level NS – Non-Significant

Association between couples independent variables and marital compatibility in couples of arranged marriage was given in Table 4. The results showed that age has no significant association with the marital compatibility levels.

Location, education, occupation, income, was significantly associated with marital compatibility in couples of arranged marriage. This implies that couples in the age range of 24-34 years living in urban areas having a graduation degree,

working in government and private job, with the income more than 5lakhs are showing high marital compatibility levels. Husband's type of family had a significant association with the marital compatibility whereas wives had no significant association. This may be influenced by the traditional gender roles, decision-making authority, and societal expectations. There was no significant association between duration of marriage and marital compatibility. Couples from nuclear families who have been married for more than 3years were showing more marital compatibility levels. Couples who have natal, in-laws, and partner support were having more marital compatibility levels. Support from families and spouse can contribute a healthy and harmonious marriage life.

Conclusion

The findings of the present study revealed that the significant difference was not observed between the couples of marriage of choice and arranged marriage. Higher marital compatibility levels were observed in couples of marriage of choice than couples of arranged marriage. Communication, flexibility and marital conflict were more in wives of marriage of choice than wives of arranged marriage. Higher levels of mutual respect were observed in wives of arranged marriage than marriage of choice. Husbands in marriage of choice showed higher communication levels, flexibility, marital conflict and mutual respect towards their wives than the husbands of arranged marriage. Couples with the consent of parents receive maximum support from the family than the couples of marriage of choice. Marriage of choice couples had more support from spouse than the couples of arranged marriage. The study highlights the couples having higher education levels, with a secured job and good salary with family and spouse support having good communication levels, flexibility, healthy marital conflict and mutual respect supports satisfaction and marital compatibility in couples rather than type of marriage. The commitment towards each other in marriage leads to a healthy and satisfied marriage life.

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