

Case Study

## Marital Interaction: A Case Study from Chattisgarh

Dr. Ankita Deshmukh<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. Bansh Gopal Singh<sup>2</sup>

### ABSTRACT

Purpose of this study was to find out whether there exists relationship between Parental attachment, support, income and negative Marital interaction. In this study 103 married wives were included in the study using systematic random sampling. The tools used were sociodemographic data sheet, parental home attachment scale and parental support scale and marital interaction scale (Deshmukh & Singh, 2014). The results were analyzed using regression. The results of the study indicate that the predictor variable Parental Attachment, Parental support and Parental income do not significantly predict negative marital interaction.

*Keywords: Marital interaction, Parental income, Parental support, Parental Attachment*

Marriage is one of the ancient, closest, and most important complex human relationships. It is the base of a society since it results in the formation of family. Its most important characteristic is that it gives social acceptance or sanction to human relationships in the form of social acceptance of sexual union of the opposite sexes.

### MARRIAGE

Marriage in hindi refers to “udhaah” which means to take “vadhu” into “var’s” house (Basu & Akbar, 2005). Marriage is legal, religious and social union of two opposite sexes in to a family life. The main objective of marriage includes begetting children, raising providing financial and social support to children and spouse (Gupta & Sharma, 2009). Marriage is essential for human’s deepest needs for companionship, affection and sexual expression (Singh, 2008). Marriage has been defined as a relationship between man and woman which involves mutual dependence and obligation (Anand, Shekhar, Jayakumari & Somasundaram, 2009). Marriage is a social, religious, spiritual, and legal union of individuals, where interpersonal and sexual relationships are accepted by state and religion (Dhar, 2013). Marriage in India is determined by caste system, dowry payments, age, order of birth among siblings and arrangement of primary and monetary needs of family and other systems to which the couple belong (Sheela & Audinarayana, 2003).

Hence, we can say that marriage is an entrance of two opposite sexes to enter into family life which is accepted by social, religion, and law. Husband, wife and children are ought to be in group which is supported by religion or law and they should get social economic functions,

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, St.Thomas College, Bhilai, Chhattisgarh.

<sup>2</sup>Vice Chancellor, Pt. Sunderland Sharma open University, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh

\*Corresponding Author

Received: July 4, 2023; Revision Received: December 14, 2023; Accepted: December 18, 2023

## **Marital Interaction : A Case Study from Chattisgarh**

and bear their socialization. Marriage provides a secure and protected satisfaction of his needs for companionship, affection and sexual expression (Coleman, 1964).

Marriage is good for mental and physical health of the spouses (Burman & Mangolin, 1992; Waite & Gallagher, 2000). In a mutually satisfying long-term couple relationship, the partners are protected from the negative effects of life stresses, to some extent, while in distressed relationships partners are more vulnerable to the negative effects of stress (Ditzen, Hoppmann & Klump, 2008).

Marriage may be stable or unstable depending upon the nature of interaction between the partners. A stable marriage is one in which relationship ends with the death of one of the spouses. On the other hand, divorce and separation define an unstable marriage (Corsini & Auerbach, 2000; Kluwer, 2010).

There are various factors which affect the stability of marriage. Interaction between husband and wife is an important phenomenon which determines the nature and stability of marriage. A good interaction may enhance the marital satisfaction, and hence stability of marriage. Marital satisfaction also determines the nature and quality of interaction between husband and wife and therefore both affect each other.

### ***Marital Interaction***

Newcomb, Turner and Coners (1965) define interaction as a process which refers not just to what goes on with each of the interacting person but also to what goes on between them. Accordingly marital interaction refers to what goes on within and between husband and wife. Epstein and Baucom (1989) have outlined three specific features of marital interaction: behavioral, cognitive, and affective.

It is observed that major cause of marital conflicts in India, is dowry system and in-laws in joint family system. Caste system is also an important factor for marriage in India (Despande, 2002; Gupta, 2000; Mayer, 1997; Srinivas, 1996) and one who defies this system faces social rejection (Dhar, 2013; Sommer et al., 2001), psychological fear, decision to go ahead in a social context (Dhar, 2013). Wallerstein and Blakeslee (1995) found that happy couples have mutual respect, enjoy and cherish each other's company as compared to unhappy couples. Happy couples are close and compatible (Olson, Olson Sigg, & Larson, 2008).

Marital distress, a major personal and social problem of present era is a result of dysfunctional marital interaction. Marital interaction of distressed couples has three specific features. Cognitions are distorted and or in appropriate affection are mixture of emotions as anger, depression, anxiety, and jealousy. Marital distress is rising at an alarming rate in the west. Though, marital conflict was not a serious problem in India, however it is taking a serious shape at present.

Negative marital interaction is found more in the interaction of distressed or unhappy couples as compared to non-distressed or happy couples (Griffin, 2003; Gottman, 1979; Hahlweg, Revenstorf & Schindler, 1984; Heyman, 2001; Levenson & Gottman, 1983; Margolin & Wampold, 1981; Rausch, Barry, Hertel & Swain, 1974; Revenstorf, Hahlweg, Schindler & Vogel, 1985; Schaap, 1982, Ting-Toomey, 1982). The distressed or dissatisfied couples are more negative in their attitudes and behavior (Buehler & Gerard, 2002; Fiorito, 1977; Gottman, 1979; Schaap, 1984). Non-distressed couples are found to be more

## Marital Interaction : A Case Study from Chattisgarh

positive. Positivity is reflected in couples through emotional expression, behavior exchange, and problem solving behavior and also in verbal behavior (Gottman, 1979).

Rosen, Myers and Hattie (2004) found that love and loyalty to the spouse results in marital satisfaction. Feeney (2002) found that increase in attachment leads to increase in marital satisfaction. Kazdin (2000) and Greef (2000) found that good communication between couples results in good marital satisfaction. Gupta (1992) and Greef (2000) found that negative correlation between self-disclosure and marital satisfaction. Gottman (1998) found that lack of acceptance of spouse towards one another decreases marital satisfaction. Researchers over last 40 years have established the importance of not only behavior economics but also cognitive, meditational, and affective aspects of dyad interaction (Baucom & Epstein, 1990).

### *Rationale of the Study*

The present study's problem identification has been generated through extensive briefs of sociologist, counsellors and advocates working in the area of marital dysfunctioning. India is constantly changing and the western ideology is influencing Indian Culture. Earlier, the traditional Indian Parents taught their daughter the strict rules set by society for "Do's" and "Don'ts" to their daughter. The sociologist, counselors and advocates in their subjective introspection of the rising negative interaction of the Marital dyad suggest that the attachment and support which the daughter receives from her parents is the reason behind the above rising dissatisfaction.

So, the present study explores whether the parental attachment, Support and Income result in negative marital interaction.

## METHODOLOGY

### *Design*

The aim of the present study was to examine the marital interaction of distressed participants and the factors affecting it.

Marital Interaction which was **criterion variable** in the study, included all the possible negative interactions of husband and wife ranging from in-laws problems to children upbringing issues, interpersonal problems to behavioral problems.

**Predictor variables** included parental support, attachment with maternal home, parental income (of wife), birth order, education, and tenure of marriage. Hence the design is correlational in nature.

### *Sample*

The universe of the study consisted of 500 dissatisfied participants or more appropriately distressed participants. The sample frame included all the dissatisfied married legal wives. The target group included dissatisfied wives who enrolled themselves for marital counseling due to dissatisfaction in their marital relationship. The sample size included 103 marital counseling receiver's group.

### *Sampling Technique-*

The sample was selected through systematic random selection.

## **Marital Interaction : A Case Study from Chattisgarh**

### ***Inclusion Criteria***

There was no age bar or any inclusion or exclusion criteria in the span of marriage for the participants. The participants were selected on the basis that they were able to report their problems verbally and were sane enough to understand and reply to the researcher. It was also made sure that the participants were actually dissatisfied and were not faking. Only those participants were included who were raised by their biological parents.

In order to minimize the self-selection bias of having participants volunteer, it was decided to recruit the couples by using a person-to-person appeal. A list of all the currently enrolled marital counseling participants was used as a starting point. Every third wife on the list was interviewed until the necessary number of participants was obtained.

In order to minimize pre selection bias, the referring therapists were asked to refer all couples in the appropriate dissatisfaction level, regardless of presenting marital problems. Therapists were requested to include only those couples who want to mend their relationship and were not forced by relatives or any other person of significance in considering a couple for referral.

### ***Exclusion Criteria***

The only criteria for exclusion were inability to understand the language of researcher or the inability to reciprocate or talk, have reached satisfaction level after counseling, were just taking advantages of free services provided of counseling and were actually not having marital problem in the recording period.

The researcher acted as an independent investigator in this study and had no contact with these couples as a therapist.

### ***Sample Size***

One hundred three participants belonged to Marital Counseling Group. They were randomly selected from Bhilai Steel Plant Counselling Centre and Police Counselling (Bhilai).

### ***Tools***

The aim of the research was to measure marital interaction, maternal home attachment and parental support of participants.

Socio-demographic data sheet was made by the researcher.

Marital Interaction Scale was developed to assess negative marital interaction of participants and marital home attachment and parental support which participants received from their maternal home were also constructed by the researcher.

### ***Procedure***

The participants who had enrolled themselves for marital therapy in various counseling centers were contacted. Written permission was obtained from Bhilai Steel Plant Counselling Centre and oral permission was granted from Police Counselling Cell (Bhilai). After the completion of counseling session, the clients were introduced to the study by the researcher, all the participants who were approached to take part in the study agreed. They were further interviewed by the researcher for required variables individually with only client and researcher in the room.

## Marital Interaction : A Case Study from Chattisgarh

The researcher filled the data obtained in the scale. Each and every detail was cross checked with the help of concerned Counselor.

### Objectives

1. To explore whether marital interaction is determined by parental support in wives.
2. To explore whether marital interaction is determined by attachment with maternal home in wives.
3. To explore whether marital interaction is determined by wife's parental income.

### Hypotheses

- It is hypothesized that parental support of wives would predict the marital interaction.
- It is hypothesized that attachment with maternal home of wives would predict the marital interaction.
- It is hypothesized that parental income of wives would predict the marital interaction.

### Analysis

For the statistical Analysis, SPSS version 17 was used. Stepwise Regression Analysis was used to regress predictor variable over criterion variable.

## RESULT

The "Marital Counseling Receiving Participants" ranged in age from 19 to 61 years, and mean aged 34.34 years. The age of the husband ranged from 21 years to 65 years. These participants had been married an average of 14.04 years, ranging from 1 year to 37 years. The age at the time of marriage ranged from 12 to 30 years and the mean age at marriage was found to be 20.04 years for the participants.

*Table no.1: Frequency and percentage of different variables of marital counseling receivers*

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Marriage before legal age	37	35.92
First marriage	98	95.14
Second marriage	3	2.9
Gudawat marriage	2	1.9
Love marriage	0	0
Forced marriage (by parents)	2	1.9
<b>Religion</b>		
Hindu	98	95.1
Christians	3	2.9
Muslim	2	1.9
<b>Children</b>		
Childless couples	16	15.5
Child couples	87	84.4
Male child couples	67	65.0
couples without male child	36	34.9
Participants who had 1 male child	41	39.8
Participants had 2 male children	24	23.3
Participants had 3 male children	2	1.9
Female child couples	62	60.1
had no female child	41	39.8

### Marital Interaction : A Case Study from Chattisgarh

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
participants had 1 female child	43	41.7
participants had 2 female children	16	15.5
participants had 3 female children	3	2.9
<b>Family type</b>		
Joint family	48	46.60
Nuclear family	55	53.398
<b>Education level (of wife)</b>		
Uneducated	11	10.7
Primary educated	60	58.3
Graduate	18	17.5
Post graduate	14	13.6
<b>Education level (of husband's)</b>		
Uneducated	2	1.9
Primary educated	54	52.4
Graduate	35	34.0
Post graduate	5	4.9
Diploma holder or Professional course degree holder	7	6.8
<b>Income (of wife)</b>		
0	81	78.6
1-10000	16	15.5
10001-20000	5	4.9
20001-30000	1	1.0
<b>Income (of husband)</b>		
0	3	2.9
1-10000	36	35
10001-20000	30	29.1
20001-30000	19	18.4
30001-40000	8	7.8
40001-50000	5	4.9
50001-60000	1	1
60001-70000	0	0
70001-80000	0	0
80001-90000	0	0
90001-100000	1	1

Thirty-seven (35.92%) participants were married before the legal age of 18. Three of the marriages in this group were the second marriage of the husband and therefore the participants were second wife of their husband but legal, the first wife died or divorced as per the community tradition. Two of these participants were widow and were remarried by the family. Two of the marriages were “Gudawat” marriage native to the area of Chattisgarh. There was reportedly no “Love Marriage” or “Intercaste Marriage”.

Ninty eight (95.14%) of the participants were in their first marriages. Ninety-eight participants were Hindu, 3 couples were Christians and 2 were Muslim. In this sample 16 childless participants and 87 participants who had children. The group consisted of 41 participants who had 1 male child, 24 participants had 2 male children, 2 participants had 3 male children and 36 were without male child. 43 participants had 1 female child, 16

### Marital Interaction : A Case Study from Chattisgarh

participants had 2 female children, 3 participants had 3 female children and 41 had no female child. Forty-eight (46.60%) participants belonged to joint family and 55 (53.398%) participants belonged to nuclear family. Eleven participants were uneducated, 60 participants were primary educated, 18 were graduate and 14 were post graduate. The education of husband of the group consisted of 2 uneducated, 54 primary educated, 35 graduate, 5 post graduate and 7 were Diploma holder or Professional course degree holder. The income of husband ranged from 0 to 100000. The income of participants ranged from 0 to 30,000. Eighty-one (78.6%) were financially dependent on their husband.

**Table.2: Parental Income Analysis of Marital Interaction**

Predictor Variables	B coefficient	$\beta$	Explained variance percentage	t	Significance
Constant	183.309	-	-	36.910	.000
Parental income	5.583	.050	.25%	.501	.617
<b>R=.050 (R<sup>2</sup>=.0025), F(1,102)=.251</b>					

Table 2 shows analysis of the data, the multiple correlational coefficient had been found to be .050 which had been insignificant [F (1,102) = .251, p>.05]. Its square was .0025, which indicated that this insignificant variable included in the present analysis contributed only .25% variance in the negative marital interaction.

Beta coefficient of variable indicates that the Parental Income emerged with a value of 5.588, explained only .25% of variance in negative marital interaction.

**Table.3: Parental Attachment Analysis of Marital Interaction**

Predictor Variables	B coefficient	$\beta$	Explained variance percentage	t	Significance
Constant	181.025	-	-	20.295	.000
Parental Attachment	-.551	-.023	.8%	-.234	.815
<b>R=.092 (R<sup>2</sup>=.008), F(1,102)=.425</b>					

Table 3 shows analysis of the data, the multiple correlational coefficient had been found to be .092 which had been insignificant [F (1,102) = .425, p>.05]. Its square was .008, which indicated that this insignificant variable included in the present analysis contributed only .8% variance in the negative marital interaction. Beta coefficient of variable indicates that the Parental Attachment emerged with a value of-.023, explained only .8% of variance in negative marital interaction.

## Marital Interaction : A Case Study from Chattisgarh

**Table.4: Parental Support Analysis of Marital Interaction**

Predictor Variables	B coefficient	$\beta$	Explained variance percentage	t	Significance
Constant	172.372	-	-	13.293	.000
Parental Support to their daughter	-.064	-.017	12.8%	-.122	.093
Parental Support to their grand children and son in law	2.00	.128	17%	.895	.373
<b>R=.116 (R<sup>2</sup>=.014), F(1,102)=.687</b>					

Table 4 shows analysis of the data, the multiple correlational coefficient had been found to be .116 which had been insignificant [F (1,102) = .425,  $p > .05$ ]. Its square was .014, which indicated that Parental Support variable included in the present analysis contributed only 14.5% variance in the negative marital interaction.

### DISCUSSION

The aim of the present research was to study the relationship between Parental Attachment, Parental support, income and negative Marital interaction among wives who have enrolled themselves in marriage counseling.

The age of the wives ranged from 19 years to 61 years following the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The sample was selected by Simple random sampling Correlation design was used for the present study.

The tools used were sociodemographic data sheet, parental home attachment scale and parental support scale and marital interaction scale (Deshmukh & Singh, 2014). The results were analyzed using regression.

In the present study, first hypothesis was that whether wife's parental income predict negative marital interaction. The contributed variance for the predictor variable is only .25% which is insignificant at .05 level. Therefore, the first hypothesis is rejected. It is an observation that higher income of father indicates that the female belongs to rich family. The husband suffers inferiority and tries to make-up the status problem by working hard, creating work-life imbalance. When the girl belongs to upper-middle class then the girl is accustomed to live in a life-style that requires more disposable income, she wants to get it but the desires creates imbalance in life enough to create dissatisfaction but not marital dissolution.

The second hypothesis in the present research was whether Parental Attachment predict negative marital interaction. The contributed variance is .8% which is insignificant at .05 level. Therefore, second hypothesis is rejected. When the wives maternal home attachment increases, it threatens the dominance of husband towards wife. The wives family attachment is seen as interference in the authority of husband and his family.



## Marital Interaction : A Case Study from Chattisgarh

The third hypothesis in the present study was whether Parental Support predict negative marital interaction. The contributed variance for this predictor is 14.5% which is insignificant at .05 level. Therefore, the third hypothesis is rejected. It is an observation that when biological parents of wife provides her with support in financial and emotional terms, generates inferiority among husbands reflecting his incompetency to provide needs to his family, hurting ego of husbands. This also leads to over interference of parents in the marital life of couples. The over interference is not welcomed by husband and affects the power system in marriage especially negatively for husband leading to divorce (Knudson-Martin, 2013).

### REFERENCES

- Anand, A., Shekhar, B., Jayakumari, S.J. & Somasundaram, V. (2009). Counselling the divorce seeking spouses-A study of factors associated with divorce seeking spouses. *Indian Journal of Applied Psychology*, 46, 22-27.
- Basu & Akbar. (2005). *Hindu Marriage Act*. Kanpur Law House.
- Baucom, D.H., Epstein, N., Sayers, S., & Sher, T.G. (1989). The role of cognitions in marital relationships: definitional, methodological, and conceptual issues. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 57, 31–38.
- Burman, B., & Margolin, G. (1992). Analysis of the association between marital relationships and health problems: An interactional perspective. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112, 39–63.
- Corsini R.J, Auerbach A.J, Concise Encyclopedia of Psychology. Newyork: John Wiley & Sons Inc.; 2000.
- Dhar, R. L. (2013) Intercaste Marriage: A Study from the Indian Context, *Marriage & Family Review*, 49 (1), 1-25.
- Ditzen, B., Hoppmann, C. & Klumb,P. (2008). Positive Couple Interactions and Daily Cortisol: On the Stress-Protecting Role of Intimacy. *Psychosomatic Medicine* 70, 883–889.
- Feeney, J. A. (2002). Attachment, marital interaction, and relationship satisfaction: A diary study. *Personal Relationships*, 9, 39–55.
- Gottman, J. M., Coan, J., Carrere, S., & Swanson, C. (1998). Predicting marital happiness and stability from newlywed interactions. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 60, 5–22.
- Greef, A. P. (2000). Characteristics of families that function well. *Journal of Family Issues*, 21, 948–962.
- Gupta, M.L., & Sharma, D.D. (2009). *Sociology*. Sahitya Bhawan Publications.
- Kazdin (2000). *History Of Behaviour Modification*. Baltimore. University Park Press
- Kluwer, E. S., Heesink, J. A. M., & van de Vliert, E. (1997). The marital dynamics of conflict over the division of labor. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 59, 635-653.
- Knudson-Martin, C. (2013). Why power matters: Creating a foundation of mutual support in couple relationships. *Family Process*, 52(1), 5-18.
- M. J. Coleman & L. H. Ganong (Eds.), *The handbook of contemporary families* (pp. 411-431). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Newcomb, Theodore M. & Turner, Ralph H. & Converse, Philip E.(1966). *Social Psychology: A Study of Human Interaction*. Travistock Publications
- Olson, D., Olson-Sigg, A., & Larson, P. (2008). *The couple checkup: Finding your relationship strengths*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.
- Rosen-Grandon, JR., Myers, J.E. Hattie J.A. (2004). The Relationship between Marital Characteristics, Marital Interaction Processes, and Marital Satisfaction. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 82, (1),58-68.

## Marital Interaction : A Case Study from Chattisgarh

- Sheela, J., & Audinarayana, N. (2003). Mate selection and female age at marriage: A micro level investigation in Tamil Nadu, India. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 34. Retrieved from Expanded Academic ASAP database.
- Singh, B.G. (2008). Marital Distress in India: Need for Indigenous Counselling models. *Indian Journal of Human Relations*, 34, 1-12.
- Waite, L. J., & Lillard, L. A. (1991). Children and marital disruption. *American Journal of Sociology*, 96, 930–953.

### ***Acknowledgment***

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

### ***Conflict of Interest***

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

***How to cite this article:*** Deshmukh, A. & Singh, B.G. (2023). Marital Interaction: A Case Study from Chattisgarh. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 11(4), 2118-2127. DIP:18.01.197.20231104, DOI:10.25215/1104.197