

A Study on Coping Styles of Indian Families Going through Divorce

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ABSTRACT

The research was conducted on the coping styles of individuals undergoing divorce using a qualitative design. Eleven case studies were analysed to meet the objectives of the study. The literature review from across the globe highlighted the trauma of individuals who were going through divorce, the challenges their families were facing and stressed upon the required support from loved ones. Primary data, in the form of case studies, was analysed and four common experiences identified: belief in lasting marriage, transitioning from friends to strangers, emotional turmoil, and continuous evaluation of situations. Results indicated that despite family support and personal resilience, individuals struggled to cope with the sudden trauma of divorce. Further, the study suggests some future therapeutic interventions for such cases.

Keywords: Coping Style, Divorce, Therapeutic Interventions

In India, divorce is a social taboo because marriage is viewed as a sacred event in one's life. The divorce rate in India was less than 1% a few years back but there's been a steep increase in divorce cases in the last seven years (Bhowal, 2025). Divorce impacts all family members, creating emotional distress and life changes. Remarriage is not so common in India, and children are often raised by single parent. There is a provision of legal support, but India is lacking in providing therapeutic support for coping with the emotional turmoil. Studies highlight the psychological toll of divorce, including feelings of loss, failure, and low self-worth. According to Ahrons (1999) study of post-divorce relationship, family alterations are turning points, they are very uncomfortable times that bring an end to familiar experiences while at the same time, are the start of an unknown life. In Ahron's perspective, the transitional times may make people feel at their lowest but it is most likely that they will experience personal growth at the same time. However, it is to be noted that unlike other expected life transitions, divorce can take place at any time leading to severe disequilibrium. Clapp (2000) stressed that divorce unsettles emotions and exacerbates feelings of loss. One of the most important aspects of life and identity is gone. Also, the partners who are served with the divorce unexpectedly go through feelings of failure and low self-worth. The

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psychological impact is feelings of bitterness, resentment for the divorcing partner and anger.

Everything changes with divorce such as social status, future family plans, financial security, and comforts of togetherness, quality time with children and a major aspect of one's identity. Many feel they have been uprooted, have a sense of loneliness and loss. Divorce leads to significant emotional upheaval, with partners and children struggling to adjust. In India, divorce is especially challenging due to cultural and legal factors, with no adequate therapeutic support.

Statement of the Problem

Researchers have identified the unexpected announcement of divorce as a traumatic experience (Ahrons, 1999, Baumeister & Wotman, 1992, Pam & Pearson, 1998, Figley 1989). Although India's divorce rate remains low compared to developed countries yet there is a lack of therapeutic intervention for the trauma experienced by families undergoing divorce. Divorce as a trauma affects the entire family, influencing each member's emotional state and family dynamics. Therapy should address the stress experienced by all the family members and help them cope with the existing situation.

The Research Questions

The researchers attempted to answer the following questions through this study:

1. What are the initial emotions and feelings when divorce is unexpectedly announced?
2. How do families cope and manage the situation?

The research aimed to contribute to therapeutic approaches and understand the family's ontological losses post-divorce.

Objectives

The research was undertaken with the following objectives:

- To identify the common experiences of individuals undergoing an unexpected divorce.
- To examine the coping styles adopted by Indian families dealing with unexpected divorce.
- To propose future therapeutic interventions based on the lived experiences of divorced individuals.

Scope of Study

This study investigated how individuals coped with the sudden and unexpected experience of divorce, identified their common experiences and examined the coping styles adopted by them. The research contributes to a gap in literature, particularly regarding sudden divorces in Indian marriages, and highlights the need for further studies and mental health interventions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kerr (2012) studied the traumatic reactions, betrayal, and multiple losses due to sudden, unexpected divorces and highlighted the coping style aided by spirituality, family support, and strong bonds with children. It suggests clinical implications for assessing trauma and unresolved grief in divorce clients.

Pourebrahim (2017) identified four key themes: implications, backgrounds, consequences, and adaptation to study the gender difference in divorce aftereffects. He found that men and

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women share implications and backgrounds but differ in consequences and adaptation, with men facing emotional issues and women experiencing social impacts. The study emphasizes the need for comprehensive divorce prevention and support programs.

Thadathil & Sriram (2019) reviewed 14 Indian studies (2000–2018) on divorce causes and effects. They identified common causes of divorce were harassment by the husband or his family, domestic violence, dowry, substance use, patriarchy, and infidelity.

Becver (2006) reported that the circumstance in which one partner decides that the marriage can no longer continue, the non-agreeing partner is faced with many challenges. The situation resembles withdrawal from an addiction, in which the craving for the separated person remains for some time. Some partners begin to feel that life is over (Anderson, 2000, p.71), the withdrawal symptoms get worse before they get better and many abandoned partners begin to internalise the rejection. The emotional problem tends to become a part of and change one's deepest beliefs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Universe of the Study: The study was conducted in Delhi and National Capital Region (NCR).

Population of the study: The married partners who were asked for a sudden divorce by their spouses.

Sampling technique: For the purpose of phenomenological study, it was important that the respondents had the experience of the phenomenon the researchers wanted to study. The respondent's details were taken from a fellow counsellor and family therapist who had been working in the field for over a decade and a total of eleven respondents were selected. The respondents were informed of their right to not participate or withdraw from the research if they wished to and no further questions would be asked. The respondents were assured of confidentiality regarding their identity and what they shared during the interview. The respondents agreed to have the research findings published while safeguarding their confidentiality.

Research Method and Tools for Data collection: A case study method was used to explore situations and gain a better understanding of each case. Phenomenological interviews, self-structured in nature, were conducted with eleven respondents for this study. Questions regarding respondent's experiences and feelings were addressed in the interviews. The interview questions were preceded by the central research question.

Data collection: To achieve the objectives of the study, eleven respondents were studied in an in-depth manner through interviews lasting about two hours. The researcher also maintained notes of their thoughts and emotions during the data collection process.

Major Findings:

The data after being collected from selected persons was analysed for notes and was reduced to significant statements. The researchers then developed a structural description based on how the individuals experienced the sudden divorce announcement and a textual description on what they experienced. This collated together described the core of their experience.

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Table 1: Demographic background of respondents

Respondents	Number of years married	Number of children	Ages of children at the time of Divorce	Time between separation and Divorce	Highest degree of educational qualification
1.	12	2	9 years & 6 years	1 year 6 months	Graduate
2.	5	0	-	3 years	Graduate
3.	9	2	7 years & 5 years	1 year	Graduate
4.	15	2	13 years & 11 years	2 years	Post Graduate
5.	8	2	10 years & 6 years	6 months	Graduate
6.	15	1	12 years	2 years	Professional
7.	10	1	9 years	7 years	Graduate
8.	2	0	-	5 years	Graduate
9.	23	1	19 years	7 months	Post Graduate
10.	7	2	6 years & 4 years	3 years	Graduate
11.	12	2	10 years & 7 years	3 years	Graduate

Table no. 1 represents data of all the case studies undertaken, focusing on demographic background like marital history, children, time since divorced, and their educational qualifications. The duration of marriage of studied cases ranged from 2 to 23 years. Majority of the respondents had either one or two children whereas only two reported no children. Among those with children, their ages at the time of separation ranged from 4 to 19 years, indicating that separations occurred when children were generally in early to mid-childhood. The time gap between divorce and the data collection varied from 6 months to 7 years, with about half of the respondents interviewed within two years of separation. In terms of educational qualification, it is seen that the majority (7) were graduates, while two were postgraduates and one held a professional qualification, suggesting a relatively well-educated sample.

Case study No. 1

Respondent 1 shared her journey from courtship to the breakdown of her marriage. She met her husband through family, and their close-knit backgrounds gave her confidence in the relationship. After a traditional 'Roka' ceremony, they courted for over two years before marrying. She was warmly accepted by her husband's family, especially his mother, with whom she shared a deep bond due to both having experienced the loss of a parent. Their marriage was built on shared family values, and after three years, they had children. Life revolved around their kids, and they maintained a loving, affectionate relationship. However, close to their 12th anniversary, she sensed something was wrong. Her husband distanced himself emotionally and physically, eventually confessing he no longer wanted to

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be married. She later discovered he had reconnected with a childhood love. This revelation deeply shattered her, especially as he also withdrew from their children. Her husband blamed her for influencing the kids against him, adding to her pain. She was devastated by the betrayal, the sudden divorce, and the financial strain that followed. What hurt most was the loss of trust and the emotional abandonment of their family. Despite it all, she found strength through her faith in God.

Observation

There was significant emotional disruption experienced by her and her children. Despite a year having passed since the divorce, her vivid recollection indicated the lasting psychological effects. At the end of the interview, she expressed gratitude for the opportunity to share her story, this gave her emotions a new perspective. From a research standpoint, this highlighted the dual role of qualitative interviews as both data collection and a reflective space where participants got validation and meaning.

Case study No. 2

Respondent 2 met his wife through mutual friends and married her after two years of dating, despite his family's opposition to their interfaith relationship. They married without his family's consent in an Arya Samaj temple, leading to his estrangement from them. The couple started their life in a rented flat, with both working. However, his wife was dissatisfied with her job, their financial status, and lack of travel opportunities. She expressed feeling unimportant in the relationship. He tried to meet her expectations and believed in their bond, even though she was not keen on starting a family and had trouble conceiving.

Over time, she spent more time away from home, leading him to suspect an affair, although he found no proof. Eventually, she told him she wanted to end the marriage. Despite his emotional efforts, she became distant, moved to a bigger city for a better job, and filed for divorce. He was left confused about the reasons for her dissatisfaction, as she didn't seek alimony and simply cited lifestyle and emotional differences. His family sympathized, but he felt too guilty to return to them and was left feeling utterly alone.

Observation

The participant, struggling with depression, had been in therapy for over three months and sought reassurance about his situation, particularly the belief that it wasn't entirely his fault. He was affected by the lack of closure after his marital separation. The interview offered a supportive space to express his emotions, and he expressed gratitude how sharing his experiences helped with his emotional healing.

Case study No. 3

Respondent 3 shared that her marriage ended abruptly two years ago, primarily due to her husband's inability to cope with life's mounting stress and financial hardships. The tragic loss of their third child deeply impacted him, leading to substance abuse, gambling, and suspected involvement with call girls. Despite noticing signs of his declining behaviour, she remained supportive, prioritising his needs over her own, and hoping things would improve. The news of the divorce left her devastated, especially as she came from a traditional background where divorce carried a strong stigma. She was overwhelmed by concerns about societal judgment, her children's future, and financial stability. Nevertheless, she gathered strength for the sake of her children and moved in with her parents. Her children eventually adjusted well and enjoyed a calmer environment away from their father's harmful habits.

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Although she tried to rebuild her life, her narrative revealed ongoing confusion and emotional attachment. She struggled to understand why her husband left despite her patience and loyalty, and felt a lingering sense of failure for not being able to save him from self-destruction.

Observation

On reflection, it became apparent that, despite her improvements in her life and that of her children, she had not fully integrated her emotions. This observation led me to consider the prevalent phenomenon in which individuals' bond through shared trauma. However, there was a noticeable determination in her, the desire to make sense of her past experiences. Her resolve to move forward and provide a better life for herself and her children showed resilience in the face of adversity.

Case study No. 4

Respondent 4 left her husband after discovering that he had continued an affair with his ex-girlfriend, despite their arranged marriage. After confronting him, she moved back with her parents, and later discovered she was pregnant with his child. He apologized and promised to sever ties with his past, and with her parents' support, she returned to him. She believed he genuinely regretted his actions and their marriage seemed to improve, especially after having two sons, as her husband became more affectionate. However, 15 years later, she learned of another affair with his colleague, leading to his confession and a desire for a divorce. She felt betrayed again, blaming herself for misjudging his character and regretting her earlier forgiveness.

The divorce left her with a loss of identity and financial insecurity, especially as a stay-at-home mother. Despite a financial settlement, she struggled with raising her sons as a single mother and noticed behavioral issues in them. Her father's death from cancer shortly after her divorce added to her grief, and he regretted encouraging her to return to the marriage. She remains haunted by the unanswered question of how her husband could betray her a second time after their children were born.

Observation

The individual appeared confused as she blamed— herself, her in-laws, her husband, the other woman. Her trauma hindered clear expression, highlighting her emotional distress. The betrayal by her husband had deeply impacted her, and her lack of assertiveness raised concerns about her ability to parent her two emotionally affected sons. Still, despite any earlier happiness in the relationship, she might ultimately be better off without him.

Case study No. 5

The individual shared the challenges in his marriage, which had been arranged later in life after overcoming astrological obstacles. His wife, a successful career woman, often traveled for work while he managed the household and cared for their children. Despite living in a joint family, there were no conflicts with his wife and parents. However, the marriage began to unravel when his wife sought legal separation, prioritizing her career and wanting to live independently, leaving the children with their grandparents. This announcement devastated him, despite his support for her independence. He found comfort in spiritual practices, though the divorce and the revelation that his wife had never wanted marriage or children caused significant emotional pain. He took on full parenting responsibility, leaning on his spirituality to cope with the betrayal.

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Observation

He admitted his struggle to stay strong for his children and parents. Sharing his story made him feel heard and lightened his burden. It was the first time he had spoken in such detail about his divorce, and he felt better. It was reassuring to learn that his children had adapted well, maintaining their routine and were closer to the grandparents.

Case study No. 6

he was well-qualified with an MBA and corporate experience yet chose to be a stay-at-home mother to adhere to her family's traditional expectations. She believed her marriage was loving and stable as her husband regularly expressed affection. However, she was blindsided when she discovered his infidelity—especially with her closest friend. On confronting him, she was told to leave and initiate divorce proceedings. She was devastated when the daughter chose to stay with the father.

he respondent experienced deep hurt, betrayal, and shame. She struggled with re-entering the workforce due to the career gap and felt insignificant when comparing herself with younger, more professionally advanced colleagues. Nevertheless, she got down to rebuilding her life independently, stating that “betrayal is the worst hardship one can go through.”

She (for reference – Case study 6 first paragraph first line)

The (for reference – Case study 6 second paragraph first line)

Observation

The respondent's story reflected entrenched gender norms expecting women to be just caregivers. The interview served as a cathartic experience, reconfirming the therapeutic potential of qualitative research. Her willingness to share stemmed from a desire to help others, highlighting how sharing stories can empower participants while enriching research work.

Case study No. 7

The respondent was a young woman who against her parents' wishes married an older, charming man. Initially free-spirited, she struggled with his controlling nature, leading to frequent conflicts and incompatibility. His affair triggered a swift divorce, leaving her traumatized and feeling guilty. With the support of her parents, she rebuilt her life, resumed education, and became independent. Despite initial challenges, she found emotional growth and peace. Over time, her relationship with her ex-husband improved, and they co-parented amicably. She even cared for him during a health crisis. Her journey reflects significant personal transformation and healing.

Observation

The case highlighted emotional resilience and the transformation that followed after an early marriage, marital discord, and divorce. It underscores the significance of parental support in healing, breaking gender expectations within traditional marriages, and overcoming challenges faced by women re-entering education and the workforce after a long domestic break. Self-reflection and presence of a supportive environment helped her grow, mature and empower herself to come out stronger from this adversity.

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Case study No.8

A young man meets an attractive girl at a party and persuades his mother to arrange their inter-caste marriage. During the wedding, his wife's lack of a smile raised concern, and soon her possessive behavior increased, including threats of self-harm if he worked late. One night, his mother witnessed her nervous breakdown and learnt she had bipolar disorder. After consulting the family the couple divorced, leaving him heartbroken and feeling manipulated. His ex-wife remarried and had a child, which made him resentful. Struggling with guilt and emotional detachment, he tried counseling. He could not escape his mother's pressure to remarry and his insecurities. Despite career success, he found solace in socializing with women and remained emotionally isolated only devoted to his mother.

Observation

The subject clearly had not moved past his wife, still tracking her life with jealousy and bitterness. His failed marriage seemed to have triggered a fear of commitment, leading to multiple short-term relationships. Despite his mother's attempts to push him toward settling down, he would end things whenever he sensed the relationship becoming serious, displaying signs of commitment phobia. His energy was now directed at career success, which became his primary source of fulfilment, while he avoided emotional vulnerability, especially with family or people who challenged him.

Case study No.9

A woman, married young in an arranged marriage, endured years of physical abuse from her husband, who frequently travelled for work, leaving her to care for their son. After living with her in-laws for four years, her husband filed for divorce, falsely accusing her of mistreatment and demanding money in exchange for sex. Shocked and hurt, she recalled the abuse, including calling the police after being beaten. Her son, who had witnessed the abuse, refused to speak to his father. The husband was angry at her for refusing money and sought the divorce. She felt betrayed and determined to deny the divorce, suspecting he had found someone else. With support from her parents and son, she was prepared to face court and defend herself.

Observation

She had faced years of physical abuse and the unexpected divorce petition had traumatised her. The false accusations added to her distress, yet she had control over the situation by deciding not to give in easily. Her resolve to confront the court proceedings, with the support of her son and parents, highlighted her emerging strength and determination, despite the emotional and social pressures.

Case study No.10

An army man stationed in a remote area struggled with infrequent communication with his wife. His interfering father-in-law often accused him of neglecting his family and manipulating his wife. After months, he returned to find his wife distant, and soon, received divorce papers. He knew his father-in-law's selfishness and regretted sending his family away. Despite attempts of army counsellor to resolve the issue, his wife remained aloof. Torn between his career and family, he was determined to save his marriage but felt helpless against his father-in-law's influence.

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Observation:

The researcher observed the subject's emotional conflict between his dedication to his army career and his desire to maintain family ties. His father-in-law's manipulation played a crucial role in the marital breakdown, and despite external efforts, the subject's commitment to his profession over familial compromise remained a central factor in his frustration and emotional turmoil.

Case study No.11

A woman from Bombay had an arranged marriage and adapted well to life in a joint family. During her second pregnancy, she discovered her husband's letters to his aunt, initially dismissing them as familial concern. Over time, she learned of their ongoing affair and confronted him. His angry response and the delivery of divorce papers shocked her. Betrayed and heartbroken, she struggled with self-confidence, isolation, and the realization that the affair had been ongoing before their marriage. Refusing to grant the divorce as revenge, she re-entered the workforce, facing emotional and financial hardships, including health issues like eczema. She felt betrayed by everyone, including her relatives, who had known about the affair.

Observation:

The researcher observed the woman's shock and disgust over her husband's affair, and her regret for not being vigilant. Despite financial struggles, she refused to divorce him, driven by anger and a desire for retribution. Her sister's support was crucial during this time.

I. The common experiences

Based on the respondents' narration of their grappling with the unexpected announcement of divorce, the four common experiences that were evident were:

1. Belief that marriage is forever.
2. From life partners to complete strangers.
3. An emotional turmoil for the person and children.
4. Continuous analysis of the situation

1. Belief that marriage is forever.

The narration of every respondent reflected a deeply rooted belief in the sanctity and permanence of marriage. All the respondents shared a common belief that marriage is a sacred bond and lifelong commitment. The mindset of society is the belief that hardship is a necessity for long married life. The studied cases reflected the strong cultural narrative that in India marriage is not just a union of two individuals, but union of two families and their cultures. The same belief cited by Singh and Pandey (2023), that the marriages are a long-term commitment not just between two individuals but between two families and main emphasis is on building a stable and enduring family unit.

2. From life partners to complete strangers.

The case studies revealed that all is not good beneath the surface of seemingly stable marriages. There were deep-rooted issues like manipulative behaviour of a partner, unmet emotional needs, and pressure to meet the expectations of family members and society. The impact of infidelity, ambition, and discontent with lifestyle choices exposed the fragility of these unions. Moreover, the enduring influence of family of origin—especially in the Indian cultural context—emerges as a critical factor, shaping not only individual expectations but

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also the course of marital relationships. These stories highlight the need for greater emotional awareness, communication, and the ability to recognize and address inherited patterns in order to build truly fulfilling partnerships. Restarting a life as a single person or a single parent is one of the challenges. The pain of rejection without any warning or preparation is another challenge (Becver, 2006, p.196).

3. An emotional turmoil for the person and children.

The respondents' experiences reflected the profound and multifaceted impact of sudden announcement of divorce—not only on themselves but also on their children. The emotional spectrum ranged from anger, confusion, and grief to deep psychological distress and behavioural changes. Al Gharaibeh (2015) also reported the impact of divorce like financial adversity, lack of concentration in studies, sleeping disorders, and stubbornness. Although each individual coped in their own way, yet a common thread ran through their narratives: a shared sense of disbelief, helplessness, and the haunting question of how one could ever brace for such a life-altering event. Their stories highlighted the urgent need for emotional support and resources for families navigating the fallout of separation and loss.

4. Continuous analysis of the situation

The marriage, built over years, ended abruptly, leaving the respondents grappling with betrayal and confusion. They sought support from family, spirituality, and friends while managing the emotional toll on their children. Despite their pain, they stayed strong for their kids and began a new chapter.

Respondent 5 reassured his children after the divorce announcement, while Respondent 9 was shocked by her husband's insensitivity during their son's exams. Respondent 8 questioned her parents' decision to end the marriage without addressing her mental illness, and Respondent 7 wondered why her husband wouldn't give her a second chance. Respondent 11 was devastated by her husband's affair with his aunt, and Respondent 10 struggled to help his wife confront the reality of their situation. Despite the pain, each respondent leaned on their loved ones to heal and move forward.

II. Coping Styles Adopted by Indian Families Dealing with Unexpected Divorce:

The coping style for dealing with distress due to divorce is highly personal and often marked by emotional upheaval, uncertainty, and profound change. Generally, the process begins with intense emotional shock and gradually unfolds through a series of adaptive strategies and personal transformations. Based on the experiences of respondents under study, following were the main coping styles of the individuals that emerged through this study:

1. Emotional Support from Family and Friends

After initial shock, respondents overwhelmingly credited their families and close social circles for helping them cope with the devastating news. Parents and siblings of the individual play important role in their coping with the situation along with their own children, friends, and co-workers. Kołodziej-Zaleska & Przybyła-Basista (2015) also cited that parents as well as siblings, including friends, and acquaintances were the main source of support to the persons going through divorces. They can vent out their emotional stress if there is a reliable support system, which also plays the role of a mentor to make them feel less isolated during a time of intense personal turmoil.

2. Seeking help from Support forums and Mental Health Professionals

It is a fact that people feel more comfortable sharing their experiences with others who have undergone similar situations. Such support forums not only offer a sense of belonging but also share mutual understanding. Our respondents were members of such forums too. Some of the respondents also took professional help from mental health personnel. Such forums and professional help directed them towards coping strategies, stress management techniques, and also essential information regarding the legal and emotional aspects of divorce. Rahman in his recent study (2025) recommended the need for comprehensive community-based support programs for individuals undergoing divorce and the need to have policies to obtain mental health services.

3. Re-establishing Self-care

This phase of life is very stressful for the respondents, hence they become emotionally vulnerable, neglecting self but gradually they begin to prioritize self-care. With the reassurance of their support systems, they restarted taking care of their physical and emotional wellbeing. This renewed attention on self-care marked an important step towards their journey of regaining control over their lives and rebuilding their confidence.

4. Focusing on the Present and Planning for the Future

With the help of their support system, they started to live in the present moment which emerged as the key coping strategy. Respondents learned to focus on their future instead of wasting their energy thinking about the past events. They worked on setting short-term and long-term life goals, like pursuing higher education or upgrading their professional skills which further helped them in rebuilding their lives.

5. Achieving Financial Independence

One of the major setbacks of divorce are financial strain on the respondent. Many respondents were dependent on their parents or siblings for financial support. This financial backing allowed them to regain their footing and work towards economic independence. They started regaining their financial stability either by securing jobs or by enhancing their qualifications to increase their employability prospects.

6. Exploring New Interests and Spiritual Practices

To live their life further they have to find a purpose, which further improves emotional well-being, for this aspect, several respondents explored new hobbies and interests. Some turned towards spiritual practices and started participating in social service activities which gave a sense of connection with a higher purpose and also an opportunity to give back to the community. These involvements contributed to a sense of fulfilment and helped them in regaining their personal identity. Adaptive spiritual coping was positively correlated with greater post-traumatic growth. Spiritual coping contributed exceptionally to adjustment after divorce in comparison to nonspiritual coping (Krumrei, et al, 2009).

7. Redefining Identity and Building Self-worth

The process of rediscovery was central to many respondents' coping journeys. Through new roles, interests, and responsibilities, they began to rebuild their self-esteem and redefine who they were beyond the relationship. This period of personal growth helped them establish a stronger sense of self-worth and autonomy.

8. Focus on Parenting and Professional Roles

Many respondents channelled their efforts into parenting and professional development. Focusing on work and children gave them structure, a renewed sense of responsibility, and a reason to move forward. Setting realistic goals and managing expectations were essential in restoring balance and stability in their lives.

The above coping styles were based on the experiences shared by respondents which were actually a powerful narrative of resilience, growth, and reinvention.

III. Impact of Divorce: Key Psychosocial Challenges and Recommendations for Therapeutic Intervention

The research captures the key concerns for therapeutic considerations which were expressed by respondents and identified by the researchers.

Emotional Well-being:

All respondents reported experiencing intense and overwhelming emotions such as anger, bitterness, shock, confusion, worthlessness, and even a desire for revenge. These emotional disruptions often left individuals feeling destabilized and unable to function effectively in their daily lives. Therapeutic interventions should prioritize emotional support by creating a safe space for expression, facilitating emotional regulation, and introducing coping strategies to help individuals regain control and resilience.

Parental Challenges:

Parents among the respondents faced significant stress related to custody arrangements, visitation rights, and the complexities of co-parenting. Such issues contributed more to emotional distress and also raised concerns about the well-being of their children. Hence, therapeutic support that helps such individuals to develop effective co-parenting strategies, emotional management skills, and guide them to provide a stable and nurturing environment for their children is the need of the hour.

Financial Concerns:

The financial strain is one of the major stressors, it was observed that particularly women respondents were more vulnerable due to the loss of the primary breadwinner of the household. The concerns to meet the day-to-day expenses, children's education fees etc. were common cause of anxiety which further led to depression. Therefore, the therapeutic approach should integrate financial counselling, budgeting assistance, and long-term financial planning, so to financially empower individuals and regain economic independence and social security.

Social Stigma:

In India, divorce is still a stigma in majority of the communities. In the case studies, the respondents often felt judged, ashamed, and isolated due to the negative societal perceptions surrounding divorce. Such feelings lead to withdrawal of individual from society and result in decreased self-esteem. Therapy is needed to address such challenges by changing the mindset, normalizing the experience of divorce, promoting self-acceptance, and rebuilding supportive social connections.

Cultural Expectations:

Many respondents reported the pressure of societal and family expectations related to marriage and family. They felt that these norms were burdensome and difficult to navigate, worsening feelings of failure and isolation. Hence, it is high time to introduce culturally

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sensitive therapeutic interventions that aim to challenge these societal norms and help individuals in redefining their identities and life goals, especially affirming that divorce does not reduce their worth or place in the society.

Allen (2016) also reported that emotionally focused therapy (EFT) is one effective means of working with a couple who are separated or divorced. Further, Rahman et al (2025) stressed upon the policy initiatives to improve access to mental health services and reduce societal stigma. They stated that enhancing these resources can foster resilience and stability among divorced women and children, promoting their emotional and social well-being.

CONCLUSION

The researchers studied the individuals' coping strategies to deal with their unexpected divorces, focusing on the common emotional turmoil they were going through. The study identified the psychological challenges and also recommends therapeutic intervention by the mental health professionals. It opens the horizons for further research in the area. The study lays the foundation for the researchers to explore the other domains related to this aspect of life. The study invites the attention of mental health professionals to design therapies for such individuals so they can deal with the psychological impact of such adverse events that happened in their lives.

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Conflict of Interest

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