

A STUDY OF STRENUOUS IN-LAWS RELATIONSHIP AMONG CONFLICTED COUPLES

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to find out the influence of various responsible factors on familial disorganization. These factors were divided into 3 category i.e personal, family and social under family factor strenuous in-laws relationship variable was found to be main reason for familial disorganization. The study was conducted in Haryana state. Mewat pocket was purposively selected for the present study as it is dominated by muslim population. Two districts namely Gurgaon and Faridabad were selected purposively out of which 30 males and 30 females who had filed their cases for divorce were purposively selected representing both the districts. For dependant variable self structured pretested questionnaire was used and for independent variable socio-economic status schedule was developed by sodhi (1986) was used. Personal interview was undertaken to have the objective information without any biases in a friendly manner. The analysis revealed that family factor i.e strenuous in-laws relationship was found to be main reason for marital discord.

Keywords - Marital, Conflict, Socio-Economic, Strenuous Relationship, In-Laws, Family Relationship

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is certainly one of the important things in life, but why, we might wonder, does the 'high endeavor so often fail? There are several reasons why difficulties occur again and again in successful as well as unsuccessful marriage. One obvious reason is that marriage is not concluded between two programmed machines but between two human beings who both have their own mentality and attitudes. A further consideration is that now a days people have the highest expectation from married life. They expect the misery of loneliness, they expect to have children; they expect to set up a pattern of life with their partner which is economically rewarding, finally they expect happiness. In this final expectation they hope for more than marriage can give. Since many people expect marriage to give them this final happiness here and now they find it hard to be content with only having the idea of happiness. Another consideration that is especially relevant today is the great confusion that now surrounds marriage and family life. According to Marwah (1982) the mother-in-law in a typical joint family, who often found herself displaced from the household hierarchy after her son's marriage, used, among others, dowry as an instrument of persimmon, perpetuating her own authority in the household. The parent of the boy considered money spent on the education of the son as an investment and the amount of dowry received is considered as compensation to the amount spent on boy's education. Pothan (1987) reported that females had problems with their in-laws there are different type of interference by the in-laws which cause the break of

marital bonds. Conflicts were more prevalent among those families where mother-in-law found to be main decision maker, dominant and oppressive.

Sandeep (1991) concluded that the unpleasant behavior of the in-laws forces a women to leave her matrimonial home even though she has no problem with her husband the latter has no legal right to seek for divorce on the ground of desertion. And in Indian where joint families are still the rule rather than the exception then point of law can have very wide ramification. So the present paper is an modest attempt to find out the influence of strenuous in-laws relationship on marital conflict. An effort has been made for professionals, policy makers, educationist and social workers to enhance the knowledge level regarding family conflict which would help in early counselling.

Materials and Methods

The present study was conducted in Haryana state due to easy accessibility. Gurgaon and Faridabad districts were purposively selected from Mewat pocket as these were dominated by Muslim population. The criteria of sample selection was purposive, based on the availability of cases of marital conflict with different religious organisation and willingness of respondents to cooperate with researchers. From the prepared list of sixty respondents thirty males and thirty females were randomly selected on the basis of their cooperation. To measure socio-economic status scale designed by Sodhi (1986) was used. For independent variables viz., strenuous in-laws relationship, self developed pretested questionnaire was used. Frequency and percentage were used to draw the inferences.

Result and discussion

Table 1 - Profile of respondent (N60)

sr.no.	variable	category	sex of respondents	
			Female	Male
1.	sex	female Male	30(100)	30(100)
2.	caste	lower Middle Upper	8 (26.67) - 22(73.33)	7(24.33) - 23(76.66)
3.	Age	Less than 25 year 25-35 years 35-45 years Above 45 years	2(6.67) 26 (86.67) 2(6.66) -	- 30(100) - -
4.	Educational level	Illiterate Primary Middle Matric Secondary	21(70) 5(16.66) 2(6.67) 2(6.67) - -	- - 6(20.00) 13(43.33) - 7(23.33)

		Technical Education	-	4(13.33)
		Graduate	-	-
		Post - graduate		
5.	Age at marriage	12-18 years	26(86.67)	-
		18-25 years	4(14.33)	30(100)
		Above 25 years	-	-
6.	Occupational	Agricultural	-	2(6.67)
		Laborer	-	-
		Caste occupation	-	3(10)
		Construction work	-	4(13.34)
		Business	-	13(42.33)
		Service	-	8(26.66)
		House wife	30;100)	-
		Any other	-	-
7.	Monthly income	less than 2000	7(23.33)	2(6.67)
		Rs. 2000-3000	4(13.33)	12(40)
		Above Rs 3000	19(63.33)	16(53.33)
8.	Type of family	Nuclear	10(33.33)	10(33.33)
		Joint	29(66.67)	20(66.67)

Figures indicate percentages

Data presented in Table 1 revealed that in males, majority of respondents 76.67%) were belonged to upper caste and 23.33% respondents were belonged to lower caste. In females, majority of respondents (73.33%) were belonged to upper caste. In females majority of respondents (73.33%) were belonged to upper caste and 26.66% respondent were belonged to lower caste. Regarding Age in females, majority of respondent (86.67%) were in the age group of 25-35 years followed by equal number of respondent 6.67% were in the age group of less than 25 years and 35-45 years. In males cent percent respondent were in the age group of 25-35 years. Regarding education data present in table depict that In females majority (70%) of respondents were illiterate followed by 16.66 percent were belonged to the category of primary level, and equal number (6.67%) were belonged to the category of middle and matric level each.

In males, almost equal to half respondent (43.33%) had education up to matric level followed by 23.33 percent respondent had got technical education and 20 percent had passed their middle schooling and very few of them i.e 13.33 had passed their graduates. Regarding

age at marriage In females majority of respondent (86.66%) were in the age group of 12-18 years followed by 13.33 percent respondent were in the age group of 18-25 year . males all of them were in the age group of 18-25 years.

Further data present in table 1 revealed that regarding occupation In females all of them were housewives. In males, almost equal to half of the respondent 43.33 percent were engaged in business followed by 26.66 percent were engaged in service and 13.37 percent engaged in construction work and 10 percent were in caste occupation and very few of them 6.67 percent were engaged in agriculture.

Table 2 Frequency distribution of relationship of in-laws among conflicted couples N-60

Sr. No.	Factors	Sec of Females	respondent Males
1.	relationship with in-laws Very pleasant Tolerant Repulsive	2(6.66) 9(30) 19(63.33)	- 14(46.66) 16(53.33)
2.	face conflict with in-laws Yes No	25(83.33) 5(16.66)	27(90) 3(10)
3.	Reason of conflict Behaviour of in-laws Restriction imposed by in-laws Interference of in-laws	 2 5(83.33) 28(93.33) 28(93.33)	 3(10) - 27(90)
4.	In-laws encourage spouse is creating conflicting situation Always Sometimes Never	25(83.33) 5(16.66) -	27(90) 3(10) -
5.	In-laws behaviour change in absence of spouse Always Sometimes Never	15(50) 13(46.42) 2(6.66)	- 15(50) 15(50)

6.	Main decision maker in in-laws family Father-in-law Mother-in-law Husband/wife Self Brother-in-law Sister-in-law	1(3.33) 19(63.33) 4(13.33) - 1(3.33) 5(16.66)	8(26.66) 12(40.00) - - 10(33.33) -
7.	In-laws appreciate your view point Always Sometimes Never	- 10(33.33) 20(66.66)	- 3(10) 27(90)
8.	in-laws criticise your working Always Sometimes Never	20(66.66) 8(26.67) 2(6.66)	- 20(66.66) 10(33.33)
9.	Freedom of work Always Sometimes Never	2(6.66) 8(26.66) 20(66.66)	13(43.33) 20(66.66) -
10.	freedom in different activitie. 1. Social visit a. Complete freedom b. To some extent c. No freedom	5(16.66) 25(83.33) -	30(100) - -
	2. Talk with family member a. Complete freedom	10(33.33)	30(100)

	b.To some extent c. No freedom	- 20(66.66)	- -
	3. Socialization Complete freedom To some extent No freedom	5(16.66) 5(16.66) 20(66.66)	26(86.66) 4(13.33) -
	3. Purchase of items a. Personal purchase Complete freedom To some extend No freedom	5(16.66) 5(16.66) 20(66.67)	30(100) - -
	b. Daily household items Complete freedom To some extend No freedom	5(16.66) 5(16.66) 20(66.67)	26(86.66) 4(13.33) -
11.	freedom with in- laws todiscuss 1.Personal loan Always Sometimes Never	0 20(66.66) 10(33.33)	0 3(10) 20(90)
12.	2.Support during conflicts Always Sometimes Never	- 10;33.33) 20(66.66)	- 3(10) 27;90)

Figure indicate percentages

Frequency distribution of in-laws among conflict couples

Data in table 2 show frequency distribution of respondents on extent of in-laws relationship among conflicted couples. Relationship between in-laws and daughter-in-law is considered to be an important factor in causing strains in marital relationships. A close persual of the data in Table 2 indicate that most (63.33%) of females respondents had strenuous relationship with in-laws followed by 30 per cent female who reported tolerant relationship and only 6.66 per cent of female respondents who reported pleasant relationship with in-laws. This means that

majority of respondents had very strenuous relationship with their in-laws. Majority (83.33%) of respondents face conflict with in-laws against 16.66 per cent who never face conflict. Equal number (93.33%) of females revealed that restriction imposed by in-laws and interference of in-laws was found to be main reason for strained relations with their in-laws followed by behavior of in-laws (83.33%).

The females further complaint that their in-laws always interfere in their daily working and always tried to find fault in their working. This creates the tension in their relationship. So the atmosphere in house became very tense. Majority (83.33%) of females alleged that their in-laws always encouraged their spouse in creating conflicting situation by complaining about her in trivial matter like lack of interest in work, lack of sense of responsibility on her part. Half of females (50%) complaint that in-laws behavior always changed in absence of spouse. This can be due to the reason that in-front of her husband, behavior of in-laws was pleasant but in-laws behavior changed in absence of spouse. In most of the (63.33%) cases mother-in-law was found to be main decision maker in the family followed by 16.66 per cent cases where sister-in-law was main decision maker. It was found that in some families, the eldest daughter-in-law (bhabhi) was the favorite in-laws just because she was living with them comparatively for a longer period. Her behavior, likings and disliking were considered to be model and other daughter-in-law in the family were expected to follow her. This situation created hatred in the minds of the younger daughter-in-law. Mother-in-law and sister-in-law did not want anybody to interfere in their decisions. This can be inferred that the females of the family play an important role in the dissolution of intimate relationships. In 13.33 per cent cases the husband was main decision maker in family followed by 3.33 per cent cases father-in-law was main decision maker in family This shows that males play less important role in the decisions of family.

Further most of (66.66%) females reported that their views-points were never appreciated by their in-laws. The reason behind this was that the husbands were traditionally oriented and thought that their wives should be subordinate to the elders in the family not to interfere in the family decisions. In most (66.66%) of the female complaint that their in-laws always followed by 26.67 per cent sometimes and 6.66 per cent their in-laws never criticized their working. In most (66.66%) of cases females reported that they were never free to do work followed by 26.66 per cent female respondents who were sometimes free to do work and only 6.66 per cent of females were always free to do work according to their wish. Majority of (83.33%) females complaint that they were sometime free in making social visits. Followed by 16.66 per cent of females had complete freedom to visit outside. In most (66.66%) of cases females were not free to talk with family members or other relatives because of in-laws fear in their mind and they might not discuss their personal problems with other members of the family. Most of (66.66%) females were not even free to purchase their personal items. This shows that most of the respondents were economically dependent but equal number of females (16.66%) were sometimes free and completely freedom to purchase household items. Most of (66.66%) females reported that they never got support from their in-laws during stressful situation.

Regarding males, the data in table 14 show certain discrepancies as compared to females. As 53.33 per cent of males reported that they had very strenuous relationship with in-laws followed by 46.66 per cent of males reported that they had tolerant relationship with in-laws. Which means that 90 per cent of males face conflict with their in-law as compared to 10 per cent of males who never face conflict with their in-laws. In majority (90%) cases the interference of in-laws was found to be main reason for conflict with in-laws followed by in 10 per cent cases where behavior of in-laws was found to be main reason of conflict. They further revealed that wife's parents play important role in dissolution of their married life as the bad behavior of wives was supported/backed by in-laws. Equal number of (50%) males reported that their in-law behavior always and sometimes changed in absence of their wife. Majority (90) of males reported that their in-laws encourage spouse (wives) followed by 10 per cent males who reported that their in-laws sometime encourage spouse in creating situation. In 40 per cent cases mother-in-law was reported to be the main decision maker in the in-law family followed by 33.33 per cent and 26.66 per cent cases where brother-in-law and father-in-law were found to be main decision maker, respectively. This showed that in-laws always to keep their daughter under their influence. The table further revealed that in 90 per cent cases males view point were never appreciate by their in-Laws followed by only 10 per cent cases males reported that their view Points were sometimes appreciated by their in-law. In most of (66.66%).

the males complaint that their in-laws sometimes criticized their working followed by in 33.33 per cent cases where the in-laws never criticize their working In 56.66 per cent cases males reported that they were sometimes free to take up work according to their wish followed by 43.33 per cent cases males reported that they were alway free to take work according to their wish. All males were free to make social visits, to talk with family member and to purchase their personal items about 86.66 per cent males were completely free to purchase daily, household items majority of (90%) males were never free to discuss their personal problems with their in-laws and also they never got moral support from their in-laws during conflicting situation.

Hence, it can be concluded that strenuous in-laws relationship was found to be contributing factors leading to marital discord both in males as well as in females. Interference and restriction imposed by in-laws were main reasons of conflicts in family. In-laws always encourage spouse in creating conflicting situation and that is why it ultimately leads to tensions between husbands and wife. Mother-in-law was found to be main decision maker in in-laws family. She did not want to interfere anybody in the decisions of family from both sides parents always keep their son and daughter under their influence. Same conclusions were arrived by Nandaneka,1987 and Ramu (1996).

Table 3 - Extent of level of strenuous in-laws relationship of conflicted couples (n=60)

Sr. no.	level of strenuous in-laws relationship			
	poor	Good	very good	
1.	21(70)	6(20)	3(10)	
2..	18(60.00)	12(40)	-	

Figure indicate percentages

A close perusal of data in Table 3 depict that most of 70 per cent of female respondents reported that they had poor relationship with in-laws against 20 per cent of them they had good relationship with in-laws followed by only 10 per cent of female respondents reported that they had very good relationship with her in-laws. Almost a same trend of strenuous in-laws relationship was found among males i.e. most of (60%) of males respondents reported that they had very poor relationship with in-laws against 40 per cent of them had good relationship with in-laws. In both cases strenuous in-laws relationship was found to be main cause of conflict. The reason may be that interference of in-laws and restriction imposed by in-laws was found to be main reasons of marital conflict. One obvious reason was that treatment imparted to the daughter-in-law differed according to the salary of their husbands and some time they give more love and affection to their husbands than wives. It creates jealousy in the mind of daughter-in-law which became the bases for conflicts between husband and wife. The same findings observed by Ramu (1996).

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