

Interpersonal Problems in Arranged and Love Marriages

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Marriage is often considered to be the cornerstone of a healthy social structure. The stronger the quality of a marriage, the healthier the social structure of society. The present research investigated the interpersonal problems among arranged and love marriages. The sample of this study comprised 100 couples who had married for love, and 100 couples whose marriage had been arranged by their families. The age range of participants was 20 to 40 years (Mean = 28, SD = 5.2). Inventory of Interpersonal Problems-32 (Horowitz, Alden, Wiggins, & Pincus, 2000) was administered to assess the nature of interpersonal problems experienced by the sample. The findings of present study revealed that the couples whose marriage was arranged by their families were more domineering and vindictive, compared to couples who had married for love. However, couples in love marriages were more socially inhibited, non-assertive and intrusive when compared to arranged marriage couples. This research has important implications for social psychologists, marital counsellors and families.

Keywords: interpersonal problems, marital quality, love marriage, arranged marriage.

Marital quality is an important, desirable and significant domain in human life. It allows natural growth of the society by creating family units. Apart from its impact on the society, better quality marriages have a significant impact on the life satisfaction, health and productivity of individuals (Madathil & Benshoff, 2008). Better marital quality is associated with lower depression (Williams, 2003), better self-rated health and fewer physical illnesses (Umberson, Williams, Powers, Liu, & Needham, 2006). Thus it is not surprising that troubled marriage leads to greater vulnerability to infection, illness and delays in recovery times of an individual (Coon & Mitterer, 2011).

In order to reflect on the quality of marriage, one way would be to study love and arranged marriages and their affective quality. Batabyal and Beladi (2011) differentiated love and arranged marriages in the following manner, "In "love marriages", men and women who wish to get married search for a bride/groom and this activity is generally conducted by the two individuals who are interested in getting married. In contrast, in "arranged marriages", the individuals who wish to get married typically do not conduct any search activities by themselves. Instead, the process of searching for a suitable bride or groom is conducted by parents, family, and, in recent times, increasingly by matchmaking firms". In love marriage, the basis is mutual attraction and affection whereas, in arranged marriage the basis is the selection of most appropriate match from the options available. Each type of marriage has its pros and cons. The question that needs to be addressed here is to find out the type of marriage which leads to lesser interpersonal problems among married couples.

According to Sullivan (2013), the interpersonal theory deals with the characteristics of individuals and in determining their interaction patterns accordingly. The first development of the interpersonal theory was based on the principle of complementarity in which the people involved in dyadic interactions. The second development of

the interpersonal theories occurred on the principle of vector length in which the persons have interpersonal circle and these people generally have inflexible and rigid personalities.

The Inventory of Interpersonal Problems 32 (IIP- 32) was developed by Horowitz, Alden, Wiggins and Pincus (2000) with the focus of assessing the problems in the relationships over a range of eight domains. These domains were originated from the works of neo Freudians forming the interpersonal circumplex model. The model purposes that interpersonal problems vary on a circular continuum as follows

The first domain of interpersonal problems on the scale is of domineering or controlling. Controlling partners of the married couples feel difficulty in giving up control and tend to be hostile over other. Furthermore, the loss of control (even though temporarily) is considered to be a loss of dignity while is likely to make them feel threatened. They are also likely to tarnish the relationship by arguing too much over the validation and stand of their perspective without effectively realizing that of the others (Horowitz, et al., 2000).

The second domain of interpersonal problems is vindictiveness or self-centeredness. Vindictive individuals show hostile dominance, high agency and very low communion. They experience irritability and anger very quickly and these feelings are coupled with revengeful thoughts. They do not take care of the feelings or needs of other person and do not forgive any insults from their companion (Horowitz, et al., 2000).

The third domain of interpersonal problems is cold attitude of partners. Cold and / or distant individuals are those who have low communication because of which they feel minimally attached or connected to any other person including their spouse. They are unable to maintain a long term commitment as they enjoy their solitary existence and freedom. The main personality issue with these individuals is that they lack warmth or connection that the spouse requires and this deficit leads to interpersonal problems (Horowitz, et al., 2000).

The fourth domain of interpersonal problems is social inhibition of partners. A socially inhibited partner will be low on agency as well as communion. They tend to be lonely and hypersensitive. They maintain minimal social interactions because they are unable to express their feelings and are often termed as introverts. They try

to avoid humiliation and in order to do so, they avoid any social activity. As a result, their companion might think lowly of them or might take them for granted which is likely to hurt their feelings as a result (Horowitz, et al., 2000).

The fifth domain of interpersonal problems is non-assertiveness of partners. Individuals rating high on the non-assertive scale lack self-confidence and self-esteem. They face difficulty in taking initiatives and avoid being the centre of attention especially in situations where their authority is required. They also have pressing their stand position even if they are right. Consequently, they are likely to have a dependent personality. Therefore they assign leadership role to their companions (Horowitz, et al., 2000).

The sixth domain of interpersonal problems is intrusive attitude of partners. They consider themselves to be friendly, social and extraverted. At the same time they are ready to adopt to leadership position. The problem with these people is that they are likely to open up too much and have a problem in maintaining their intimate relationships (Horowitz, et al., 2000).

The seventh domain of interpersonal problems deals with the self-sacrificing attitude of partners. They are overly-affiliated with one another, however they consider themselves to be warm and generous. They easily connect to people both socially and emotionally and are ready to help other people. The issue with these individuals face is that they cannot set and maintain boundaries while empathizing with other people. As a result, it becomes difficult for them to feel angry for their own reason and express it (Horowitz, et al., 2000).

The eighth domain of interpersonal problems is the intrusive attitude of partners. They consider themselves to be friendly, social and extraverted. At the same time they are ready to adopt a position of leadership. The problem with these people is that they are likely to open up too much and have a problem in maintaining their intimate relationships (Horowitz, et al., 2000).

Existing literature has indicated that many couples face a multitude of social and personal problems in life when they could not find the right ingredients for a successful and happily married relationship (Ali, Israr & Janjua, 2009). Some common problems include depression, domestic abuse and lack of financial support. Wiseman (2007) noted that difficulties in establishing satisfying romantic relationship for a longer term is a major issue for young adults which inhibits the effective mutual relationship development. Torppa (2010) noted that interpersonal problems in adults lead to communication issues which further give rise to misunderstandings.

According to Rubio (2014), more than 72% of the marriages in Asia and Africa were arranged by the families or the social set up of the concerned individuals. Unfortunately, arranged marriages are not turning to be happy and successful marriages. In a report by Hussain (2014), it was noted that only in the 1st quarter of 2014, over 2300 women approached the courts for the dissolution of their marriages. Upon further inquiry, Hussain (2014) found that over 11000 cases for divorce were already pending with the family court in Pakistan. More statistical data reveals that from the year 2005 to 2008, more than 75000 divorce cases were registered in Pakistani courts and then from 2008 to 2011, the same figure rose to 124,141 that is an almost 65% rise in those seeking to end their marriages.

The amount of literature available with reference to interpersonal problems in marriage is significantly missing thus creating a gap in understanding this topic. Hence the present study was designed to investigate the interpersonal problems of love and arranged marriage couples in Pakistan.

Research Hypothesis

Keeping in view the above literature, the following research hypothesis was developed.

H1: Individuals in arranged marriages would show more interpersonal problems as compared to those in love marriages.

Methodology

Sample

The questionnaire based survey was conducted using a sample size of 200 married couples in which 50% married for love and the remaining 50% had their marriage arranged by their family. The sample was recruited using snowball sampling. Homogeneity of the sample was ensured in terms of religion, socio-economic background, and family system; the sample was predominantly associated with the Islamic faith, belonged to middle socio-economic background and lived in a joint family system.

The demographic values for the research have been presented as under:

Table 1
Demographic Information of the Study (N = 200)

Variable	<i>f</i>	%
Age groups		
20-25 years	44	22.0
26-30 years	66	33.0
31-35 years	40	20.0
36-40 years	50	25.0
Marriage type		
Arrange	100	50
Love	100	50
Gender		
Men	100	48.5
Women	100	51.5

Instrument

In order to collect data from the sample, a demographic sheet was used. The demographic sheet collected information about the age, gender, socio-economic background, family system and type of marriage.

In order to assess the interpersonal problems faced by the couples, the Inventory of Interpersonal Problems (IIP-32; Horowitz et al., 2000) was used. A self-report instrument, IIP-32 consists of 32 items addressing eight different types of interpersonal problem domains. The present study included six domains (6 sub-scales) e.g. domineering, vindictive, cold, socially inhibited, non-assertive, and intrusive behaviours comprising 24 items. Two domains (overly accommodating, self-sacrificing) were not included as these domains are not perceived as interpersonal problems in Pakistani culture (Akhtar, Suhail, Rana & Singh, 2013). The instrument has good reliability ranging from $\alpha = .60$ - $.80$ (Horowitz et al., 2000). The scoring for each item on a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranges from "not at all" (0) to "always" (4).

Research Design

We used a cross sectional two group design to examine six interpersonal problem domains (Horowitz et al., 2000) between love married and arranged married couples.

Procedure

Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained from the participants. Couples who agreed to participate in the research were informed about the purpose of the research and assured about the confidentiality of their responses. Questionnaires were administered in order to compare interpersonal problems among couples in love and arranged marriages.

Results

Table 2 shows that reliability of different domains of the interpersonal problems was satisfactory and it ranged from moderate ($\alpha = .60$) to high ($\alpha = .72$)

Two factor MANOVA was computed to examine the impact of marriage type and gender on interpersonal problems of married couples. Findings, Table 3 shows that the main effect of marriage type on interpersonal problems was significant, $\lambda (6, 191) = 14.44, p < .001$. Post-hoc analysis indicates that individuals in arranged marriages were more domineering ($M = 8.51, SD = 3.61$) and vindictive ($M = 10.21, SD = 3.39$), when compared to those who had love marriages. Findings also indicate that individuals who had married for love had high social inhibitions ($M = 9.82, SD = 3.01$),

Table 2
Psychometric Properties of the Interpersonal Problems Scale (N = 200)

Variable	α	<i>M(SD)</i>	Skew
Domineering/Controlling	.66	7.93 (3.47)	-.23
Vindictive/Self centred	.63	9.12 (3.43)	-.08
Cold/Distant	.62	8.09 (3.48)	-.09
Socially Inhibited	.72	8.81 (3.57)	-.44
Non-assertive	.61	8.58 (3.20)	-.48
Overly accommodating	.60	8.01 (3.24)	-.04
Self-sacrificing	.61	8.88 (3.45)	-.06
Intrusive/Needy	.70	8.50 (3.75)	-.10

Table 3
Interpersonal Problems in Arranged and Love Marriages (N = 200)

Variables	DVs	SS	df	MS	F	p	η^2	Power
Gender	Dominating	6.34	1	6.34	.54	.46	.003	.11
	Vindictive	1.20	1	1.20	.11	.73	.001	.06
	Cold	.050	1	.050	.004	.94	.000	.05
	Social Inhibition	3.34	1	3.34	.28	.59	.001	.08
	Non-Assertive	1.19	1	1.19	.12	.73	.001	.06
	Intrusive	10.18	1	10.18	.78	.37	.004	.14
Marriage Type	Dominating	67.47	1	67.47	5.70	.01	.028	.66
	Vindictive	241.81	1	241.81	22.68	.001	.103	.99
	Cold	6.69	1	6.69	0.54	.46	.002	.11
	Social Inhibition	204.70	1	204.7	17.23	.001	.080	.98
	Non-Assertive	46.92	1	46.92	4.65	.03	.023	.57
Gender*Marital Status	Intrusive	226.98	1	226.9	17.42	.001	.081	.98
	Dominating	.095	1	.095	.008	.92	.000	.05
	Vindictive	19.43	1	19.43	1.82	.17	.009	.26
	Cold	.72	1	.72	.06	.80	.000	.05
	Social Inhibition	3.72	1	3.72	.31	.57	.002	.08
Error	Non-Assertive	17.42	1	17.42	1.72	.19	.009	.25
	Intrusive	9.06	1	9.06	.69	.40	.004	.13
	Dominating	2317.13	196	11.82				
	Vindictive	2088.87	196	10.65				
	Cold	2397.93	196	12.23				
Total	Social Inhibition	2328.27	196	11.87				
	Non-Assertive	1977.13	196	10.08				
	Intrusive	2553.75	196	13.02				
	Dominating	2391.02	199					
	Vindictive	2347.12	199					
	Cold	2405.55	199					
	Social Inhibition	2541.39	199					
	Non-Assertive	2040.87	199					
	Intrusive	2802.00	199					

were non-assertive ($M = 9.05$, $SD = 2.85$), and indicated intrusive behaviours ($M = 9.57$, $SD = 3.48$), when compared to individual's whose marriage had been arranged. However, individuals in love as well as arranged marriages do not differ significantly on cold behaviours.

Results also indicate that the main effect of gender on interpersonal problems was non-significant, $\lambda(6, 191) = .38$, $p = ns$. Furthermore the interaction effect of gender and marriage type was also found non-significant, $\lambda(6, 191) = .88$, $p = ns$.

Discussion

The main aim of this research was to compare the interpersonal problems of couples in arranged and love marriages. The research hypothesis proposed that individuals in arranged marriages would show more interpersonal problems as compared to those in love marriages.

The hypothesis was partially supported with significantly higher existence of domineering attitude and vindictive interpersonal problems in arranged marriages. The finding related to higher level of domineering in arranged marriages is consistent with those of Allendorf and Ghimire, (2013) who conducted a research of arranged marriages in Dutch families and concluded that the dominance of father over the daughter in arranged marriages is substituted by the dominance of the husband and thus the relationship is likely to sustain with the husband having an interpersonal problem of domineering behaviour. Findings of this study also indicated that individuals in arranged marriages tend to be vindictive towards each other. One possibility for this finding could be that individuals in arranged marriages try to comply with social and familial traditions rather than fostering genuine care and positive feelings for each other. Hence, they sustain their marital relationship even if they lack psychological satisfaction and mental compatibility which ultimately results in poor marital quality.

The finding of this research showed that social inhibition levels are higher in love marriages. One possibility for this finding might be that in some cases, family members try to hide if their son or daughter had a love marriage. Consequently they discourage the love married couple to socialize more with other relatives of the family. Whereas couples in arranged marriages had less socially avoidant behaviours than love marriage couples. They take part in their family gatherings and allowed to socialize with others.

Non-assertiveness was also found higher in individuals in love marriages. In Pakistani culture, the couple entering in a love marriage have to prove themselves as a right choice for each other for their families. In the process of gaining social approval for both families, they are likely to depict non-assertive behaviours and compliance with the wishes of the family. Rubio (2014) indicated that partners in love marriages know each other before the wedding and therefore they develop a greater need of each other than couples in arranged marriages. Thus this finding of more intrusive behaviour in love marriages is justified.

Conclusion

Positive social relationships are fundamental in the establishment of a healthy and sustainable society; harmonious marital relations are a cornerstone of these social relationships (Silvera & Seger, 2004). Results of the present study indicate that couples in both love and arranged marriages experience interpersonal problems in their marital relationships. The nature of these interpersonal problems

however differs according to the type of marriage. Partners in arranged marriages experience more domineering and vindictive behaviours towards each other, whereas partners in love marriages face greater social inhibition, non-assertive and intrusive behaviours.

Limitations

The results of the present study should be considered keeping in view the following limitations:

1. The present study was a cross sectional survey and it is recommended for future researchers to conduct a longitudinal research to investigate impact of the types of marriages on interpersonal problems; as love is a phenomenon that is dynamic in its approach and is influenced by time and domestic circumstances.
2. As the present research is a survey study, future research could focus on a mixed method study. This will help researchers understand the intricate problems married couples face in Pakistan.
3. The sample size for the present research comprised 400 participants from Punjab and was adequate; however future researches could use samples from the Sindh, KPK and Baluchistan in order to make the results more representative of the Pakistani population.

Implications for Future Research

This study has made significant addition in the existing pool of literature. It provides psychologists and marital counsellors with a basic framework on which they can build therapeutic techniques and counselling programs. Furthermore, clinicians can address the interpersonal problems of married couples keeping in view their type of marriage in Pakistani society. It would make them well informed about the reasons behind divorces and separation in married couples, which can lead to the positive resolution of such problems improving the success rate of marriages in Pakistani society as a whole. Finally, the research creates awareness of marital problems amongst members of the society.

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