



## Dynamics of Marital Stability

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**Abstract:** Marriage is considered one of the most important and sacred relationships in the life of a person. The institution of marriage and its constituents are constantly changing with the changing demands of the times. In earlier times, the concept of marriage and the prevalence of the joint family system was very common. But a paradigm shift from the joint to the nuclear family system resulted in a wide range of changes in marriage dynamics and systems. It affected the whole pattern and marital dynamics of a marital relationship. The stability in a marital relationship comes from marital compatibility, marital happiness, marital adjustments, etc. The communication pattern of a couple and its affection and adjustment is on fall in a marital relationship, as a consequence, the divorce rates are continuously increasing. It becomes important to find out the remedial action and strong coping strategies for changing dynamics in marital stability. To survive and maintain a healthy relationship and marital stability is a very important component. This paper is an attempt to focus on the changing dynamics of a marital relationship and its influences on marital stability.

**Index Terms - marital stability, marital relationship, changing dynamics**

### Introduction

Marriage is a legally recognized and socially accepted partnership, typically involving a man and a woman. It is governed by laws, norms, conventions, beliefs, and attitudes that specify the spouses' rights and obligations and grant status to their children (if any) (1). Marriage can be viewed as the most sacred institution. It has several important functions social, biological, economic emotional, cultural, etc. This institution affects all the domains of life directly or indirectly. The institution of marriage is constantly undergoing thought a process of change and is dynamic in nature. The disintegration of extended and joint family systems and the prevalence of nuclear households are symbolic of changes taking place because of several reasons. Officially remaining married without divorcing, physically separating, or separating legally is known as marital stability. Marital adjustment, marital quality, marital satisfaction, and marital success are all related but different from marital stability (2). Marriage-related stability is a sign of and a predictor of a strong and long-lasting relationship. Marriage stability is the result of a number of characteristics, including marital quality, adjustment, and happiness. The degree of interaction and marital contentment were both observed to decrease over time, although divorce propensity, issues, and conflicts did not show any discernible developmental change (3). The stages family life cycle also affects the dynamics of marital relationship contributing toward marital stability. The level and motivating factors of couples to adjust, build good compatibility, personal dedication, and maintain good marital relationships contribute a lot to the stability and durability of a marital relationship.

### The objective of the study-

The objective of this study is to spotlight the changing dynamics of marriage from different perspectives and their effect on marital stability.

### Significance of the study-

The relationship builds through marriage provides a legal and highly acceptable way to live in a society and secure oneself in a society-approved way of living. Marriage serves various functions and a lot of research had been conducted and described it. There are many functions but the most important is the transmission of oneself to the next generations. So that our culture, traditions, customs, etc. are preserved. But this institution of marriage is on a continuous path of disintegration, as the society is evidence of high divorce rates. It becomes important to study the stability of a marriage. The changing dynamics of a marital system can adversely affect marital stability. Marital stability doesn't only affect couples, but the children, family members, and society as a whole is affected by the factors affecting marital stability.

### **Health and well-being and Marital stability**

In a general notion, it is said that health is wealth. Because the domain of health in one's life affects all other dimensions of life. Maintaining any relationship is largely dependent on one's health and well-being. Many studies by sociologists, psychologists, and epidemiologists show that married people enjoy better physical health, longer lifespans, psychological wellness, and higher levels of subjective happiness. Numerous studies demonstrate the connection between marriage and marital stability and one's health and well-being (4,5,6). Marriage frequently entails a public pledge to stick together "through sickness and health," and marriage itself may also have an impact on physical and mental health. Compared to not being married, being married is related to improved physical health. The cause, however, is probably a combination of various things (7). Unhealthy marital relations may contribute to various physical as well as psychological issues. Marital and family pressure is also a contributing factor to poor health. To maintain a good relationship and enjoy being a married couple is not a cup of tea these days. A good adjustment and coping strategies are required to main a healthy marriage. Poor marriage quality may contribute to mood and anxiety disorders as well as the escalation and maintenance of substance use disorders by having a detrimental impact on controlling negative emotions (8).

### **Changes in family structure and Marital stability**

Family structure is a very important determining factor of marital stability. As a family has the potential to withhold marriage and other relations as per societal norms and traditions. Both the systems joint and nuclear have merits as well as demerits. But the continuous rise in urbanization and modernization resulted in a large number of nuclear families and the prevalence of large joint or extended families are toward the disintegration phase. It has been largely recognized that conjugal relations have little significance in the joint family (9). The couples in the nuclear system seem to be more comfortable and compatible with each other because of the freedom, space, comfort, and independence to make decisions, etc. It can be concluded that women who live in nuclear households have better marital adjustment than women who live in joint families. This is a sign that there are more nuclear families than ever before, meaning that only individual families can adjust to a new marriage. The benefits of joint families, however, cannot be disputed due to their shared responsibility structure (10). In a joint family system, a high level of tolerance is required to adjust with many family members. In a joint family, the shared responsibilities and the support system play a positive role in day-to-day activities.

### **Presence of children and Marital stability**

The children of any couple are considered the most precious asset born out of their relationship. There is a wide range of functions of marriage but reproduction is considered to be one of the major functions. The presence of children in a marriage can change the reasons to stay in the marriage and affects marital stability. It is suggested that children play an important role in stabilizing marriage and resolving conflicts in marriage (11). The age of children affects marital stability. Continuous and shared responsibility of a couple towards child rearing contributes towards marital stability and neglects arguments and negative emotions in a couple According to a study's findings, firstborn children strengthen marriages during their preschool years. Other children only strengthen marriages while they are very young. Children who are older and those born before marriage greatly increase the likelihood of disturbance. Over time, children's initially stabilizing and eventually destabilizing have impacted the period of time (12). Children can also be a source of disturbance and conflict in a marriage. Many reasons can be associated with it as the poor parent-child relationship, poor marital adjustment, arguments over child-rearing, etc.

### **Dual earner families and Marital stability**

The concept of dual-earner families is prevailing as female literacy and independence have increased from earlier times. Women and men both earning in financial assets changed the whole pattern of stability in marriage. The lifestyle, communication patterns, decision making is different as compared to the male-earner family The empirical investigation revealed that, following the start of the economic change, working women dramatically increased their likelihood of divorcing compared to women without jobs. This study suggests that the economic change increased women's dependence on their partners significantly and made it considerably harder for non-working women to leave unpleasant marriages (13). Working couples have affectionate relationships, as evidenced by signs of affection such as an enjoyable conversation between partners, sex-life satisfaction, and personality congruence. The working couples are content with their social circle, family life, and financial management. Overall, the results show that working couples are happy with their marriages (14). The working couples have a busy schedule and a lot of personal and professional responsibilities, their content of contacts, and interaction with society has a different aspect that contributes towards a good pleasant societal interaction and hence contributes towards marital stability and a positive social image as a couple.

### **Education and Marital stability**

Education is learning the desired change in the behavior of an individual. The cognition, intelligence, behavior, and personality is of different makeup. The experience, the decision-making, problem-solving, and coping strategies of an educated individual resulted in a good analysis of the situation and relationships. The results showed that there was a strong correlation between married people's marital stability and their low and high levels of educational attainment, but not between those people and those with a medium level of educational attainment. It was suggested, based on the findings, that individuals active and engaged in the marriage-molding institution hold seminars, workshops, and conferences to inform prospective couples about selecting partners based on their level of education (15). It was concluded that premarital education was linked to lower levels of conflict, higher levels of contentment and commitment in marriage, and a lower risk of divorce. These estimated impacts were consistent across racial groups, income levels (including the poor), and levels of education, indicating that premarital counseling is typically helpful for a variety of couples (16). It was investigated how education influences choices, which in turn affects career and marital happiness in couples. It was revealed that job contentment declined and marital satisfaction improved as an individual's education level increased and it was supported by empirical evidence (17). Education level influences the whole scenario of stability and adjustment in a marital relationship.

### Financial condition and Marital stability

Money is one of the dominant assets in making a marriage successful as it has the power to buy other resources. The association between financial contentment and marital satisfaction was mostly validated by this study. The best predictors of marriage satisfaction, according to OLS regression, were financial status satisfaction and marital stability (18). If a couple is under financial strain then, it may lead to poor marital stability. The results demonstrate a significant association between financial pressure, financial management methods, marital stability, marital satisfaction, and marital stability. In conclusion, finances do play a significant part in the stability and contentment of marriage (19). Financial pressures and financial contentment were found to interact negatively. The results show that financially pleased individuals are more likely to have stable marriages (20). Financial strength can have a very strong impact on a marriage. as it can bring about the satisfaction one gain from enjoying good material resources, good social status, warm relationships, etc.

### Family life cycle and marital stability

There are three major stages of the family life cycle. The first stage is known as the beginning of family crucial with the viewpoint of establishment and adjustment. It begins with marriage and continues until the first child is born. The relationships and the patterns developed in this stage will determine the quality of future relationships that a couple enjoys. The second stage is known as the expanding family. It starts with the birth of the first child and remains until the last child leaves home. This stage focuses on child-rearing. Financial decisions are very important during this phase, as the education of children, investment plans, saving techniques, etc. are to be planned for the long term. The third stage is known as the contracting stage. It begins when the first child leaves the home as an adult and ends when the last child leaves the home. This period focuses on vocational adjustment and financial recovery, as the children become self-reliant (21). Gender roles in committed relationships often grow more traditional with the birth of the first child. In western nations, women frequently take on greater domestic and childcare tasks during this period (22,23). As children start to leave the home, marital satisfaction tends to rise for many couples in their midlife (24). grandparents may adopt various techniques when raising various grandkids, and over time, these styles may vary as the needs of the family change (25).

### Communication and marital stability

Communication is a two-way process. When the component of communication is linked with marriage, then it becomes very crucial. Self-expression in a couple of relationship has the power to enhance marital compatibility in a couple. There was a serious lack of communication between partners in more than half of the broken relationships. One needs to communicate well in order to build a strong, long-lasting relationship with someone (26). Respect, discussion, ownership, listening, and commitment have been named as the five main tenets of good communication. in marriage (27). Relationship quality and stability were positively correlated with communication abilities such as self-disclosure, the accuracy of nonverbal communication, frequency of successful communication, understanding between spouses, and empathy (28). Criticism, defensiveness, contempt, and stonewalling were all found to be significantly and negatively correlated with marital stability and set a couple on the path to divorce (29). It can be concluded that Relationships of the highest caliber and one of encouragement are necessary for the growth of healthy people in all spheres of life. For a marriage to succeed or for any other significant relationship to exist, effective marital communication is essential (30).

### Conclusion

Marital quality and stability are adversely affected in this era of globalization. It is important to check and update the determinants and their consequences, as they will have an impact on our future generations. The scarcity of time and changes in the whole lifestyle and pattern of interaction among couples makes it more crucial. With each stage of the family life cycle comes different challenges and determinants which affect marital stability in a relationship, The alarming rates of increasing divorce in society are very disturbing. The awareness of the changing dynamics is to be addressed as the coping strategies and remedial actions will be taken as per the changing dynamics of a marriage.

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