

Attitude towards marriage, sexual adjustment and performance of married working women

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Marriage is not a mere convention, but an implicit condition of human society. It is an adjustment between the biological purposes of nature and the sociological purposes of man. Its success only depends on the way it is worked. The present study was planned to investigate the attitude towards marriage, sexual adjustment and performance of working women from different organized sectors. A sample of 300 working women was selected purposively. Forty six per cent respondents were strongly agreed about registration of marriage. A substantially high proportion (58.7%) of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement of having sexual relations without marriage. College teacher and clerk had more favorable attitude towards marriage. A small proportion of husbands and wives were unfaithful to their counterparts in sexual matters. Fifty-three per cent working women were able to manage their dual roles satisfactorily.

■ **KEY WORDS**: Working women, Attitude, Marriage, Sexual adjustment

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About three decades ago, educated women were not normally seen in gainful employment outside the four walls of home, except as nurses and teachers in schools. While teachers were accepted as working in a respectable profession, nurses have never been accorded the respect that their profession should command. Marriage is an art which involves both pain and joy. The difficulties of life do not end, rather begins with marriage. It takes two to make marriage a success, but one can make it a failure. Draupadi tells Satyabhama that “happiness is not derived from happiness, but good woman experiences happiness through suffering.” Uma won Siva not through her personal beauty, but through

austerity and suffering. Women have a genius for suffering, and if they are not true to it, they lose their great gift of cherishing life. Kalidasa in his *Sakuntalam* shows how two loving souls are worked through suffering into shape and molded into fitness for each other. The Gods are strange. They send us sorrow to fit us for larger things. Centuries of tradition have made the Indian woman the most unselfish, the most self-denying, the most patient and the most dutiful woman in the world, whose pride is suffering.

Mutual security provisions by partners serve a stabilizing function for them and promote some trust (Kotler, 1989). However, those relationships which also

foster positive changes in partners were able to achieve a sustained intimacy required adequate levels of autonomy and separation from the parental family. Early experience was thus represented in their outcomes. Employed women experienced more hassles and received lesser support than their unemployed counterparts, they enjoyed better well being (Thakar and Misra, 1999). Resources generated by employment (e.g., income, status etc.) appear adequate not only to cope with stresses emanating from multiple roles, but also to enhance well being. Wives earned more than their husbands, work in higher status occupation, or both to determine if wives with resource advantages are able to exercise greater power in their relationship than wives in more conventional marriages. The balance of marital power was more closely related to gender than to income or status (Tichenor, 1999). There was a positive correlation between higher education and attitude toward social change. Higher education is important for women for not making them self dependent but helpful in bringing social change in society (Kumar *et al.*, 2004). In the traditional Indian society, it was not considered respectable for a middle or upper class woman, particularly for a married woman, to seek a career or to accept service outside the home. And it was only under the pressure of gross economic necessity and under adverse circumstances that she came out to take up gainful employment. This concept of respectability does not hold good any longer in today's changing socio-economic and politico-cultural context. Today, by and large, it is not considered derogatory, even for a married woman, to take up any gainful employment. Keeping this in view the present study was undertaken with the objective to investigate attitude towards marriage, sexual adjustment and performance of working women.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

The total 300 working women from different profession like education (school and college teacher), health (doctor and nurse) and other services (officer and clerk) from organized sectors of Jharkhand were selected purposively. The survey design of research was used in the present investigation. As regards the selection of respondents, four districts such as Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Ramgarh and Bokaro were selected for field investigation. A questionnaire was pretested before collecting the data. The attitude towards marriage was

measured through the scale developed under the study. For measuring attitude towards marriage summated rating scale (liker type) was used. Attitude was quantified through five point continuum scale: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree with relative score 4, 3, 2, 1 and 0, respectively. The sexual adjustment with their spouse was quantified through five point continuum scale: extremely satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, dissatisfied, extremely dissatisfied with relative score 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, respectively. The performance in two roles of the respondents was conceived as how happily they accepted the dual roles which were measured as: very happily, happily, neither happily nor unhappily, unhappily, very unhappily with relative score 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, respectively. The data were analyzed using statistical methods such as frequency, percentage, mean score, standard deviation and pair 't' test. Paired t - test was applied to see the significance of difference between selected categories.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study as well as relevant discussion have been presented under following heads :

Attitude towards marriage :

Attitude is a way of acting, feeling or thinking, one's mental disposition etc. According to Thurstone (1946) attitude is the degree of positive or negative affect associated with some psychological object. A good marriage is characterized by mutual respect and support for one another's goal. But a bad marriage not only fails to provide the stability but also creates disruptive forces that are like shock waves spreading to all aspects of life. A glance at the data (Table 1) unfolds that 45.7 per cent of the respondents were strongly agreed about registration of marriage followed by marriage is the relation made in heaven (40%), prime role in choosing her husband (30.3%), marriage is essential for procreation of children (29%), marriage is an institution that one must follow (27.7%) and marriage arranged by parents is stable (23%). The reasons for getting married by registration could be traced to the fact that registration certificate serves innumerable purposes. Still a high proportion of women believe the marriage as sacrosanct women have become assertive and want free hand in choosing career and mate. Most of respondents (58.7%) strongly disagreed with the statement of having sexual

relations without marriage followed by the statements ‘marriage is a necessarily evil’ (24.7%) and ‘one should not marry to lead a hassle free life’ (14.3%). Only 25.7 per cent of the working women showed neutral attitude that career is more important than marriage (Table 1).

Relationship satisfaction is an individual’s attitude toward the partner and the relationship, typically in terms of the perceived quality of the relationship (Dainton *et al.*, 1994). The use of number of typologies of specific relationship maintenance behaviours is associated with higher perception of satisfaction, commitment and liking (Canary and Stafford, 1994). Krech and Crutchfield

(1948) defined attitude as an enduring organization of motivational, perceptual and cognitive process with respect to some aspect of the individual’s world. Rogers (1961) view attitude as relatively enduring organization of an individual’s belief about an object that predisposes his action.

Comparison of attitude towards marriage between selected categories :

There was significant difference between Doctor-College teacher, Doctor-Clerk, College teacher-School teacher and School teacher-Clerk with regard to attitude

Table 1 : Distribution of the respondents on the basis of their attitude towards marriage

Statement	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Marriage is the relation made in heaven	120	40.0	87	29.0	59	19.7	24	8.0	10	3.3
Marriage arranged by parents is stable	69	23.0	147	49.0	54	18.0	30	10.0	0	0.0
Marriage is an institution that one must follow	83	27.7	128	42.7	62	20.7	21	7.0	6	2.0
Marriage is essential for procreation of children	87	29.0	126	42.0	57	19.0	26	8.7	4	1.3
Marriage is necessary evil	18	6.0	44	14.7	63	21.0	101	33.7	74	24.7
Career is more important than marriage	32	10.7	57	19.0	77	25.7	108	36.0	26	8.7
Marriage should necessarily be registered	137	45.7	104	34.7	34	11.3	20	6.7	5	1.7
One should not marry to lead hassle free life	22	7.3	50	16.7	74	24.7	111	37.0	43	14.3
A girl should have prime role in choosing her husband	91	30.3	137	45.7	51	17.0	15	5.0	6	2.0
One can easily have sexual and other relations without marriage	3	1.0	3	1.0	35	11.7	83	27.7	176	58.7

Table 2 : Comparison of attitude towards marriage between selected categories

Pair of respondents	Paired differences			t value	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean		
Doctor- Officer	-1.300	5.335	0.754	-1.723	0.091
Doctor-College teacher	-2.120	5.634	0.797	-2.661 *	0.011
Doctor-School teacher	-0.480	5.504	0.778	-0.617	0.540
Doctor-Clerk	-2.280	5.849	0.827	-2.757 **	0.008
Doctor-Nurse	-1.720	6.908	0.977	-1.761	0.085
Officer-College teacher	-0.820	5.382	0.761	-1.077	0.287
Officer-School teacher	0.820	5.558	0.786	1.043	0.302
Officer-Clerk	-0.980	4.943	0.699	-1.402	0.167
Officer-Nurse	-0.420	6.168	0.872	-0.481	0.632
College teacher-School teacher	1.640	5.066	0.716	2.289 *	0.026
College teacher -Clerk	-0.160	5.308	0.751	-0.213	0.832
College teacher -Nurse	0.400	5.368	0.759	0.527	0.601
School teacher-Clerk	-1.800	5.202	0.736	-2.447 *	0.018
School teacher-Nurse	-1.240	5.332	0.754	-1.644	0.106
Clerk-Nurse	0.560	4.820	0.682	0.822	0.415
Higher service-Lower service	-0.353	5.273	0.431	-0.821	0.413

* and ** indicate significance of values at P=0.05 and 0.01, respectively

towards marriage (Table 2). College teacher and clerk had more favorable attitude towards marriage. College teacher has regards for traditional social values embedded in the institution of marriage. Clerks are more conforming to the social values which are reflected by their favorable attitude towards marriage. Urban educated working women's attitudes towards marriage are changing due to education, liberalization and modernization. The individual interests are given priority and social values are on decline. Indian working women try to strike a balance between tradition and modernity which is manifested by solemnization of increasing number of love-cum-arrange marriage (Table 2).

Sexual adjustment :

Sociologists have categorically stated that sex is the foundation of marriage. The marriage gives exclusive sexual rights to the spouses over one another. Restraining and controlling sexual urges by restricting sex to within marriage give strength to the family and to the individual. Majority of the working women (55%) were sexually satisfied and about one-fourth (25.67%) were extremely satisfied (Table 3). Sixty eight per cent working women were faithful to their husbands and 72 per cent husbands were faithful to their wives. However, a small proportion of husbands (2.67%) and wives (2 %) were unfaithful to their counterparts in sexual matters. It is discernible

that persons never try to fathom their sexual satisfaction unless the problem is abnormally serious. And it is rarely found that separation is due to less sexual satisfaction. However, unfaithfulness of the spouses does create tension in marital relationship (Table 3).

Comparison of sexual adjustment between selected categories of respondents :

The rapid development in higher education have their impact in two ways, by creating conditions for a woman to be self-reliant and by creating stronger emotional bounds between her and her husband. An educated young man wants for intellectual co-operation and participation in the pleasures and joy of life, not only with the prospect of a wife who can only be the acquiescent slave of his desires and the begetter of his children. A successful woman, having an extra ordinary career, is said to be dangerous for married life as husband does not find sex appeal in his wife. In the different categories of respondents belonging to higher service, doctor had lowest sexual adjustment which may be due to less time available with them to relax and enjoy sex (Table 4).

Performance in dual roles :

The attitude and ideas of working women have changed with greater speed which creates disharmony

Table 3 : Sexual adjustment of working women			
Sr. No.	Factors of sexual adjustment	Number	%
1.	Level of satisfaction		
	Extremely satisfied	77	25.67
	Satisfied	165	55.00
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	47	15.67
	Dissatisfied	9	3.00
2.	Unfaithfulness of husband		
	Extremely dissatisfied	2	0.67
	Most of the time	8	2.67
	Frequently	17	5.67
	Occasionally	17	5.67
3.	Unfaithfulness of wife		
	Rarely	54	18.00
	Never	204	68.00
	Most of the time	6	2.00
	Frequently	12	4.00
	Occasionally	15	5.00
	Rarely	51	17.00
	Never	216	72.00

in their relationship and this changing personality and pattern caused marital maladjustment and conflicts. Marriage and family are the most significant social institution and they are greatly affected by the social changes taking place in the various spheres of life of the society. Working wife's make marital interaction more complicated and creates problems in the family and so efforts are required to make adjustment and to achieve marital harmony. With multiplicity her roles becomes complex in terms of 'expected' and 'actual' roles and she faces the major part of confusion with regard to her status and role.

Majority of the wives (51.33%) happily did household duties and 26 per cent wives did it very happily. Seventeen per cent wives had neutral reaction; majority of the husbands (52.67%) perceived their wives performing their duties satisfactorily, while only 1.67 per cent husbands perceived that their wives performed very unsatisfactorily (Table 5).

Performance of working women as daughter-in-law depict that majority of them (51%) performed satisfactorily while only 3.67 per cent performed very unsatisfactorily. About 55 per cent respondents had satisfactory participation in family function. Similarly 45 per cent respondents satisfactorily participated in religious functions. Fifty-three per cent working women were able to manage their dual roles satisfactorily. Only 5.67 per cent derived much more pride in the role of

working women while majority of them (59.67%) had equal pride for job and family. Substantial proportions (54.67%) of respondents were able to meet the demands of married and family life.

Comparison of performance in two roles between selected categories of respondents :

The performance of doctor, officer and college teacher were found to be at par, may be due to the limited working hours and limited responsibilities of clerical staff in an organization (Table 6). Women play a dynamic role in their home activities as wives, as mothers responsible for the development of their children and as home maker in charge of the operation of their homes.

Management of time and work is also closely related to other management responsibilities. The family is part and parcel of the community. The housewife has to play an important social role by visiting friends and neighbors, attending marriages, religious and other social festivals. She forms the most important link between her family and the community. She has to devote some time for social work in the community. The housewife is the main carrier of social customs and traditions. She also performs religious activities including pooja, prayer etc. Basic needs of life such as affection respect, security and experience cannot be met unless work and family go hand in hand. This shows that management of work in office and in the home are inseparable parts of the

Table 4 : Comparison of sexual adjustment between selected categories of respondents

Pair of respondents	Paired differences			t value	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean		
Doctor- Officer	-0.520	0.931	0.132	-3.949 **	0.000
Doctor-College teacher	-0.700	0.974	0.139	-5.081 **	0.000
Doctor-School teacher	-6.000	1.236	0.175	-0.343	0.733
Doctor-Clerk	-0.440	0.837	0.118	-3.718 *	0.001
Doctor-Nurse	-0.280	0.949	0.134	-2.087 *	0.042
Officer-College teacher	-0.1800	0.897	0.127	-1.420	0.162
Officer-School teacher	0.460	1.164	0.165	2.794 *	0.007
Officer-Clerk	8.000	0.900	0.1273	0.629	0.533
Officer-Nurse	0.240	1.061	0.1500	1.600	0.116
College teacher-School teacher	0.640	1.274	0.1802	3.552 *	0.001
College teacher -Clerk	0.260	0.965	0.137	1.905	0.063
College teacher -Nurse	0.420	1.012	0.1431	2.935 *	0.005
School teacher-Clerk	-0.380	1.193	0.169	-2.252 *	0.029
School teacher-Nurse	-0.220	1.093	0.155	-1.423	0.161
Clerk-Nurse	0.160	1.037	0.147	1.091	0.281
Higher service-Lower service	0.147	1.071	8.741	1.678	0.095

* and ** indicate significance of values at $p=0.05$ and 0.01 , respectively

Table 5 : Performance in dual roles by the respondents

Sr. No.	Dual role	Number	%
1.	Household duties (perception of wife)		
	Very happily	78	26.00
	Happily	154	51.33
	Neither happily nor unhappily	51	17.00
	Unhappily	14	4.67
2.	Household duties (perception of husband)		
	Very satisfactorily	87	29.00
	Satisfactorily	158	52.67
	Neither satisfactorily nor unsatisfactorily	39	13.00
	Unsatisfactorily	11	3.67
3.	Role as daughter-in-law		
	Very satisfactorily	66	22.00
	Satisfactorily	153	51.00
	Neither satisfactorily nor unsatisfactorily	53	17.67
	Unsatisfactorily	17	5.67
4.	Participation in family (relatives) function		
	Very satisfactorily	72	24.00
	Satisfactorily	165	55.00
	Neither satisfactorily nor unsatisfactorily	39	13.00
	Unsatisfactorily	24	8.00
5.	Participation in religious function		
	Very satisfactorily	86	28.67
	Satisfactorily	135	45.00
	Neither satisfactorily nor unsatisfactorily	50	16.67
6.	Management of dual roles		
	Very satisfactorily	85	28.33
	Satisfactorily	159	53.00
	Neither satisfactorily nor unsatisfactorily	32	10.67
	Unsatisfactorily	21	7.00
7.	More pride and interest in duties and responsibilities		
	Much more in your wife-and-mother role	69	23.00
	Little more in your wife-and-mother role	18	6.00
	Equally in both	179	59.67
	Little more in your working-woman's role	15	5.00
	Much more in your working-woman's role	17	5.67
	In none	2	0.67
8.	Meeting the demands of married and family life		
	Very successfully	70	23.33
	Successfully	164	54.67
	Neither successfully nor unsuccessfully	42	14.00
	Unsuccessfully	12	4.00
	Very unsuccessfully	12	4.00

Table 6 : Comparison of performance in two roles between selected categories of respondents

Pair of respondents	Paired differences			T value	Sig. (2- tailed)
	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean		
Doctor- Officer	-0.700	6.488	0.918	-0.763	0.449
Doctor-College teacher	-1.380	8.909	1.260	-1.095	0.279
Doctor-School teacher	-1.220	7.118	1.007	-1.212	0.231
Doctor-Clerk	-2.460	7.595	1.074	-2.290 *	0.026
Doctor-Nurse	1.020	7.937	1.123	0.909	0.368
Officer-College teacher	-0.680	6.212	0.879	-0.774	0.443
Officer-School teacher	-0.520	5.474	0.774	-0.672	0.505
Officer-Clerk	-1.760	5.061	0.716	-2.459 *	0.018
Officer-Nurse	1.720	7.551	1.068	1.611	0.114
College teacher-School teacher	0.160	7.288	1.031	0.155	0.877
College teacher -Clerk	-1.080	7.137	1.009	-1.070	0.290
College teacher -Nurse	2.400	9.704	1.372	1.749	0.087
School teacher-Clerk	-1.240	4.805	0.679	-1.825	0.074
School teacher-Nurse	2.240	6.099	0.863	2.597 *	0.012
Clerk-Nurse	3.480	6.351	0.898	3.875 **	0.000
Higher service-Lower service	-0.193	7.713	0.629	-0.307	0.759

* indicate significance of values at P=0.05 and 0.01, respectively

building of family life. The association of women's house work time with their own earnings was much larger than its association with their partners, earnings (Gupta, 2006).

Conclusion :

The pairs of doctor-clerk, doctor-nurse, officer-school teacher, college teacher-school teacher, college teacher –nurse and school teacher-clerk had significant difference with respect to sexual adjustment. College teacher had highest sexual adjustment. Sexual relationship between husband and wife is an important aspect of marital relationship. Social service has become a fashion in modern India with women who belong to the higher income groups or who are highly educated. Dual-earner couples negotiate household chores, childcare and social matters to support their partners and to maintain their relationships. Under the pressure of economic necessity, opposition to the gainful occupation of women is steadily diminishing. They face special challenges as they try to balance work and family responsibilities. Long, inflexible working hours, an unsupportive supervisor and unfavorable work environment are the factors that affect work - family conflict. The Indian husband expects special care from the wife for most of his needs.

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