

Interrelationship between familial characteristics and marital satisfaction of university teachers in northern Karnataka-A gender analysis

■ P.G. Holeyannavar and P.B. Khadi

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■ **ABSTRACT** : An ex-post-facto design on “Interrelationship between familial characteristics and marital satisfaction of University teachers in Northern Karnataka-A Gender analysis” was carried out on a sample of 150 University teachers drawn from three cities of Northern Karnataka. Teachers offering UG/PG courses in agriculture/science faculty belonging to Assistant professor to Professor and above cadre were randomly selected. Familial characteristics included family environment, family involvement and social support of University teachers assessed using family environment scale developed by Bhatia and Chadha (1993), family involvement scale by Misra *et al.* (1990) and social support questionnaire by Sarason *et al.* (1983). Marital satisfaction was assessed using questionnaire developed by Haynes *et al.* (1992). Results revealed that more than half of State Agricultural University (67.0%) and Non- State Agricultural University (67.3%) teachers had high level of family environment and none of them fell in low level. The family environment of both SAU and Non-SAU teachers differed significantly by gender, indicating that females had better family environment compared to male teachers. Most of the SAU (84.5%) and Non-SAU (85.5%) teachers revealed high level of family involvement and none were in low level. With regard to social support, teachers of SAU (73.8%) and Non-SAU (70.0%) received high social support but none were in low level. High level of marital satisfaction was observed in most of the SAU (83.8%) and Non-SAU (94.1%) teachers and the rest were in average levels. Statistical analysis through ANOVA indicated that there were no main and interactionary effects of university, gender and cadre on marital satisfaction. Positive and significant correlation was observed between family environment and family involvement with marital satisfaction of SAU and Non-SAU teachers. This indicated that the more conducive the family environment the higher the marital satisfaction of both the groups of teachers and vice versa.

See end of the paper for authors' affiliations →

P.G. Holeyannavar
ICAR-KVK, Chintamani,
Chikkaballapura (Karnataka)
India
Email : poojagsh@gmail.com

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Family is a basic unit of any society that provides tremendous scope for love, care, intimacy and happiness. The family is the oldest and most important of all social institutions that man has devised to regulate and integrate his behavior as he strives to satisfy his basic needs. Family provides a buffer between rapidly changing societal and individual needs to maintain a stable identity. The familial factors like family environment, family involvement and social support are positively influencing marital satisfaction.

Family environment is a context where the members in interpersonal relationships live with cohesion, expressiveness, acceptance, care towards one another, as well as strive to achieve one's own personal growth and of the family unit as a whole. Family involvement is a unidimensional cognitive or belief state of psychological identification with the family context. Social support is the physical and emotional support which is derived from the sources at workplace and outside the workplace. At the workplace the sources of social support include the supervisor and co-workers, while sources outside the workplace include family and friends.

Satisfaction with one's marriage is, in our growing society, an important component of individual's well-being. When a male's workload is greater, he is more likely to withdraw at home, whereas a female with a greater workload is more likely to increase her anger at home. This demonstrates the gender difference where men have a tendency to retreat while women have a desire for further connection. As a result, women report lower marital satisfaction due to decreased time shared with their husband (Sweet and Moen, 2007). This lower marital satisfaction may affect commitment to job and family spheres.

Family environment plays a vital role in maintaining marital stability. The family environment includes the factors like nature of constellation, number of children in family, marital relationships between husband and wife, maternal employment, socio-economic status, family relations, religious background of family and cultural factors which indirectly influence marital satisfaction of the couple. Karambayya and Reilly (1992) used work and family involvement to predict job and marital satisfaction, stress and work structuring, and found that family involvement resulted in high level of marital satisfaction and low level of stress. Hence the present study was undertaken with following objectives:

- To study the familial characteristics and marital satisfaction of University teachers
- To compare the family environment and marital satisfaction of male and female teachers
- To know the influence of familial characteristics on marital satisfaction of SAU and Non-SAU teachers

■ RESEARCH METHODS

Research design :

Differential design was used to know the difference between agricultural and non-agricultural universities, and between male and female university teachers on familial characteristics and marital satisfaction. Correlational research design was employed to know the relationship between familial factors and marital satisfaction.

Population and sample selection :

Out of 4 universities of each type of agricultural and non-agricultural universities in Northern Karnataka, two of each, a total of 4 universities were purposively selected. The total population comprised of 289 university teachers (Male=220, Female=47). A sample of 150 University teachers (50% of the population of male teachers (n=103) and all the female teachers (n=47) were selected for the study). The criteria for selecting the sample was that the teachers should offer UG/PG courses in agriculture/science faculty and belong to Assistant professor to Professor and above cadre.

Tools used :

The family environment of university teachers was assessed using family environment scale developed by Bhatia and Chadha (1993). The tool contains 69 statements (41 positive and 28 negative) with a score of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 for the responses 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree', respectively. Reverse scoring was done for negative statements. The family environment score was calculated by adding the item scores. The total family environment score ranges from 69-345. The scale has three dimensions *viz.*, relationship, personal growth and system maintenance.

To assess the family involvement of university teachers, Misra *et al.* (1990) family involvement scale was used. This scale consists of 8 items divided into 2 formats: Questionnaire format (6 items) and Graphic format (2 items). For the questionnaire format, the respondents were requested to indicate the degree of

their agreement or disagreement with each statement depending on their own personal evaluation of their family. It is a 7 point scale having 7 alternative responses 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'mildly agree', 'cannot say', 'mildly disagree', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' with a scoring of 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively. The graphic format consisted of 2 items, where the respondents were asked to depict their relationship with the family and psychological distance from the family. The degrees of proximity represented degrees of involvement in the family. It is a 7 point scale and the maximum score on each item is 7 and minimum is 1. The scores obtained on both the formats were added to get the total family involvement score. The total score ranged from 8 to 56. The family involvement was categorized as low (8-23), average (24-39) and high (40-56) levels.

The social support was assessed using the social support questionnaire devised by Sarason *et al.* (1983). This questionnaire consists of 24 questions. The respondents were asked to indicate the people in their environment who provided them with help or support. Each question has two parts: for the first part, they were instructed to list all the people they know, excluding themselves, whom they can count on for help or support in the manner described.

For the second part, the respondents had to indicate how satisfied they were with the overall support they had with responses 'very satisfied', 'fairly satisfied', 'a little satisfied', 'a little dissatisfied', 'fairly dissatisfied' and 'very dissatisfied' with a scoring of 6, 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively. The maximum score one can attain is 243. The total score thus obtained was divided by 27 to get the item score. This gives the SSQ Number score (SSQN). The total satisfaction score for all the 27 items, maximum score is 162 and minimum 27. This score is again divided by 27 to get per item score. This gives the SSQ Satisfaction score (SSQS).

Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire developed by Haynes *et al.* (1992) was used to assess the marital satisfaction of University teachers. This scale consists of 24 items. For items 1 to 21, a score of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 is to be given for responses 'very dissatisfied', 'dissatisfied', 'somewhat dissatisfied', 'somewhat satisfied', 'satisfied' and 'very satisfied', respectively. Items 22 and 23 have 4 alternative responses and the scoring follows a system of 4, 3, 2 and 1 from upper to lower end. For item 24 there are 6 alternative responses

and scoring of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and 0, respectively. The scores obtained for each of the statements were added to obtain the total score of marital satisfaction. The total score varies from 23-141.

Data collection procedures :

The questionnaires were mailed/e-mail/handed in person in three visits. Some Case Studies of teachers were conducted. The Directors/Principal were approached for permission. The university teachers were approached in person in the respective cities and informed consent was obtained.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results on family environment, family involvement, social support, marital satisfaction and their interrelationship are presented in Table 1 to 5.

Familial characteristics of SAU and non-SAU teachers :

The results of familial characteristics such as family environment, family involvement and social support of SAU and Non-SAU teachers are shown in Table 1.

Family environment :

Regarding family environment, none of the university teachers had low family environment. Both teachers of SAU (67.0%) and Non-SAU (67.3%) were in high family environment, whereas 33.0 per cent of SAU and 32.7 per cent of Non-SAU teachers fell in average category (Fig. 1). The findings are in congruence with Devi and Mayuri (2001) who reported that majority of the couples perceived to be in average levels for various dimensions of family environment.

On statistical analysis through ANOVA (Table 2), it was noted that there were no main effects of university and interaction effects on family environment, but significant main effect of gender existed indicating that females (275.13) were higher on family environment compared to male teachers (262.56) as shown in Fig. 2. This may be due to the reason that major responsibility of taking care of individual and family needs are borne by women and they have significant role in maintaining a sound family environment. Devi and Mayuri (2001) also reported that gender differences existed in family environment, with wives surpassing husbands in independence, organization and control dimensions.

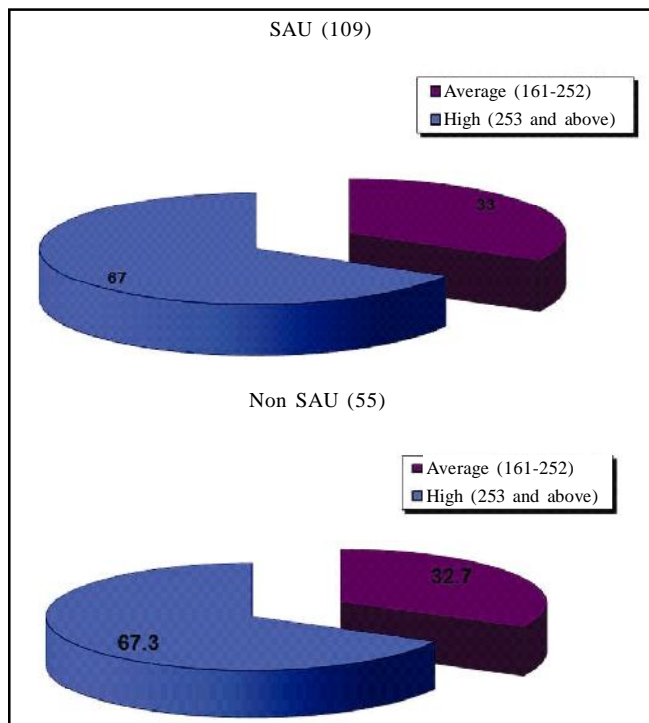


Fig. 1 : Family environment of SAU and Non-SAU teachers

Family involvement :

Most of the SAU (84.5%) and Non-SAU (85.5%) teachers revealed high level of family involvement, followed by 15.5 and 12.7 per cent of SAU and Non-SAU teachers in average category, respectively. The association between type of university and family involvement was not significant. The findings are in-line with Yadav and Halyal (1999) who found that college teachers had higher family involvement.

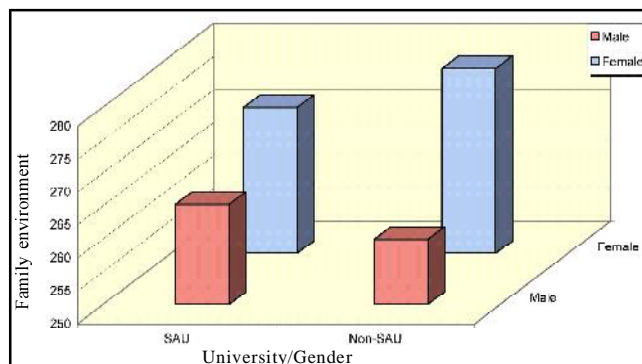


Fig. 2 : Comparison of family environment of SAU and Non-SAU teachers by gender

Table 1 : Frequency distribution of SAU and Non-SAU teachers by familial characteristics

Sr. No.	Familial characteristics	Category (Score range)	SAU (n= 110)		Non SAU (n= 55)		Modified X ²	
			F	%	F	%		
1.	Family environment	Low (160 and below)	-	-	-	-	0.001 ^{NS}	
		Average (161-252)	36	33.0	18	32.7		
		High (253 and above)	73	67.0	37	67.3		
2.	Family involvement	Low (8-23)	-	-	01	1.8	2.191 ^{NS}	
		Average (24-39)	17	15.5	07	12.7		
		High (40-56)	93	84.5	47	85.5		
3.	Social Support Satisfaction	Low (1-2)	01	2.4	-	-	0.378 ^{NS}	
		SAU (n=42), Non SAU (n= 10)	Average (3-5)	10	23.8	03		30.0
		High (5-6)	31	73.8	07	70.0		

NS=Non-significant

Table 2 : Comparison of mean scores of family environment of SAU and Non-SAU teachers by gender

University/Gender	Family environment								
	Male			Female			Total		
	N	Mean	SE	N	Mean	SE	N	Mean	SE
SAU	65	265.23	3.18	44	272.20	3.86	109	268.71	2.50
Non-SAU	40	259.90	4.05	15	278.06	6.62	55	268.98	3.88
Total	105	262.56	2.57	59	275.13	3.83	164	268.85	2.31

Factor ANOVA

Factors	MSS	F	S.E.±	CD
University	2.176	0.003 ^{NS}	3.19	-
Gender	4870.156	7.397 ^{**}	3.20	8.84
University x Gender	965.343	1.466 ^{NS}	4.42	-

** indicates significance of value at P=0.01

NS=Non-significant

Social support :

Many of the respondents, teachers of SAU (73.8%) and Non-SAU (70.0%) received high social support, followed by 23.8 per cent of SAU and 30.0 per cent of Non-SAU teachers with average social support, respectively. The chi square analysis revealed non-significant association between type of university and social support. The findings are supported by Ahmad (2007) who found that women received social support from all four sources: supervisors, co-workers, husband, friends and relatives. Voydanoff (2005) reported moderate to high levels of contact with friends and neighbors among non-institutionalized adults (25-74 years). Sarada Devi (2004) also found that spousal support was related to empowerment of working and non-working women.

Marital satisfaction of SAU and non-SAU teachers:

The frequency distribution of marital satisfaction of SAU and Non-SAU teachers are depicted in Table 3. Most of the teachers of SAU (83.8%) and Non-SAU (94.1%) had high level of marital satisfaction, whereas 16.2 per cent of SAU and 5.9 per cent of Non-SAU teachers indicated average level and none were in low level. The association between type of university and marital satisfaction was not significant as shown by the chi square value 3.21, indicating that the marital satisfaction pattern was similar among teachers of SAU and Non-SAU. The results are supported by Voydanoff (2005) who reported that the respondents showed relatively high levels of marital satisfaction and moderate levels of marital risk as indicated by mean values. Liat and Rayyan (2006) observed that both Jewish and Arab-

Table 3 : Frequency distribution of SAU and Non-SAU teachers by marital satisfaction

Category (Score range)	SAU (n=99)		Non SAU (n= 51)		Modified X ²
	F	%	F	%	
Low (23-61)	-	-	-	-	
Average (62-101)	16	16.2	03	5.9	3.215 ^{NS}
High (102-141)	83	83.8	48	94.1	

NS- Non-significant

Table 4 : Comparison of mean scores of marital satisfaction of SAU and Non-SAU teachers by gender and cadre

University	Gender/Cadre	Marital Satisfaction								
		Male			Female			Total		
		N	Mean	S.E.±	N	Mean	S.E.±	N	Mean	S.E.±
SAU	Assistant Prof	11	110.18	3.73	15	120.75	4.38	26	115.46	2.88
	Associate Prof	26	115.20	2.47	16	111.40	3.20	42	113.30	2.02
	Prof	17	119.58	3.00	9	114.25	4.38	26	116.91	2.65
	Prof and Head	10	118.90	3.92	5	101.00	6.19	15	109.95	3.66
	Combined	65	115.37	2.81	45	111.85	2.33	99	113.80	1.87
Non-SAU	Assistant Prof	8	119.25	4.38	11	115.25	4.38	19	117.25	3.09
	Associate Prof	16	118.62	3.09	4	121.00	6.19	20	119.81	3.46
	Prof	10	119.66	4.13	-	-	-	10	119.66	4.13
	Prof and Head	06	114.16	5.06	-	-	-	06	114.16	5.06
	Combined	40	117.92	2.11	15	118.12	3.79	51	117.99	1.89

Factor ANOVA

Variables	MSS	F	S.E.±	C.D. (P=0.05)
University	24.800	0.161 ^{NS}	1.88	-
Gender	375.834	2.446 ^{NS}	1.91	-
Cadre	155.099	1.010 ^{NS}	4.34	-
University x Gender	79.593	0.518 ^{NS}	2.76	-
University x Cadre	190.002	1.237 ^{NS}	4.37	-
Gender x Cadre	388.223	2.527 ^{NS}	4.46	-
University x Gender x Cadre	486.150	3.164 ^{NS}	4.72	-

NS=Non-significant

Table 5 : Association between familial characteristics and marital satisfaction of SAU and Non-SAU teachers

Familial characteristics	Category	Marital satisfaction									
		SAU (n=99)			Modified X ²	'r' value	Non-SAU (n=51)			Modified X ²	'r' value
		Low	Average	High			Low	Average	High		
Family environment	Low	-	-	-	14.910**	0.482**	-	-	-	1.739 ^{NS}	0.309*
	Average	-	12 (36.4)	21 (63.6)			-	-	18 (100.0)		
	High	-	04 (6.1)	62 (93.9)			-	03 (9.1)	30 (90.9)		
Family involvement	Low	-	-	-	0.192 ^{NS}	0.282**	-	-	01 (100.0)	7.554*	0.435**
	Average	-	03 (20.0)	12 (80.0)			-	02 (28.6)	05 (71.4)		
	High	-	13 (15.5)	71 (84.5)			-	01 (2.3)	42 (97.7)		
Social Support	Low	-	-	01 (100.0)	2.981 ^{NS}	0.297 ^{NS}	-	-	-	2.593 ^{NS}	-0.672*
SAU(n=42)	Average	-	-	10 (100.0)			-	01 (33.3)	02 (66.7)		
Non-SAU (n=10)	High	-	07 (22.6)	24 (77.4)	-	-	-	07 (100.0)	-	-	-

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages, * and ** indicate significance of values at P=0.05 and 0.01, respectively

NS=Non-significant

Muslim women reported a high level of wellbeing for three factors—life satisfaction, marital satisfaction and perceived stress.

The statistical analysis by three Factor ANOVA revealed that there were no main and interactionary effects of university, gender and cadre on marital satisfaction. However, males of Non-SAUs and those with higher positions had better marital satisfaction as indicated by mean scores (Table 4). Chalandra *et al.* (2008) reported that African American women were less satisfied with their marriages than were African American men. There were no significant gender differences found among the Black Caribbeans. Kate (2009) found that the employment status of couples did not significantly influence the relationship satisfaction of couples. Contradictory findings were reported by Bir (2006) and Shek (1995) that men had higher level of marital satisfaction than women in Turkish remarried families and Hongkong, respectively.

Inter relationship between familial characteristics and marital satisfaction :

The interrelationship between marital satisfaction and familial characteristics *viz.*, family environment, family involvement and social support of SAU and Non-SAU teachers is presented in Table 5. More than half of SAU teachers having average family environment showed high marital satisfaction, followed by 36.4 per cent in average category whereas 93.9 per cent of them with high family environment depicted high marital satisfaction. Cent per cent of Non-SAU teachers having average family environment showed high marital satisfaction. Majority of them belonging to high family

environment expressed high, followed by average category of marital satisfaction. The chi square statistic indicated significant association between family environment and marital satisfaction of SAU teachers only. There was positive and significant correlation indicating that as the family environment increased the marital satisfaction also increased among both the groups.

Regarding family involvement, most of the SAU teachers belonging to average (80.0%) and high (84.5%) categories of family involvement showed high marital satisfaction, respectively, followed by 20.0 per cent and 15.5 per cent in average categories. About 3/4th of the Non-SAU teachers with average family involvement revealed high, followed by 28.6 per cent in average marital satisfaction. Majority of them in high family involvement group expressed high marital satisfaction, followed by only 2.3 per cent in average level. Significant positive correlation was observed between family involvement and marital satisfaction of both SAU and Non-SAU teachers. Thus maintaining healthy environment in the family and psychological identification with the family are very important factors having significant influence on marital satisfaction of SAU teachers. Similar findings were reported by Yadav and Halyal (1999) who noted significant association between family involvement and marital satisfaction. Gupta and Shukla (2006) revealed that organization, expressiveness and independence in the family environment significantly predicted marital quality of 100 dual career couples across work-family integration.

More than 3/4th of the SAU teachers with high social support showed high, followed by few (22.6%) fell in average level of marital satisfaction. Cent per cent

of Non-SAU teachers having high social support showed high marital satisfaction, whereas more than half of them with average social support expressed high, followed by 33.3 per cent in average level of marital satisfaction. Negative and significant correlation between social support and marital satisfaction was observed among Non-SAU teachers only. Similar results were reported by Voydanoff (2005) stating that contact with friends was negatively related to marital satisfaction. The findings were in contradiction to Liat and Rayyan (2006) who highlighted that the more support these women received, the higher was the satisfaction with life and with marriage.

On the whole, more number of SAU (67.0 and 84.5%) and Non-SAU (67.3 and 85.5%) teachers reported high level of family environment and family involvement. The family environment of SAU and Non-SAU teachers differed significantly by gender, indicating that females had better family environment compared to male teachers. Teachers of SAU (73.8%) and Non-SAU (70.0%) received high social support. High level of marital satisfaction was observed in most of the SAU (83.8%) and Non-SAU (94.1%) teachers. Positive and significant correlation was observed between family environment and family involvement with marital satisfaction of SAU and Non-SAU teachers. This indicates that more conducive the family environment the higher the marital satisfaction of both the groups of teachers and *vice versa*.

Authors' affiliations:

P.B. Khadi, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, College of Community Science, University of Agricultural Sciences, DHARWAD (KARNATAKA) INDIA

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