

Incidence of Divorce Rates Among Educated Couples in Metropolitan Cities

Pavithra R

Department of Psychology, JAIN (Deemed-to-be University), Bengaluru, India

Abstract: *The present study examined the perceived incidence of divorce among educated couples in metropolitan cities and explored factors associated with marital instability. Marriage is an important social institution; however, changing social values, urban lifestyles, career demands, financial pressures and evolving expectations may influence marital relationships. A quantitative, descriptive research design was adopted. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising demographic questions, multiple-choice items, Likert-type statements and open-ended questions. The study focused on educated individuals residing in Bengaluru and examined perceptions regarding increasing divorce rates and factors contributing to marital breakdown. Frequency and percentage analysis were used to interpret the responses. The findings indicated that a majority of participants perceived divorce rates to be increasing in metropolitan cities. Lack of communication was identified as the most frequently perceived contributing factor (58.0%), followed by incompatibility (43.2%) and career priorities (35.8%). Financial stress and the influence of media/social norms were each reported by 29.6% of participants. The findings also indicated perceived influences of modernization, urban lifestyle, financial independence and increasing social acceptance of divorce. Participants emphasized the importance of premarital and marital counselling, effective communication, mutual understanding and family support. The study highlights that marital instability is influenced by multiple social, psychological, economic and interpersonal factors and emphasizes the potential role of counselling and relationship education in strengthening marital relationships.*

Keywords: Divorce, educated couples, marital adjustment, marital conflict, metropolitan cities, counselling

1. Introduction

Marriage and family relationships are undergoing significant changes in contemporary urban society. Metropolitan life provides greater educational and occupational opportunities, financial independence and individual freedom, but it may also create pressures associated with demanding careers, time constraints, changing gender roles and work-life imbalance. These circumstances can affect communication and emotional connection between spouses.

The literature reviewed in the present study indicates that marital dissolution may be associated with individual characteristics, family structure and external circumstances. Research has identified financial difficulties, employment patterns, economic independence, changing family structures and work-related stress as factors associated with marital instability. Urbanisation and modernization have also contributed to changing expectations regarding marriage and personal fulfilment.

In the Indian context, divorce remains comparatively less common than in many Western societies, but urban and metropolitan areas have experienced considerable social and cultural changes. Greater awareness of legal rights, increasing financial independence, changing gender roles and reduced stigma surrounding divorce may influence individuals' willingness to consider separation.

The present study therefore focuses on educated individuals in metropolitan settings, particularly Bengaluru, and examines their perceptions regarding increasing divorce rates and the factors associated with marital breakdown.

2. Objectives

- 1) To examine the incidence (rate) of divorce among educated couples in metropolitan cities.
- 2) To identify the major factors contributing to divorce among educated couples in metropolitan cities.
- 3) To analyse the impact of education, career and lifestyle on marital stability among couples in metropolitan cities.

3. Methodology

Research Design: A quantitative, descriptive research design was adopted for the study.

Study Area and Participants: The study was conducted with respondents residing in Bengaluru and focused on educated individuals in metropolitan settings. The project methodology states that 100 questionnaires were administered, while the completed study reports 81 participants and the individual analyses contain varying numbers of valid responses because of missing responses.

Sampling: The project describes the selection of respondents through a sampling procedure and reports the use of a structured questionnaire. The study included respondents from occupational groups including IT/BPO professionals, teachers, business professionals, social welfare officers and other public servants.

Research Instrument: A researcher-developed structured questionnaire was used as the primary data collection tool. The questionnaire included demographic information, Yes/No/Not Sure questions, five-point Likert-type items and open-ended questions. The Likert scale ranged from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. The questionnaire examined perceptions of divorce rates, possible contributing factors, modernization and urban lifestyle, social acceptance

of divorce, financial independence, personal or observed experiences of divorce, and preventive measures including counselling.

Data Analysis: The collected responses were organized and analysed using frequency and percentage distributions. The results were presented in tabular form and interpreted in relation to the objectives of the study.

4. Results

The findings indicated that most respondents perceived divorce rates to be increasing in metropolitan cities. Among 67 valid responses to this question, 51 participants (76.1%) answered yes, 14 (20.9%) were not sure and 2 (3.0%) answered no.

Major perceived factors:

- Lack of communication — 47 (58.0%)
- Incompatibility — 35 (43.2%)
- Career priorities — 29 (35.8%)
- Financial stress — 24 (29.6%)
- Influence of media/social norms — 24 (29.6%)
- Domestic violence — 18 (22.2%)
- Lack of family support — 18 (22.2%)
- Infidelity — 14 (17.3%)

Lack of communication was the most frequently identified factor, followed by incompatibility and career priorities. Financial stress and media/social norms were also identified by a considerable proportion of participants.

The findings further showed that 48.1% of respondents agreed that modernization or urban lifestyle has contributed to weakening marital bonds, while 24.7% were neutral and 18.5% disagreed.

Participants also expressed views regarding increasing social acceptance of divorce in metropolitan cities. The findings suggested that changing social attitudes may make individuals more willing to consider divorce when marital conflicts become difficult to resolve.

5. Discussion

The findings suggest that participants perceive divorce among educated couples in metropolitan cities as an increasing social phenomenon. Lack of communication emerged as the most frequently identified factor, emphasizing the importance of effective communication in maintaining marital relationships. Incompatibility and career priorities were also prominent, reflecting the influence of personal expectations and occupational demands on marital adjustment.

The findings are consistent with the literature reviewed in the project, which highlights work-related stress, financial difficulties, changing family structures, economic independence and changing expectations as factors associated with marital instability. Urban lifestyles may provide greater individual freedom while simultaneously creating time constraints and work–family conflict.

The study also indicates that modernization and changing social values may influence perceptions of marriage. Increasing social acceptance of divorce and greater awareness of individual rights may reduce the social pressure to remain in an unsatisfactory relationship. Financial independence, particularly among women, may provide individuals with greater ability to leave unhealthy or abusive relationships; however, financial independence alone cannot be regarded as a direct cause of divorce.

The findings emphasize the importance of premarital and marital counselling. Participants suggested that improved communication, mutual understanding, respect, emotional support and conflict-resolution skills may contribute to healthier marital relationships.

6. Conclusion

The present study concludes that participants perceive divorce among educated couples in metropolitan cities as increasing and associate marital breakdown with multiple social, psychological, economic and interpersonal factors. Lack of communication, incompatibility, career priorities, financial stress, domestic violence, lack of family support and changing social values were among the major factors identified.

The study highlights the importance of effective communication, mutual understanding, emotional support and family support in strengthening marital relationships. Premarital and marital counselling may provide opportunities for couples to develop healthy communication and conflict-resolution skills. Relationship education and counselling awareness programmes may therefore contribute to healthier marital relationships and stronger family support systems.

7. Limitations

The study was conducted with a limited sample and was confined primarily to educated individuals in Bengaluru. The findings therefore may not be generalized to all couples or to rural and semi-urban populations. The study relied on self-reported questionnaire responses, which may be influenced by personal experiences and social desirability. The study also focused on selected factors and did not examine all psychological, cultural, legal and family-related variables that may influence marital relationships.

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