



When Love Turns Hate: Consequences of Marital Discord, Marital Dissolution and HCW's under Risk

Mahendra Kumar*

Stroke Team Coordinator, Department of Neurology, PGIMER, Chandigarh, India

***Corresponding Author:** Mahendra Kumar, Stroke Team Coordinator, Department of Neurology, PGIMER, Chandigarh, India, Mail id: kumarmahen9@gmail.com.

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Abstract

Life is a path usually travelled with a partner. Marriage is the foundation of any healthy society and family basic forms of interpersonal social relationship. Marriage as a union of trust and happiness among husband and wife. Conflict in intimate human relationships, such as marriage, is inevitable especially whenever two people get together some of their traits and habits annoy other and eventually leads to disagreements and conflicts. This uneasy relationship could easily put the couple in the unenviable situation of getting separated. Regarding its consequences, divorce doesn't come with a limited effect on the couple but affects the entire family economically, emotionally, and physically. Children if present are the immediate victims who face the possible consequences. This paper is discussing about impact of divorce among family, children and individuals health.

Keywords: Divorce, HCW, Nurses, Domestic Violence

Introduction

We come from the century where this is to be believed that marriage is made in heaven and called it god's own plan [1].

Marriage is the foundation of any healthy society and family is the primary and principal aspect of human life. Since the civilization of human society the concept of marriage is the primary requirement for forming a family. In India despite massive social reforms that have been noticed in the past 2-3 decades like women empowerment, girls' education, and awareness of women's rights, marriage still predominately involves active participation of families and kin in spouse selection.

In Indian society marriage is usually classified into two approaches, "arranged marriage" and "love marriage". Although self choice or love marriage are getting approval from society and families in routine now days but still majority of marriages across India are 'arranged' In "arranged marriage", the families play a leading role and introduce the girl or boy to each other's or if they have known them previously the function is celebrated with the

wishes of both families. Whereas in love marriage, the boys and girls meet each other and decide to get married with or without prior permission or the support of their families.

Moreover the post marriage intimacy chemistry among couple can be highly influenced by the strategy used for mate selection. Hence love marriage couple knows that they don't have a sound family backup to resolve their differences. Their marriages might engender stability through the promotion of emotional bonds, conjugality, and intimacy. Whereas in arranged marriage more interference from families turn souring relationship among couples and both families.

Marriage is a one milestone of life, where one selects a partner, with a new role and new expectation. Husband and wife are two pillars of the family with help of each other; they can deal with balancing the family in all circumstances. If one pillar gets weak or breaks, the whole house crashes down. The pillars can withstand all the abuses together, the moment one pillar gets weak or deteriorates, it becomes difficult to hold the house together.

Although nothing can be more painful than marital disengagement and partition between two people who tie the knot for a lifetime and now decided to part their ways. Here sooner or later in some relationships, a day comes when they found it suffocating and painful to stay together anymore.

The status of women in the Indian community and family

Cutting across all major religions of India, the status of women is a contested terrain as there are protagonists and antagonists of the conditions of women. A woman who has been the foundation stone of the family is treated as Goddess with astonishment and restraint by society. But when it comes to equal status, hardship and humiliation have been observed in this typical patriarchal society [2].

Marital disputes and Divorce

No idea about the first case of a divorce in the history of human institutions, and surely this could not be part of God's plan for society. The decision of separation doesn't come with a limited effect on the couple but affects the entire family economically, emotionally, and physically [3].

Mainly there are two stages of divorce: Limited divorce and Absolute legal divorce. In the limited divorce, there is a hidden situation of unspoken separation as the couples live together under the same roof without any suitable intimate relationship and communication. Whereas in absolute divorce marriage is dissolved permanently.

Gabru (2004) defines divorce as a legal separation of married people to end their marital relationship [4]. Divorce is not limited to one society and community, sources from Norway and the United state shows that the divorce rate has alarmingly raised in the past 5-6 decades. Half of the marriages in Norway and the United States are ending in divorce or separation within the first ten years of their married life [5]. Studies from Australia, reported at least 20% of marriages to end in divorce [6]. Covering a similar topic Raymo and colleagues depicted that Japan witnessed a rise in divorce rates from 12% in 1980 to 17% by 1990 making a shift of one-third increase in divorce cases [7]. A recent study from Iran shows unfortunate numbers as divorce rates have increased out of the blue up to 45%. The toll reached 153 cases per 1000 marriages [8].

Though re-marriages of women do happen after divorce as compared to the first marriage quality of matches (as per similar age group, financial condition, and family structure of spouse) is hardly favorable for most women. Though divorcee women with children the possibilities of quality of matches might be more compromising.

Post-divorce women usually back to stay with their parents initially. For the majority of women, the support from their native families depends on different conditions in the household including unmarried siblings at home, brother's wife, and their financial and social reputation. A United state study reported that almost 43% of marriages end in divorce within the first 15 years of marriage, with annual incidence of divorce at 36 per 1,000 people [9].

The high cost of being a man!

Men are equally or even worst affected by a broken relationship of the marriage bond. The social image of a man means being 'hard', strong', and 'tough enough.' This traditional definition often turns into toxic masculinity resulting in ill after-effects like extreme crime, depression, and suicide. The image of men is traditionally taken as socially dominating along with related traits such as misogyny and homophobia. In addition, in recent moves by so-called feminist groups, a section of media portrays men as habitual sexual and domestic violence aggressors. Such image portrait of males in society by certain groups results in social character and can be harmful to the mental health of men involved in marital disputes. Moreover somewhere males are paying a price for being men.

Divorce and suicidal incidence

While searching literature related to suicide a truism fact is that "not all persons who commit suicide want to die and not all persons who want to die to commit suicide" [7]. There is a steady rise of almost 35% in the suicide rate in the past 3-to 4 decades in India [10]. In India family disputes are the leading cause (23.7%) of suicide according to 2009 data [11-13]. Unfortunately, the majority of victims (70%) are under the age of 45 years.

Health care workers and divorce

The situation of a broken family is more difficult if the affected people are from health care services that are also having responsibilities to providing care to the sick. Health care workers

are working in a high-stress environment with an odd hour-long shifts, performing continuously without breaks and vacations. Here it has been suggested by many evidences that health care workers lead with higher rates of divorce as compared to other professionals [8,10].

Since the initial studies on divorcees in the United States were published nearly 40 years ago, also indicate physicians have considerably higher rates of divorce and poor self-rated marital quality than other occupations [14]. A survey study conducted by over 1208 physicians from Norway investigating, likely contributors to divorce found domestic conflicts, child responsibilities, and shared financial obligations among the strongest predictors of burnout in the couple relationship [15].

The nursing profession is found among the 40 most stressful jobs [16]. Nursing is also a risk-hamper profession that required a high level of insight, calm mental status, good knowledge, and skills [8].

The contribution of women's gender accounts for far the substantial group in nursing. Although the nursing profession has sufficient representation by males in India and many other countries still majority are women and also face similar issues that other working women faced in their routine life including work-home balance [3].

A study by Abdul Azeez to find employed women marital satisfaction reported that psychological ailment can be caused by a difficult family environment [17]. Many researchers discuss prominent reasons for conflicts among spouses are mutual verbal fights, physical abuse, addiction, and financial crisis were the main factors for lack of marital satisfaction between the couples.

Nursing is a highly demanding profession that required good physical and mental health [16]. In the 21st century when women are proving their capabilities across all professions and they are more empowered to make their decision about themselves. Married female nurses are no longer dependent on their spouses financially.

Nurse's job profile and family adjustment

Nursing is a pre-challenging nature of the job but full of odd working hours, late-night shifts, long hours of duty, and low enumeration also affect work-family adjustment and quality of life.

Similar to other professional working women, nurses also have to go through a lot of adjustment challenges in their relationships. Additionally in Indian society women are counted for the responsibility of household work especially kitchen and child care the husband has to accommodate the nurse's shift duty hours and manage household chores, and the chances of ego clashes are high.

Shift duty hours in Nursing profession

The nature of duties nurses are performing poses a possible risk of getting too tired, mentally and physically exhausted. Shift working hours are a requirement of health care services and come with the cost of quality family time and sleep sacrifices. In-shift duties their schedule of family and children responsibilities get disturbed and even in a few cases, nurses are forced to leave jobs due to a lack of scheduling control [18]. Studies also reported that people engaged in a stressful job found dissatisfaction with marital relationships, especially in the case when one of the spouses is not from a similar job pattern [16,17].

Quality of life and marital adjustment

A successful marital adjustment enhances psychological well-being among couple but also improve their quality of life. Couples who support each other's and maintain a good score of mutual understating and respect can help to gain marital adjustment and run their work and family life peacefully. Additionally support from family, friends, and peer groups, children can also improve marital adjustment and positively impact their quality of life [18,19].

Effects of divorce on family

Divorce comes as a painful event of life where two individuals who planned to stay together for a lifetime parted their ways and decided to live separately. Separation never comes alone but also carries a package of divested emotions, and memories. In the repercussion of separation, one of the more hapless results is that one of the parents may become absent from the child's life permanently [20].

Every year over 1.5 million children experience the divorce of their parent's single parents children face peer relations pressure, stress-induced, anger, and work potency at school. The amounts of time children spend with their non-custodial parents is not sufficient for the normal growth and development of the child [21]. These children start to experience emotional trauma before the

actual divorce concluded. Usually, family disputes are at their peak before the final divorce.

While there is nothing inherently “wrong” with single-parent families, it stands to reason that a child who was growing up among two parents’ father and mother left only with one of them and that also without child consent. Broken families have a higher risk of developing physical and psychological disturbance over children and weaken parent’s primary bond of affection [22].

Psychological impact of divorce

Walsh in 2010 reported that no matter how painful is the process of divorce and even if the couple wanted to come out of the relationship desperately, somewhere both the individuals regret why the things turned so bad to terminate the marriage [23].

The legal proceeding of getting divorced is an emotional roller coaster and time-consuming that affects an individual’s capacity to be mindful on the job, mainly in the case of medical services. Especially in the Indian judicial system, a matrimonial case can run over years from lower courts to higher courts. Moreover, this is very difficult for the prospective divorcee to maintain work, and legal battle balance simultaneously.

The majority of contested divorces are fought for years and legal proceedings are much more time-consuming. Much evidence reported that a person is at risk of adopting practices such as alcoholism, smoking, and loneliness.

Contrary to the sick impact of divorce, professional performance can be also improved significantly. Separated individuals as they feel spending time on the job is diversion therapy and a means of surviving the tragedy of divorce and coming out as better professionals and stronger. The deprivation of divorce is posing a gloomy influence on personal and social life. During this hard time family and friends comes as rescuer and try to lower the feeling of responsibility. In the majority of cases, society comes as an unfavorable stack as people start judging the couple and realize they are about being failed in the relationship. Sometimes unspoken social rejections and avoidances are also seen.

Impact of divorce on health

If we look into the past two decades of research studies this is clearly showing associations between divorce and adverse

health outcomes among adults. Undoubtedly divorcees and legal proceedings of marital disputes ended up with poorer physical and mental health and lower levels of psychological well-being [24].

Sander, S. Strizzi, *et al.* did a study on Denmark’s population about their divorce experience and reported that the time close to divorce or judicial separation is most toxic and full of emotional disturbance. This may not be surprising if found pressure techniques used by either spouse over property, alumni or resources or child custody brought fresh poison in relation and turn to high degree divorce conflicts likely to negatively impact important decisions [25].

Outcomes of divorce on wealth

Several papers have conveyed the financial crisis of divorce experienced heavily by both gender women and men equally. Stress, stigma with society, and time-consuming follow-up of court cases made it difficult to focus on work. Most of the divorces ended with long-run legal battles that dry the couple out of their savings and a whooping part of their income. Women experience a sharper decline in household income. In the majority of cases, men may have to pay a substantial amount of their property and income for the final settlement of alumni.

The relationship between quality of life and marital satisfaction

A study conducted by Zaheri, Farzaneh., *et al.* to assess effective factors in marital satisfaction among Iranian nurses found that one fifth (20%) of total participants reportedly had medium marital satisfaction, where half of the participants (52%) reported high marital satisfaction, and 28% of very high marital satisfaction [26]. Another study by Parvin N, reported more than 60% of participants were dissatisfied with their marital life [27].

Successful marriages satisfy the physical and psychological needs of the couple. Peaceful marriage life is one of the first and foremost requisites for marital satisfaction and determinative aspects of healthy functions in life. Marital satisfaction is influenced by many aspects such as gender, communication among couples, socio-economic condition, length of the marriage, and sexual satisfaction [28].

The paradigm shift in women’s ever-changing role in society and employment status comes as a positive change in society as

women are being found breadwinners of the family. But these changes are somewhere making the distance between families in male dominating society. A long way to go to accept women as the financial leader of the family and parting their family time with job responsibility.

Domestic violence

Women are not safe even in their safest place i.e. home. Most of the violence against women is reported by their family members or close relatives and they suffered physically and psychologically. Domestic violence is an empathetic and intimate issue. Usually, women do not express to researchers about their ill experiences of domestic violence and don't find it comfortable to share and try to keep it closed doors. Either the reasons are shame or fear of getting involved in litigation and reprisal by family and near close friends; they found it more suitable to keep under wraps.

A study was conducted by Sharma kk., *et al.* at AIIMS, New Delhi to assess domestic violence against nurses by their marital partners. In this study too, half of the nurse's participants did not consent to the study and found it too personal to reveal their intimate information and refused to participate in the study as it required revealing too intimate information.²⁹ Domestic violence in a majority of cases happens behind closed doors and is most often refused by the very women who have been the victim of violence.

A study to assess cluster-randomized trial of intimate partner violence prevention intervention from Tanzania reported most common type of domestic violence against women is intimate partner violence, around one third (30%) of study participants women who were in a relationship with their partner had faced physical, sexual or emotional violence by their intimate partner. In some regions of the world, around 38% of women have faced intimate partner violence [30].

Evidence suggests that women who have experienced this type of violence are 2.3 times more likely to have alcohol abuse and 2.6 times more likely to experience depression or anxiety [31].

A recent study reported showing worldwide data on domestic violence reported that 20-50% of women globally suffer from domestic violence by family or intimate partner [32].

Many studies reported that the consequences of domestic violence to nurses are not limited to physical, mental, sexual, and

reproductive health. The outcomes are long-lasting and left with never forgotten emotional wounds [33].

A National survey on family and women's health covering data from 29 Indian states from 2005-to 2006 reported more than one-third of married women (37%) have been the victim of domestic violence including physical and sexual abuse [34].

Recent special circumstances of the COVID pandemic turn things more difficult for already tense relationships of couples and tested their passions. The lockdown situation and strict guidelines of social distancing where people were confined in their homes increased the risk of disputes among partners [35].

On the other side NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau) reported surprising data as over 80% of cases of domestic violence are found to be false. A recent observation from higher courts also found that many women are filing cases against their husbands and In-laws to settle their enmities. Such women are damaging the real meaning and purpose of these laws [36].

At the time of writing this paper, the COVID pandemic has crossed three years and mortality crossed 5 million lives across the world and over 300 million get affected. The disruption created by the COVID pandemic has resulted in a massive employment crisis [37].

The humanitarian impacts of the pandemic have also been huge. It caused what experts call a "shadow pandemic" that of increased exposure to abuse and violence during the successive lockdowns and disruptions to vital support services. The pandemic caused economic slowdown increased unemployment, scarcity of jobs, and raised future worries and increased levels of stress due to the double burden of care and household duties, which has further intensified the risks. Many countries reported at least a 30% increase in domestic violence cases [38].

Conclusion

Both spouses carry the stigma of broken marriages forever. Many couples do not want to end their relationship, but they, however, want the disputes to end. Therefore they decide to take a break from their relationship permanently. Marriage is an institution of peace and order in society that necessitate faithfulness and lifelong commitment. Marriage not only fulfills the primitive

biological need for sexual gratification in a social approval way but also helps the individual to achieve a higher level of personality maturation. Marriage as an institution has a crucial role in helping two individuals to have personal growth and enrichment from established family life. Healthy relationships among couples are blessings and if they do not find it working better to end with a positive drive than humiliating each other.

Conflict of Interest

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