

Attachment Styles in Arranged Marriage and Love Marriage Couple

Attachment Patterns in Early Marriage: A Comparative Study of Arranged and Love Marriages

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Abstract: This study investigates the attachment styles of couples in arranged versus love marriages, focusing on their implications for marital satisfaction. Utilizing attachment theory, which suggests that early caregiver relationships influence adult romantic dynamics, the research assesses how these styles affect intimacy, conflict resolution, and emotional needs within marriages. The sample comprised 80 participants (40 couples) evaluated with the Marital Quality Scale (MQS) and the Attachment Styles Questionnaire (ASQ).

Findings indicate significant differences in attachment styles: arranged marriage couples displayed higher secure attachment scores, suggesting better emotional connectivity and satisfaction, while love marriage couples exhibited elevated levels of avoidant and anxious-ambivalent attachment styles. These results align with existing literature, emphasizing that attachment patterns play a critical role in shaping relationship dynamics. The study concludes that arranged marriages foster more secure attachment, leading to greater satisfaction, whereas love marriages may encounter higher levels of insecurity and dissatisfaction.

Keywords: Marital adjustment, love marriage, arranged marriage, attachment styles

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a socially recognized and approved union between individuals who commit to one another, expecting a lasting and stable intimate relationship. The initiation, development & maintenance of the relationship vary for each individual and couple. It involves the interpersonal processes that include cognition, affect, physiology, behavioral patterns, social support, and violence (Fincham & Bradbury, 1997). An attachment is the "lasting psychological connectedness between human beings" (Bowlby, 1969). Attachment can be described as a special form of emotional relationship involving mutuality, comfort, safety, and pleasure

for both caregiver and child in a relationship (Hazan & Zeifman, 1999).

Attachment styles, shaped by early caregiver relationships, powerfully influence adult romance: how one conceptualizes intimacy, conflict, and emotional needs. Specifically, in the case of marriage-by-choice or arranged, these styles will be shaped and in due course, determine relationship dynamics and satisfaction. In arranged marriages where the partners start off, as a rule, with very little knowledge of the other person attached styles can come to the fore with higher anxiety or avoidance in how couples feel connected to one another. Love marriages usually take off well with an existing emotional connection fueling different challenges related to expectations and emotional intimacy.

Understanding attachment styles gives insight into how couples approach their relationships and how they may be able to have healthier interactions with one another, taking into account different types of marriages. The study focuses on arranged and love marriages. It elaborates on the interaction between attachment styles and marital dynamics, revealing key patterns and their consequences for relationship success. The present study was carried out on arranged and love marriage couples as it is seen that early marital relationship is an optimal context for studying the attachment change processes.

Research has shown that attachment styles significantly influence relationship satisfaction, communication patterns, and conflict resolution in marriages. Secure attachment, characterized by comfort with emotional intimacy and trust in partner availability tends to promote healthier relationship dynamics. Conversely, insecure attachment patterns – whether avoidant or anxious-ambivalent – can create challenges in maintaining satisfying

relationships. However, limited research exists on how these attachment patterns might differ between arranged and love marriages, particularly in the crucial early years of marriage.

The present study aims to bridge this knowledge gap by examining attachment styles in both arranged and love marriages during the first decade of marriage. This period is particularly crucial as it represents the

formative years, where couples establish their relationship patterns and emotional bonds. By understanding how attachment styles manifest in different marriage types, we can better comprehend the dynamics of marital relationships and potentially develop more effective interventions for couples experiencing difficulties.

RESULTS

Comparisons of love marriage and arranged marriage couple on Attachment Variables.

Subscales	Group	Gender	Mean	SD	Group F ratio	Gender F ratio	Group x Gender F ratio
ASQ (Secure)	Love Marriage	Male	35.25	5.15	7.88**	0.47	0.16
		Female	36.40	5.85			
	Arranged Marriage	Male	38.65	4.03			
		Female	38.95	3.59			
ASQ (Avoidant)	Love Marriage	Male	62.30	8.17	14.85**	1.40	0.30
		Female	58.65	7.99			
	Arranged Marriage	Male	53.00	10.98			
		Female	51.65	10.32			
ASQ (Anxious Ambivalent)	Love Marriage	Male	56.00	12.79	10.75**	0.01	0.76
		Female	53.70	11.01			
	Arranged Marriage	Male	46.25	9.29			
		Female	48.05	8.38			

The above tables (2 & 2.1) show that both groups differ significantly in their styles of attachment. Comparison done by ‘t’ tests and ANOVA indicates a significant difference in secure, avoidant, and anxious-ambivalent attachment styles between both Love Marriage and Arrange Marriage couples. There was no significant difference in the interaction effect of group and gender between the two groups.

The data was generated from two groups of participants, Group 1- Love Marriage (N-20 couples) and Group 2- Arrange Marriage (N-20 couples). The total sample comprised of 80 participants. The groups were screened using the Marital Quality Scale (MQS, Shah, 1995).

DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted among couples whose duration of marriage ranged from 2 years to 10 years and who fulfilled the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Research has shown that secure

individuals are comfortable with intimacy, perceive attachment figures as warm and responsive and have positive expectations about relationships.

The result indicates that the styles of attachment used by the couples in both Love Marriage and Arranged Marriage groups varied on the different dimensions of attachment. The mean scores of Love Marriage groups and non- Love Marriage groups in secure attachment style are found to be 35.83 and 38.80 with a ‘t’ value of -2.83 which is found to be significant at p< .01 level. This indicates that the groups differ significantly in secure attachment styles. It is seen that the mean scores of Arranged Marriage group is higher than the mean scores of Love Marriage group suggesting that the Arranged Marriage group have a more secure attachment style in comparison to Love Marriage group. A secure attachment bond is an active, affectionate and a reciprocal relationship in which partners derive and provide closeness, comfort and security. As it involves a profound psychological and physiological interdependence secure couples

are more satisfied in marital relationships than the insecure couples (Hazan & Zeifman, 1999). The findings of the earlier studies are found to be consistent with the present study as it is seen in a study by Hazan and Shaver, 1987 that the adults with different attachment styles experience relationship differently and their satisfaction level and interpersonal relationship also varies. A study done by Feeney (1999), found that securely attached couples report higher relationship satisfaction, trust, supportiveness, and more positive self-disclosure. More securely attached persons have been found among seriously committed dating couples or married couples than in samples of single individuals in several studies (Kirkpatrick & Davis, 1994; Kobak & Hazan, 1991; Senchak & Leonard, 1992, Feeney & Noller, 1990, 1992; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Kirkpatrick & Hazan, 1994; Shaver & Brennan, 1992). Hill, Young, and Nord (1994) found that persons who reported a secure attachment style were more likely to attain marriage/cohabitation and less likely to experience divorce than insecure persons. The findings by Senchak and Leonard (1992) found that couples in which both partners were securely attached evidenced better overall marital adjustment than couples in which one or both partners were insecurely attached. In a recent study Major & Saudia (2003) found that secure couple pairings demonstrate higher degrees of intimacy, more comfort in disclosing vulnerable information, and greater openness than insecurely attached couple pairings and mixed (i.e., secure/insecure) couple pairings. All these findings reported in earlier studies were found to be consistent with findings of the present study.

The findings of the present study also shows that the mean scores in avoidant attachment style between both the groups are found to be significantly different. Mean scores in Love Marriage group is 60.48 and mean scores of Arrange Marriage group being 52.33 and 't' value of 3.86 which is found to be significant at $p < 0.01$ level. Hence, this suggests that the couples who are Love Marriage are found to use more avoidant attachment style in comparison to Arrange Marriage group. Avoidant individuals are uncomfortable with intimacy and interdependence. They perceive attachment figures as unreliable and uncaring, and they prefer not to depend on others for support. They attempt to maintain a positive self-image in the face of potential rejection by denying attachment needs, distancing themselves from others and restricting expressions of emotionality. These

findings suggest that couples who are avoidantly attached are dissatisfied in marital relationships which is in keeping with earlier research work.

Results show that the mean scores among couples on the Anxious- ambivalent attachment style in both the groups are found to be significantly different with mean scores in the Love Marriage group being 54.85 and mean scores in the Arranged Marriage group being 47.15 and the 't' value is 3.31 which is found to be significant at $p < 0.01$ level. Hence, this indicates that the attachment pattern used by the Love Marriage group is more anxious-ambivalent than the Arranged Marriage group. This suggests that couples whose attachment pattern is anxious-ambivalent are likely to be less satisfied in marital life. This could also be compared to the earlier studies done by Grau & Doll (2003) who found that partners who feel anxious about their relationship generally see themselves as being in an inequitable, disadvantaged position and low in relationship satisfaction. Crowell and Treboux (2001), found in their study that couples in which both partners were categorized as insecurely attached were more likely to have separated or divorced. Simpson, Rholes and Philips (1996) report that highly ambivalent couples saw their partners and relationships less positively in terms of amount of love and commitment, mutual respect, openness and supportiveness in the relationship. Avoidant men behaved in a less warm and supportive manner towards their partner and vice-versa suggesting poor relationship quality. Anxious-ambivalent partners have an exaggerated desire for closeness, coupled by a heightened concern about being rejected and unloved, they have a strong desire to gain approval from others because they depend on acceptance by others for a sense of personal well-being. They perceive others as relatively untrustworthy, yet they are eager to become involved in relationships, despite their perils.

CONCLUSION

The present study indicates that the kinds of attachment styles one uses in close relationships impact marital satisfaction in couples whereas in marital Arranged Marriage couples use more of a secure attachment pattern than in Love Marriage couples. On the other hand, insecure patterns of attachment i.e. both Avoidant and Anxious – Ambivalent are used by Love Marriage couples. Earlier research work in this domain also corroborates this finding.

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