

ANALYSIS ON THE MARITAL WELL-BEING OF ADULT SINGLE CHILD IN AND AROUND TIRUCHIRAPPALLI CITY

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Abstract

This study focuses on examining the marital well-being of adult single children during their adulthood stage. Research suggests that individuals from smaller families, including those with a single child, may have higher levels of relationship quality in their adulthood stage. Having grown up with more individual attention and resources from their parents, single children may have developed stronger interpersonal skills and communication abilities, which can positively influence their marital relationship (Blake, J& Marks, N. 2014). At the same time single children in adulthood may often known for their careful and responsible nature, maintaining strong connections with their family members and possessing a friendly approach towards their spouses. The research involved collecting 100 samples from adult single children in and around Tiruchirappalli. The various statistical analyses, including one-way ANOVA, t-test, and correlation analysis, were conducted to explore their marital well-being. However, due to the unique character tics of this population, data collection proved challenging, requiring extensive efforts to locate and involve adult single children.

Keywords: Single-Child, Marital Well-Being, Relationship, Adulthood.

INTRODUCTION

Research on the impact of having a single child on marital well-being has yielded mixed findings. While some studies suggest that having a single child can positively affect marital satisfaction (Downey, et al, 2004) others indicate potential challenges and negative outcomes (Favez, N, Corboz-Warnery. A, 2012). It is important to note that the impact of having a single child on marital well-being can vary depending on various factors such as cultural context, individual differences, and personal circumstances.

On the other hand, some research suggests that having a single child may present unique challenges and potential negative outcomes for marital well-being (Favez.N, Corboz-Warnery. A, 2012). One study found that couples with a single child reported higher levels of inter parental conflict compared to couples with multiple children (Nomaguchi, K.M., & Milkie, M.A. (2003) this because parents of single children may have higher expectations and invest more in their child's upbringing, leading to increased pressure and potential disagreements in parenting decisions. Furthermore, the absence of sibling relationship to fulfill the child's social and emotional needs, potentially straining the couple's bond.

The increasing prevalence of single-child families in developing nations is being observed as a novel demographic pattern. In recent years, nuclear families have transitioned into single-child households, reflecting a global trend. One notable aspect of the modern family system is the shifting perspective regarding the value of children. In traditional societies, the strength of a family was often associated with having more children. However, the emphasis has now shifted towards improving the quality of life

rather than focusing solely on the quantity of offspring. Childbearing has become more of a personal choice, seen as a means of self-expression rather than an obligatory stage in life. Consequently, it is anticipated that low fertility rates and the preference for very small families with a single child will continue to be a viable option in the foreseeable future. Numerous literature reviews have highlighted this emerging trend, particularly among the urban, educated, and affluent segments of society (National Council of Applied Economic Research, 2012).

The global trend of declining fertility rates has resulted in a decrease in the average annual rate of population growth. As a consequence, family sizes have been shrinking, giving rise to an increasing number of single-child families. This phenomenon is evident worldwide and has significant implications for the structure of families, kinship networks, and the socio-economic and demographic composition of societies. The decline in fertility rates can be attributed to several factors, including socio-economic development, successful implementation of birth control programs, and advancements in contraceptive technologies (Nanda et al., 2012).

In the face of declining fertility and increases in divorce, the quantity of children growing up without other children in the household has increased as families have become smaller. The expansion of families with just one child, resulting in children growing up without siblings, has been steadily increasing over time (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008) cited in A. Mancillas (2011), the percentage of women between the ages of 40 and 44 who have had only one child increased from 9.6 percent in 1980 to approximately 17 percent in the 1990's, reaching 20 percent in the 2000s. Carrol (2007), indicate that only 3 percent of American adults believe that one child was the ideal number for a family. Blake (1989, p. 230) and others have suggested that children without siblings tend to have a higher tolerance for being alone and lead "rather different personal lives from those residing with numerous siblings."

Need for Single-Child Family

India, with its vast population and diverse culture, is facing numerous challenges in the realm of sustainable development. As the country's population continues to grow rapidly, there is an urgent need to address the issue of overpopulation. One solution that has gained prominence in recent years is the promotion of single-child families.

Couples today see having children as a tremendous responsibility and are unwilling to give up their materialistic goals in favor of having a large family. In other words, there is a significant trade-off between the quantity and quality of children. These societal perceptions and attitudes strongly impact the reproductive choices made by couples, prompting them to voluntarily limit their family size to a single child. There are various factors that influence the decision of having a single child, and the belief that children do not flourish without siblings is one of them. It is commonly thought that growing up without siblings can make children feel lonely and deprived of the opportunity to develop essential social skills. Additionally, the argument suggests that parents who have only one child may tend to overindulge and excessively protect their child due to their exclusive focus on their single offspring.

The Emergence Of The Single-Child Family Scenario In India

Indian society has been a family-oriented society. Although the large family norm is very strong, the trend towards small family is also apparent. Single-child family is often seen as a relatively new demographic phenomenon in the context of this

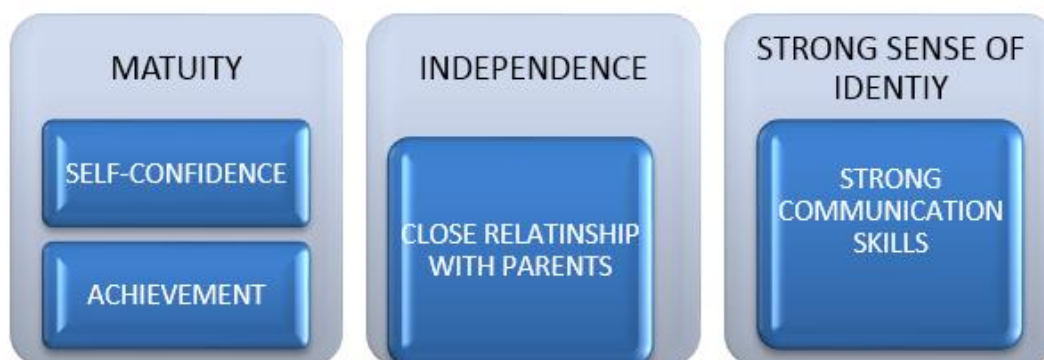
downward trend of infertility. Thus the single-child family is seen among a small, but significant section of the population especially in urban India (Basu & Desai, 2010). In recent decades, rapid fertility decline is a global phenomenon experienced by developed as well as many developing countries. In India too, despite the regional variations in fertility rates, sub-replacement fertility has been reported in many states including Kerala (India, Registrar General, 2012).

Marital Adjustment Of Single Children

Marital adjustment refers to the process of adapting to the changes and challenges that occur within a marriage. When a single child gets married, they experience a significant shift in their family dynamics, as they transition from being the sole focus of their parents' attention to forming a new unit with their spouse. Adjusting and shared decision-making after their marriage. Having grown up with more control over family decisions, they may need to learn to collaborate, compromise, and consider their partner's perspectives and preferences when making choice together (Schwartz, C.R. 2010).

Characteristics of Single-Child

1. Single children seem to have as many friends as not-only ones, being leaders and feeling satisfied with their lives.
2. Single-child tends to show traits similar to first-children and seem to have higher self-esteem than children with siblings.
3. Several studies have highlighted the potential negative perceptions associated with single-child families, characterizing them as problematic, maladjusted, spoiled, pampered, egoistic, and having undesirable personalities (Weiten, 1998).



REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Polit and Falbo (1987) in single-child families, the parent-child relationship can be more effectively isolated as the primary source of socialization. Reed Larson and Maryse Richards¹⁴⁸ found that adolescents reported more extreme emotions and more fleeting emotions than their parents. People are more likely to become conscious of their emotional cycles during adolescence, such as when they feel bad for being angry.

Their capacity to manage their emotions might be enhanced by this new understanding. In the late 19th century G.Stanely Hall, the president of Clark

University in America was the first psychologist who came to look at adolescence as a critical stage of life (Jaffe, 1998). Consistent with him adolescence was a period of 'Sturm und Drang'- which are German terms meaning 'storm and stress.

According to Herbert, Adolescence can be traumatic for some individuals, but it is by no means necessarily or even largely so. However, many of the physiological and psychological changes that characterize adolescence, particularly as young people develop their sense of identity, are adequately unsettling. An understanding of these processes can be a benefit to young people in transition from childhood to adulthood and their parents (Herbert85). J.J.Arnett stated that "Adolescence is a stage of human development that is more capricious than any other stages.

Marital Adjustment

Landis (1977)Marriage changes must be made to everyone's married life. This adaptation brings peace and joy, compromise, and self-sacrifice. Aside from these unmarried individuals, they can hardly adapt and experience isolation and something is lacking in life. Couples are happier than rare individuals. This is the value of wedding and marital life. Marriage is an opportunity for our desires, our love, and our sexual expression to be fulfilled.

Marital change is an endeavor by the partners who meet the needs of each other through their giving and taking process. He used the phrase adaptation to 'the state of accommodation in various places, In his study of marital changes, where there may be a dispute in marriage, marital change involves improving, adjusting, or changing the actions and interaction patterns of individuals and pairs to meet optimum relationship satisfaction.

The creation of harmonious relationships is a continuous process of interaction to make marital changes between partners and within oneself. The psychological view is that, for the sake of attaining mutual satisfaction, marriage is almost constant and culturally decided. Joy, affection, confidence, and feelings in a happy marital life are needed.

Katie Raetz.2011,In the field of psychology, birth order has always been a touchy topic. Many researchers have attempted to categorize particular personality traits based on birth order, but no consistent relationship has been established. The current research looked at a random sample of 10,000 married couples to see if birth order affects individual and couple marital satisfaction.

It also looked at why couples with the same birth order had a higher degree of marital satisfaction than couples with different birth orders, as well as the general question of why people are drawn to people who are identical to them. Person and couple satisfaction, as well as the five styles of married couples from Prepare/Enrich, were tested hypotheses.

According to this report, birth order has no impact on marriage intimacy or satisfaction. Although this research focused solely on marital satisfaction, while Allred and Poduska examined overall happiness, the two may be related. There was no separation between the sexes. The researcher expected this result to be confirmed in the current analysis, but it was not. Only children are often identified as having first or third-born personality traits, so, interestingly, this result wasn't observed inhomogeneous firstborn couples or third-born couples.

The study's drawbacks include the fact that those who take Prepare/Enrich are either doing extremely well in their marriage or doing extremely poorly. While a stratified, national sample was used to reduce bias, it was not a completely random sample. Another drawback is that there has been very little study on the effects of birth order, with even fewer studies in the area that have been repeated. Since this is such a new and challenging area of psychology, it can be difficult to come up with congruent or important results that can be repeated.

The tests conducted in this analysis should be replicated with a larger sample size to see whether statistically meaningful results could be obtained. It's also possible to investigate the relationship between birth order, personality, and marital styles or marital satisfaction. Another possibility for future research in this area may be to investigate why homogeneous only child couples seem to be more devitalized than homogeneous first or third born couples, by looking at how personality characteristics in each of the birth orders vary even though only children are often compared to first and youngest children. The influence of birth order on couple happiness and desire could be investigated in a variety of ways.

Parent's Influence on Marital Life of the Single-child

Wang Jie (2003), an expert on marriage issues with the Tianjin Academy of Social Sciences, pointed out some of the advantages and disadvantages of being a singlechild during their marital time. In 1979, some 6.1 million parents issued a single-child family certificate. Today, their children have grown up and have reached the legal age of marriage. This article addresses some of the benefits and drawbacks of the marriage of the only child to those children who have grown up in a family with their sisters or brothers.

One statement that is helpful to point out under this topic is parent's interference in their marriage. Parents of one-child families usually hold higher expectations for their kids' marriage. Very often, they would interfere with their children's mating and marriage lives, which may add the difficulties for the younger couple to have a happy and harmonious marriage.

Social Maturity of Single-Child

Feiring and Lewis (1984) reported that single children have uniquely connected social networks with fewer friends, compared to first-borns. They also added that single-child have unique social networks with smaller networks with fewer friends, compared to firstborn children. Some studies from Blake (1989); Claudy et al. (1979) have reported that single-child are more outgoing and more involved in extracurricular activities and are more acceptable to their peers than children. There is no such thing as a higher level of acceptance. And there is some proof that single-child are more popular socially. For example, if the children chose the sides, teachers reported that only one child was chosen.

Concerning particular social activities, Blake (1989) states that single-child are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities, music, drawing, cultural events, radio hearing, reading journals, reading books, and solitary play, as well as to have no discrepancies with the general social participation. But other researchers such as Kitzmann et al., 2002; Downey, Douglas B, and Condrón, 2004, indicated that social and behavioral abilities are only marginally degraded to adolescents, are less able to communicate between peers, and are more likely to be victims and aggressors. In a

survey of 70 students, Falbo (1978) found that there were fewer friends in general but equal numbers among close friends and fewer clubs than those with siblings. Polit (1984) indicated that one-parent families trespasses differently than other single-parent, two-child, or two-parent one-child families as a result of their social networks (Polit, 1984). Therefore, earlier studies indicate that social behavior differences between the aged with and without siblings may differ by parental divorce.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The child without any sibling is normally known as a Single-child. In this modern era, single-child is the preference of many parents. Some parents preferred single-child even in earlier days due to their reasons. This leads to creating a vast area of difference between the child with siblings and the child without siblings (Single-child). It automatically creates behavioral changes in single-child. This behavioral pattern influences mental health to create balance in all the changes happening in a single child's life.

This type of lifestyle may result in good terms when the single-child is living alone. But if that person is getting married, it would be difficult to handle the marital life. They have to be prepared well to share their life with someone is the best remedy to handle the marital life. This study focused on the behavior, mental health as well as adjustments made to maintain them.

Aims and Objectives

- To identify the socio-demographic factors.
- To find out marital well-being of adult single child.
- To analyse the relationship between spouse.

Research Design

The researcher adopted descriptive design as the study aims on describing the marital well-being of adult single child.

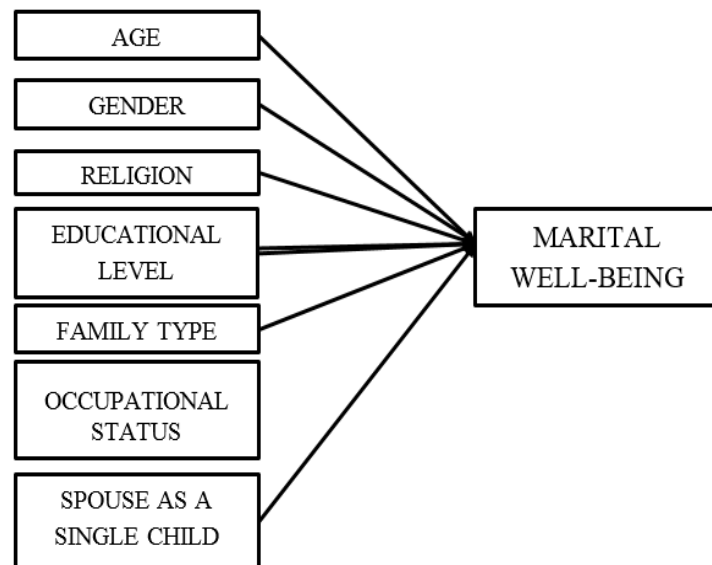
Universe and Sampling

The researcher considered the population of adult single children residing within the Trichy Corporation as the universe of the study. The Trichy Corporation, located in Tamil Nadu, India, encompasses a diverse population, making it suitable for examining the impact of age on marital well-being among single children in this specific geographical area.

Snowball Sampling

To ensure an inclusive sample, the researcher employed snowball sampling. This sampling technique involves initially selected a few participants who met the inclusion criteria and then asked them to refer other eligible individuals with their network.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



HYPOTHESIS

Based on the review of the literature, the following main and supportive hypotheses were formulated to meet the research questions.

H1: There was a significant relationship exist between socio-demographic data and the marital well-being of the respondents.

The significant hypothesis has tested the relationship between the various dimensions of socio-demographic variables like age, gender, religion, caste, educational qualification, occupational status, and with the dimensions of marital well-being of the single-child in adulthood stage like communication, intimacy, concern for relation, commitment, personal characteristics, and romanticism.

DATA SAMPLES

The study was conducted among the single children in the adulthood stage in the Trichy Corporation provided with the questionnaire. 100 respondents supported the study.

Procedure for data collection

The researcher used descriptive research design and collected data from whoever comes under adult single child in around Tiruchirappalli city by using snow ball sampling method.

STATISTICAL IMPLEMENTS

From the collected samples the data has been statistically analyzed using a correlation, t- test, and one way analysis. The SPSS used to testing the hypothesis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To examine the relationship between dimensions of the socio-demographic and dimensions of marital well-being of the single-child in the adulthood stage, using Z-test.

In the socio demographic data with regard to the age of the respondents from 23 to 40 years. The average ages of the respondents are 35 years. Regarding religion majority of the respondents (88 percent) are Hindus. Regarding occupational status of the respondents' majority of the respondents (80 percents) age was working.

Table 1: Karl Pearson Correlation Between Age And Marital Well-Being Of The Respondents

S.No	Source	p-value
1.	Communication	.149
2.	Intimacy	.113
3.	Concern for relation	.043
4.	Commitment	.024
5.	Personal characteristics	.118
6.	Romanticism	.057
7.	Marital Well-being overall	.086

Karl Pearson's Co-efficient of Correlation was used to find out the relationship between Age of the respondents and dimensions of Family relationship. It was found that there was statistically not significant relationship with regard to the dimensions communication ($r=.149$, $p>0.01$), intimacy ($r=.113$, $p>0.01$), concern for relation ($r=.043$, $p>0.01$), commitment ($r=.028$, $p>0.01$), personal characteristics ($r=.118$, $p>0.01$), romanticism ($r=.057$, $p>0.01$), and marital well-being overall ($r=.086$, $p<0.01$) and marital relationship of the respondents. In this research, average age of the respondents was 35, so they were older children so they might behave matured due to parents and friends emotional support, guidance and practical assistance.

Older single children might have more time to establish personal and career goals before entering into marriage. This can contribute to higher marital well-being as they were more likely to have a clearer sense of self and be better prepared for a committed partnership, furthermore supportive relationship such as parents, friends, and extended family, which can positively impact on their marital well-being. This support system can provide guidance, emotional support, and practical assistance during the various stages of marriage (Zhang & Hayward, 2006).

Controversy report, that age at marriage of single children often marry at a younger age compared to individuals with siblings. This can impact their marital well-being, as marrying at a age might present challenges related to emotional maturity, financial stability, and relationship development (Umberson et al., 2010).

Table 2: One way analysis variance between religion and marital well-being of the respondents

S.No	Dimensions	SS	df	MS	F	P value
1.	Communication					
	Between Groups	37.670	2	18.835	.188	.830
	Within Groups	5725.263	57	100.443		
	Total	5762.933	59			
2.	Intimacy					
	Between Groups	87.081	2	43.540	.427	.654
	Within Groups	5807.653	57	101.889		
	Total	5894.733	59			
3.	Concern for relation					
	Between Groups	583.187	2	291.549	.874	.424
	Within Groups	19082.546	57	334		.782
	Total	19665.733	59			
4.	Commitment					
	Between Groups	141.272	2	70.636	1.294	.284
	Within Groups	3110.912	57	54.577		
	Total	3252.183	59			
5.	Personal characteristics					
	Between Groups	23.105	2	11.553	.452	.638
	Within Groups	1456.145	57	25.546		
	Total	1479.250	59			
6.	Romanticism					
	Between Groups	51.452	2	25.726	1.522	.227
	Within Groups	963.532	57	16.904		
	Total	1014.983	59			
7.	Marital well-being					
	Between Groups	3850.262	2	1925.131	.727	.488
	Within Groups	151006.588	57	2649.238		
	Total	154856.850	59			

G1-Hindu, G2-Musilm, G3-Christian

One way Analysis of Variance between religion and marital well-being of the respondents. There was a significant difference between religion and marital well-being of the respondents with regard to the dimensions concern for relation (F=.874,p>0.05) commitment (F=1.294, P>0.05) romanticism (F=1.522,P>0.05) and overall marital well-being(F=.727, P>0.05). However, there was no significant difference between religion and marital well-being of the respondents with regard to the dimensions communication (F=.188, P<0.05) , intimacy (F=.427, P<0.05) and personal characteristics (F=452, P<0.05).

Table 3: T Test Between Occupational Status And Marital Well-Being Of The Respondents

S.No	Dimensions	occupational status				F	df	P value
		Working (173)		Non working (47)				
		M	SD	M	SD			
1.	Communication	52.90	10.515	52.63	4.207	2.879	8	.095
2.	Intimacy	50.96	10.430	54.50	6.094	1.883	58	.175
3.	Concern for relation	90.63	19.555	92.88	4.291	5.595	58	.021
4.	Commitment	36.33	7.826	36.00	4.276	1.572	58	.215
5.	Personal Characteristics	21.73	5.340	21.88	1.885	4.882	58	.031
6.	Romanticism	17.33	4.301	16.25	4.301	.613	58	.437
7.	Marital well-Being overall	269.88	54.586	274.13	19.903	2.895	58	.094

The independent 't' test results showed that there was a significant difference between occupational status and marital well-being of the respondents with regard to the dimensions communication (F=2.879, p>0.05), Intimacy (F=1.883, p>0.05), Concern for relation (F=5.595, p>0.05), Commitment (F=1.572, p>0.05), Personal characteristics (F= 4.882, p>0.05), and Overall Marital well-being (F=2.895, p>0.05). However, there was no significant difference between romanticism (F=.613, p<0.05) and marital well-being of the respondents. In this research most of the respondents were working and also living with better financial independence. Other research conducted in South Korea, it was observed that single children had higher levels of occupational prestige compared to individuals with siblings (Park, 2017). Women from single child families have higher level of occupational status, better financial independence, and increased decision-making power within the family (Ram, B. et al. 2019).

CONCLUSIONS

Marital well-being encompasses multiple interconnected factors that contribute to relationship satisfaction and stability. Effective communication, emotional stability, concern for relation, commitment, intimacy and conflict resolution strategies these factors all play significant roles in shaping the marital well-being. Age plays a significant role in shaping the marital well-being of single children. While younger single children may face unique challenges related to early marriage and relationship formation, older single children often possess advantages such as increased relationship readiness, communication skills, and financial stability. The occupational status of children can be influenced by marital status, but single children often benefit from higher educational attainment and get prestigious occupation due to increased parental pressure and attention from their childhood.

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