

Marriage Values: Unifying the Bond

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Abstract-Marriage and family have existed in all human societies. It has been a universal social institution. Basically marriage involves a regulation of the family society and reproduction of children. The structure of this institution rearranging the relationships, they are more responsive towards marriages like companionate marriage. "At the core of a companionate marriage are friendship and trust and the belief that both partners have equal responsibility in all domains of the marriage. These type of marital relationship prioritize communication, they ease the financial burdens, maintain equality and basically they maintain the work/life balance. Society is experiencing the new transformed visions regarding relationships, institutions, ethics and values. In this paper we will try to focus on such values which are responsible to stabilize the marital relationship.

Institution of marriage has been witnessing several transformations over the last several decades. Impact of modernization and globalization are reconstructing the structure and nature of marriage across the globe. The structure of this institution rearranging the relationships, they are more responsive towards marriages like companionate marriage. "At the core of a companionate marriage are friendship and trust and the belief that both partners have equal responsibility in all domains of the marriage. They share the economic burdens and child rearing and they believe that both partners' sexual needs and wishes should be clearly articulate and fulfilled". (Wallerstein, Blakeslee)

According to Judith S. Wallerstein and Sandra Blakeslee individuals in a companionate marriage need to recognize that when the children are young and career issues are pressing, their own needs as individuals have to be placed on the back burner. They further explain that "These couples know that people living side by side experience inevitable conflicts and discord that must be confronted openly. They understand that mutual commitment is what holds the marriage together and it is essential element in any marriage." These type of marital relationship prioritize communication, they ease the financial burdens, maintain equality and basically they maintain the work/life balance.

Different societies formulated their own definitions of incest, marriage partners, their orientations in families, and their ideal post marital residence. Marital rituals probably developed in very early human societies.

Family has taken on a much extensive meaning to incorporate various combinations of persons of different genders, familial or non-familial relationships, friends etc. if we talk about values, the "traditional family" was highly valued by religious right. Kinship endures the major concern.

In India's history, and currently in certain regions, a joint family plays a significant role in the Indian culture. For generations, India has had a prevailing tradition of the joint family system. It is a system under which extended members of a family – parents, children, the children's spouses and their offspring, etc. – live together. Usually, the oldest male member is the head in the joint Indian family system (Daigorō Chihara)

It was the familial value that the family support the elderly people, takes care of widows, disabled, unmarried members of the family and assist unemployed ones during the period of their downturn. They provide them security with the sense of security and togetherness. In the past traditional families men used to do heavy works and women perform household chores. Traditionally wives move in with their husbands home (his in-laws). Blood relationships (Father-Mother and siblings) were

stronger than marital relationships (Husband and wife). In patriarchal society women's best method of survival was to marry, and to marry well. Husbands become her legal guardian in every manner. All these activities unite the partners in a relationship for that particular purpose that they have certain family goals like personal satisfaction, companionship and procreation.

As Carole Pateman writes, "The patriarchal construction of the difference between masculinity and femininity is the political difference between freedom and subjection." For me, the concept of Patriarchy includes all the socio-political mechanisms, which I call Patriarchal Institutions, which reproduce and exert male dominance over women. Feminist theory typically characterizes Patriarchy as a social construction, which can be overcome by revealing and critically analysing its manifestations and institutions. (Tickner, Ann J.)

To understand the basic values of marriage we need to know certain views about marital relations, its aims and responsibilities. Over the last thirty years there has been a significant change in the marriage institution. The patterns are changing. If we go through the literature or current scenario any one could feel and observe the difference. Social structure is reconstructing; norms, rules, values, ethics are in reordering day by day.

On the basis of these changes two competing understandings emanated from the debate. The conjugal view and the other one is revisionist view. Traditionally marriage was an exclusive commitment between a man and women; they hold the marriage like a union between men and women who share the domestic life. They inclined towards permanency in relationships, monogamy, procreation (bearing and rearing child) which forms a bodily, an emotional, spiritual bond distinguished by its comprehensiveness and its fidelity (Richard and Linda Eyre)

In contrast modern society is increasingly adopting the revisionist views of marriage. In this particular view spouse

basically focus on personal fulfilment. This view priorities romantic love and sexual companionship. Procreation is also an important concern if they are willing to do just like other activities.. In this type partners mostly coordinate their activity.

For healthy marital relationship spouses must follow certain values like honesty in relationship, commitment is essential, fidelity and loyalty are the basic of relationship, parents are important but spouses pay attention towards both side, there should no violence in relationship, should live easy and simple life; hard work is important and spouses should enjoy its rewards, self-control and sacrifices are also valuable in relationship, children are also an important pillar in marriage institution, without child life remain incomplete.

An American sociologist W.J. Goode speculate through his studies that non western settings are highly influenced by industrialization and they are trying to adopt western economic system, family patterns would change in these societies. Families based on kinship and lineage system are vanishing rapidly and it is giving rise to the 'nuclear Families' (J. William)

In the west, family patterns across the world getting more complex. Evidences and studies suggested that the ideology of the western family, with its emphasis on companionship and romantic love is spreading the globe, even in setting with very little progress towards industrialization. (Cherlin 2012). The power of the husband is declining and marital relationships are becoming more centered on love and companionship.

Moreover, at a theoretical level, it appears reasonable to assume that while contextual determinants undoubtedly shape the experience of marriage in any given setting, fundamental commonalities may still exist in the way humans experience marriage and these are worth exploring (Sandhya 2009).

In recent times marriage has seemingly a little bit less popular and more fragile where there is an optional setting for

having children which leads to cohabitation, divorce and re-marriage.

Sociological explanations for the long term decline in marriage include changing gender roles, the impact of feminism and female empowerment, economic factors such as the increasing cost of living and the individualisation associated with postmodernism.

Economic factors are more responsible factor for declining the marriage motif. Living expenses are increasing as well as cost of wedding is also not an easily manageable task. Before marriage every male and female wants to be financially strong. Changing gender roles are also a prominent factor; liberal feminists point out that now females are not limited till household work they are working outside, they do not have to get married in order to be financially secure and sometimes for them marriage seems like poor option.

In Postmodernists society, family structures are diversified and individuals have freedom of choice. Now marriage has become the matter of individual choice. Due to this postmodernism there is less impact of social stigma related to remarrying, after a divorce, dissolution of unhealthy relationship or cohabitation.

With the association with Ulrich beck, Anthony Giddens argue that like having more freedom declination in marriage is not as simple. People are less likely to get married because of structural changes making life more uncertain. People may want to get married, but living in late modern world means marriage doesn't seem like a sensible option. According to Giddens, in pre-modern era there was no intimacy in love relationship. Romantic love based upon intimacy was impossible in the social environment where most marriages were contracted, not on the basis of mutual sexual attraction, but economic circumstances'(Giddens)

Ulrich Beck also argues that fewer people getting married is because of an increase in 'risk Consciousness'- people see that nearly half of all marriages end in divorce and so they are less willing to take the risk and get married. He also talks about individualisation- he hypothesized that individual behaviour was becoming less bound by traditional norms and values and sources of collective identity such as social class; due to individualization traditional values or sense of social commitments are not so important and it gravitate people towards cohabitation and serial monogamy rather than long term commitment of a marriage.

Marriage may have different implications in different cultures, its functions, its purposes and forms may differ from society to society. Vision has change, perspectives differs but we cannot say that marriage has lost its emphasis, the thing is that rising generation are now getting more influenced by the modern and western values, their perception, perspective and ideologies are getting reshaped within the structure of westernization, modernization, urbanization and reformed legislations. It also impacted the connotation of marriage within our Indian society. The modern generation has come up with new and fresh convictions as well as the marriage institution has also been reformed as a sacrament of companionship, trust, love, freedom and equality.

There is a change in the aim and purpose of marriage, mate selection by their terms and choices. The selection has become ample wide to include the inter-sub castes or inter-caste marriages. They want a good companion as a life partner rather sticking to caste or any specific identity. Their criteria also switch towards employment, prestige, working status, friend circle and accord attitude etc. that shows that they want to make themselves economically sound and mentally strong before they step into a phase of marriage. But sometimes these positivity turns into negativity due to individualistic values they focus themselves on personal selves and such attitudes sometimes result in arguments, disagreement and disputes with their

spouses and it tends to divorce or desertion. Although the couples are trying to cling with companionship of husband and wife on the foundation of affinity, trust and mutual consent but they have to follow certain values with these modern attitudes towards marriage and life partner.

If we all behaved with healthy values, our conflict would be limited. If we are insensitive to our spouse, they become defensive. We heard the phrase "Opposite attracts" but it is not universally applicable with every notion. Research shows that happy and long married couples share more similarities than differences. Over time, even small differences in personality or liking can create void in relationship.

In modern scenario mostly spouses are working, they earn on the basis of future planning, as we have discussed that they want themselves economically sound and mentally strong and if both are working it becomes easy for them so it is mandatory that they should discuss their values relating to money, family, investments, planning for kids because both are career-driven and unwilling to leave their profession. So discussion and planning together always find a way or alternative solution.

Social theorist has suggested that in the context of contemporary self-help culture (Giddens) and the breakdown of community and extended kin networks (Bauman, Beck) couple relationships are becoming ever-more fragile and a culture of individualisation is emerging.

Gaur, Sangal, Bagaria explain in his book "A foundation course in Human Values and Professional Ethics explain the concept of harmony in the family he set some proposals to establish the harmony in family.

1. Relationship IS and it exists between the self (I) and the other self(I).
2. The self (I) has feelings in relationship, these feelings are between 'I' and 'I'.

3. These feelings in the self (I) are definite i.e. they can be identified with definiteness.
4. **Recognizing** and **fulfilling** these feelings leads to **Mutual Happiness** in Relationship.

Where 'I' is considered as self and the other I is the other self. In the relationship we need to understand the other one's self just like 'Our Self'. We need to think that everyone has some desires, some expectations just like every human being. So in a marriage if a partner tries to understand the spouse's desire and expectations the relationship will be perfect. It develops the harmony in relationship and increases the mutual understanding and happiness.

In a book No Cheating, No Dying, Elizabeth Weil sums up in her project that after a year of experimentation with various marriage improvement options meant to insure that their marriage was in healthy condition Weil concluded "I had a good marriage before I spent a year improving it, and I have a good marriage now". She then adds, "in fact, my marriage is better, truly better. Although not in the ways I'd expected...."

In other words, 'Perfect' in marriage does not require living-happy-ever-after in la-la land. Rather, it takes being able to talk together cooperatively about situations that have created negative feelings. As I explain in her book 'From conflict to Resolution', a couple's ability to partner in the movement from conflict to resolution sustains feelings of personal well-being and mutual goodwill.

Some might call it emotional intimacy, whatever the label, women especially, being able to talk together about what upsets her spouse most significantly enhances her sense of marital satisfaction. What an irony, that a spouse who feels troubled and shares what troubles him brings forth increases in marriage satisfaction for the wife.

So we need to think that a home without mutual respect, love, consideration becomes a battleground of familial conflict. If one

or both the spouse are unwilling to change and learn to love and respect each other, this might will be grounds for discord and divorce.

Lacking of human values in marriage tends to decline the marriage and it is not as simple as it just being about individual choice. With the help of some changes in attitude and behaviour we could hope for the stabilise marriage. Love and trust are vital components to the foundation of a strong and stable marriage that endures, but love and trust alone are not enough. Couple have to understand that it's not a spouse's responsibility to make you happy it's a mutual corporation. Happiness and satisfaction are the fruit of good choices so a couple should not rely on happiness to produce love in marriage, they should be honest in relationship, relationship needs commitment and loyalty, generosity, kindness, self-control and friendly relation.

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