PERSONALITY TRAITS OF IT LITIGANTS (THOSE WHO APPLIED FOR DIVORCE) IN CHENNAI

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ABSTRACT

The researcher has selected 399 Information technology professionals to investigate the level of personality traits those who approached the family courts in Chennai for marital split. Neo Five Factor Inventory by McCrea Costa was used to collect the data from them. The data were collected by interview technique. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the findings. Results showed that 96% of the divorce litigants have very low conscientiousness, 70% of them have high or very high level of neuroticism and 85% of them have very low level of agreeableness. Study emphasized that the psychological aspects of these professionals needs to be taken care.

Keywords: Agreeableness, Divorce, Extraversion, IT Professionals, Personality Traits.

1. INTRODUCTION

Marriage (also called matrimony or wedlock) is defined [1] as a social union or legal contract between people called spouses that establishes rights and obligations between the spouses, and their children, and between the spouses and their in-laws. The definition of marriage varies according to different cultures, but it is principally an institution in which interpersonal relationships, usually intimate and sexual, are acknowledged. When defined broadly, marriage is considered a cultural universal. In many cultures, marriage is formalized via a wedding ceremony.

Divorce (or the dissolution of marriage) is the termination of a marital union, the canceling and/or reorganizing of the legal duties and responsibilities of marriage, thus dissolving the bonds of matrimony between a married couple under the rule of law of the particular country and/or state. Divorce laws vary considerably around the world, but in most countries it requires the sanction of a court or other authority in a legal process [2].

Mainstream, 2009 [3] reported as IT/IT es industry in India got tremendous boost in the past decade due to factors like liberalization and globalization of the Indian economy coupled with favorable government policies. This sector of the sunshine industry brought a new work environment and sea changes in the employment trends. Service providers characterized this sector by adhering to strict deadlines set by their customers, working in different time zones, interdependency in teams, multitasking, increased interaction with offshore clients and extended work hours [4]. With the new strains and challenges that have emerged for the Indian family, the latter has been going through a new kind of transition.

It has been wavering between traditional and Western models. The fast-changing social and family environment has thrown up new challenges, particularly to the young people, like growing instability, lack of communication, changing attitude towards sex, changing roles of husband and wife, and tensions of fast life. All these have resulted in the lack of harmony among married couples. The decline in harmony can be associated with values that emphasize individualistic, materialistic and self-oriented goals over family well-being.

Haghshenas, 2006 [5] quoted that the skyrocketing increase in divorce and the decrease of the average duration of marriage or forced and imposed livings makes it necessary to review the issue of marital satisfaction and the factors contributing to the survival and prolongation or breakage of marital relationships [5].

The following figures are the global divorce rate.

- Sweden – 54.9%
- United States – 54.8%
- Russia – 43.3%
- United Kingdom – 42.6
- Germany – 39.4%
- Israel – 14.8%
- Singapore – 17.2%
- Japan – 1.9%
- Srilanka – 1.5%
- India – 1.1%

The website [6] *stated that* even though India still boasts of that nearly hundred percent of the marriages are a success, rapid urbanization and awareness of various rights are now instigating the divorce rate to shoot up. Empowerment of women has initiated the dissolution of marriage in urban areas as financially educated women are now open to the option of ending the relationship rather than to bear lifelong abuses silently. The campaigns on gender equality are now giving rise

to ego clashes between the husband and wife, especially if the wife too is the bread earner of the family.

lifeafterdivorce.blog.com. [7] 2012 reported that in 2006, Bangalore, the IT hub of India was recorded that 1,246 cases of divorce which was filed in the courts that pertain to the IT sector exclusively.

Divorce in Chennai

Karthika Gopalakrishnan, 2012 reported in [8] that the four family courts in the city recorded 3,742 cases of divorce and divorce by mutual consent in 2011. In 2010, as many as 3,803 cases had been filed in this court newly.

Personality is defined by various theorists in different ways. Similarly it was defined by the behavioral sciences [9] as follows. It is made up of the characteristic patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviors that make a person unique. In addition to this, personality arises from within the individual and remains fairly consistent throughout life. It is a dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences his or her cognitions, emotions, motivations, and behaviors in various situations.

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association [9], Personality Traits are enduring patterns of perceiving, relating to, and thinking about the environment and oneself that are exhibited in a wide range of social and personal contexts. Theorists generally assume that: Traits are relatively stable over time, constant; they do not usually change Traits differ among individuals, traits influence behavior. They consistently are used in order to help define people as a whole. Feist, Jess Feist, Gregory J. [10] described Traits as bipolar; and they vary along a continuum between one extreme and the other (e.g. friendly vs. unfriendly).

Lewis Goldberg [11] proposed a five-dimension personality model, nicknamed the "Big Five" Openness to Experience: the tendency to be imaginative, independent, and interested in variety vs. practical, conforming, and interested in routine. Conscientiousness: the tendency to be organized, careful, and disciplined vs. disorganized, careless, and impulsive. Extraversion: the tendency to be sociable, fun-loving, and affectionate vs. retiring, somber, and reserved. Ellis, Albert; Nussbaum, Mike Abrams et.al [12] coated that Agreeableness as the tendency to be softhearted, trusting, and helpful vs. ruthless, suspicious, and uncooperative.

Antrock, J.W. [13] also illustrated Neuroticism as the tendency to be calm, secure, and self-satisfied vs. anxious, insecure, and self-pitying.

Psychologists and sociologists have examined the relationship between personality traits and family outcomes such as marital satisfaction and fertility traits predict important life outcomes, such as health and longevity, marital success, and educational and occupational attainment. S Lundberg [14] assessed the personality of people is very useful as it helps understand them, their traits, biases and their preferences, and hence how they may be convinced. (Play to their preferences and traits).

Goldberg, L.R. [15] said that the Personality inventories are intended to be descriptive of stable differences in individual dispositions. There is much alternative taxonomy, but the Big Five are broadly accepted as a consistent and reliable categorization of attributes that people find important and useful in daily interactions. In an evolutionary context, the five-factor model may identify individual variations on behavioral dimensions that are significant to human social acceptance and status in groups.

Researchers have estimated that 25% of the variance in divorce risk can be attributable to the personality traits of the spouses. More specifically, people high in Neuroticism tend to divorce at relatively high rates. The main objective of the study was the assessment of level of personality traits for divorces among computer professionals those who have applied for divorce (litigants).

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Research Design

Research approach selected for the present study was a descriptive survey as it was aimed to assess the Personality Traits of computer professionals those who have applied for divorce.

2.2. Setting

The study was conducted at Family Courts, Madras High Court.

2.3. Sample

Information technology professionals those who have applied for divorce for the first time from their life partner in Family Court at Madras High Court.

2.4. Sample Size

A total of 412 samples were selected to collect the demographic profile. Among them only 399 computer professionals those who have applied for divorce (litigants) were consented for personality assessment. Non-probability convenient sampling technique was adopted to select the samples.

2.5. Description of the Tool

Part I enlists the Demographic Profile of the litigants which includes Monthly Income (in rupees per month), Type of Family, Type of Marriage and duration of marriage.

Part II is the assessment of personality trait by a standardized scale named Neo Five Factor Inventory by Costa & Mc Crae [16] which is named as NEO-Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI).

The NEO-FFI (Costa & McCrae, 1992) contains 60 including both positive and negative statements (12 questions per domain) representing the five personality domains namely Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. Each of these five

domains has six facets. Research ethics was considered throughout the study. Participant's information, Consent form obtained and confidentiality was assured. Analysis was carried out by both descriptive statistical methods. Frequency and Percentage distribution was used to assess the demographic variables.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Demographic Variables

3.1.1. *Percentage Distribution of Family Income*

Regarding the Monthly Income, nearly 46% of litigant's family income was more than 50,000 rupees; forty three percent of the litigant's income was between Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 50,000. It revealed that more number of litigant's income was > 50,000 per month (Fig.1).
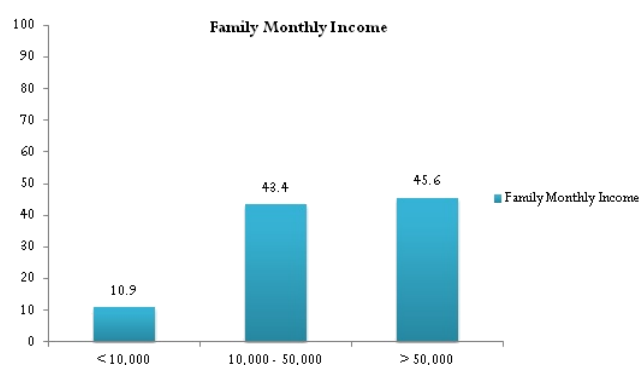

Fig.1: Percentage distribution of Family income

3.1.2. *Percentage Distribution of Type of Family*

The type of family revealed that out of 412 litigants nearly 59% were residing as nuclear family and joint family contributed about 40%. Among the study population most of the litigants were from nuclear family (Fig. 2). Among 412 samples, 2 of them (0.5%) did not reveal the data which was not included for analysis.
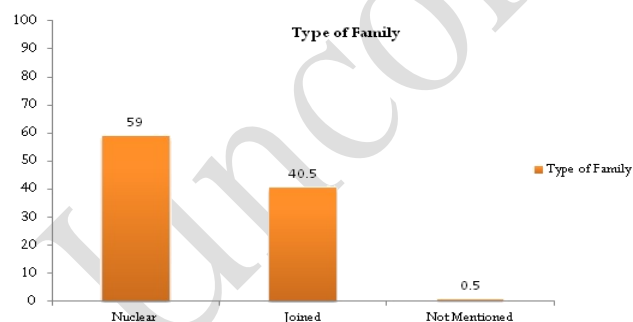

Fig. 2: Percentage distribution of type of family

3.1.3. *Percentage Distribution of Type of Marriage*

As far as the type of marriage is concerned nearly 77% of the arranged marriages had opted for marital disharmony whereas only 10% of the love marriages applied for divorce and 11.7% of the marriages were love cum arranged (Fig. 3).

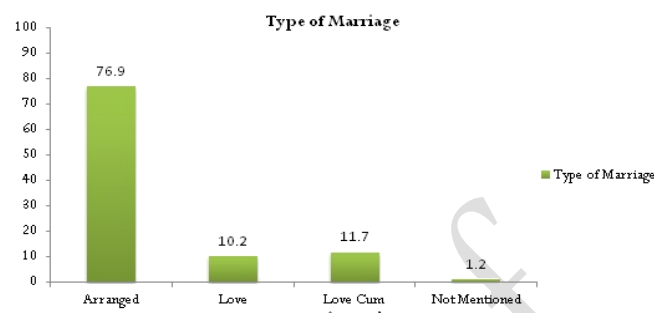Among 412 samples, 5 of them (1.2%) did not reveal the data.

Fig. 3: Percentage distribution of type of family

3.1.4. *Percentage Distribution of Duration of Marital Life*

In case of duration of marital life, about 60% of the litigants had applied for divorce within 1 to 3 years of married life and twenty five percentages of the litigants have approached the court for divorce in their 4-6 years of marital life. Results indicated that almost 81% of the marital discord was filed at the very early stage of the life (i.e.) between 1-7 years of married life (Fig. 4). Among 412 samples, 5 of them (1.2%) did not reveal the data.
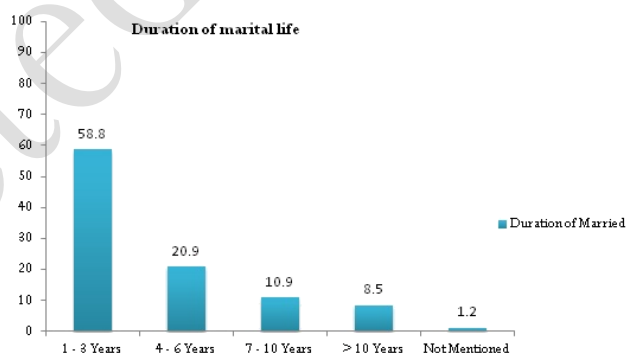

Fig. 4: Percentage distribution of duration of marital life

Based on the Personality Traits, the five traits are classified as Very High, High, Average, Low or Very Low. The classifications were done using international scoring and classification procedures given in Neo Five Factor. Classification of the Personality Traits of the divorce litigants of the present study is described below.

Nearly 95.7% of the divorce litigants have very low conscientiousness. Ozer, D. J.; Benet-Martínez, V. [17] cited as People who score low on conscientiousness tend to be more laid back, less goal-oriented, and less driven by success; they also are more likely to engage in antisocial and criminal behavior.

About 64.7% of the IT Professionals who opted for divorce have low or very low extraversion. Thompson, E.R. [18] discussed trait as of extraversion–introversion is a central dimension of human personality theories. Extraversion and introversion are typically viewed as a single continuum. Thus,

to be high on one it is necessary to be low on the other. Introverts tend to be more reserved and less outspoken in groups. They often take pleasure in solitary activities such as reading, writing, using computers.).

Nearly 87% of divorce litigants had average or low level of openness where Openness trait features characteristics such as imagination and insight, and those high in this trait also tend to have a broad range of interests. Low levels of openness indicate narrow level of imagination and insight and lesser

range of interest. Agreeableness trait assesses trust, altruism, kindness, affection, and other pro social behaviors.

Nearly 85.2% of the respondents of the present study have very low level of agreeableness. Individuals high in the trait, Neuroticism, tend to experience emotional instability, anxiety, moodiness, irritability, and sadness.

Nearly 70.5% of divorce litigants have high or very high level of neuroticism.

Table 1. Levels of Personality Traits, Percentage Distribution of Personality Traits

S.No	Overall Personality Traits	Very High		High		Average		Low		Very Low		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Neuroticism	95	23.8	185	46.4	107	26.8	10	2.5	2	.5	399	100.0
2	Extraversion	1	.3	8	2.0	19	4.8	113	28.3	258	64.7	399	100.0
3	Openness	0	.0	15	3.8	221	55.4	125	31.3	38	9.5	399	100.0
4	Agreeableness	0	.0	4	1.0	12	3.0	43	10.8	340	85.2	399	100.0
5	Conscientiousness	0	.0	5	1.3	7	1.8	5	1.3	382	95.7	399	100.0

N=399

4. DISCUSSION

In the present study high level of neuroticism contributed 70.5%. Similarly Very low level of agreeableness and conscientiousness were found to be 85.2% and 95.7 % respectively. These findings were supported by the researchers Amato and Previti [19] who found that personality problems were the fifth most commonly blamed causes of divorce, and were cited by approximately 10% of divorced individuals.

Among the personality variables that have been considered as predictors of divorce and relationship dissolution, neuroticism (a generalized tendency to experience negative effect, such as fear, sadness, embarrassment, anger, guilt) has gained the strongest empirical support [20]. Higher levels of neuroticism have been consistently linked to elevated rates of divorce. Other researchers have also found that neuroticism is associated with marital dis-satisfaction [21] suggesting that neuroticism may not be uniquely linked to divorce after controlling for marital happiness.

Alternatively, neurotic individuals may be difficult to live with and/or may easily give up on marriage [22].

Low levels of agreeableness and high levels of extraversion have also been considered as predictors of divorce and relationship dissolution. Kelly and Conley [21] found weak associations between these personality variables and marital dissolution, whereas Bentler and Newcomb [23] found that high extraversion predicted divorce for husbands only.

5. CONCLUSION

The present study was under taken with a aim to know the role of personality traits in marital split. Results revealed that each traits are responsible in maintain the stability of marital stability. However this attempt can be a base for further research to progress exclusively to study about each personality traits in detail.

Limitation

The study subjects included were either both the applicants and or the respondents who willingly involved in personality assessment. It did not focus on either the husbands or wives exclusively.

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