

RESEARCH PAPER

APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCE

Factors for Successful Relationship in Marriage: An Investigation in Sikkim

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ABSTRACT

Marriage is a societal institution and a promise where two individuals come together to form a living. Their relationship is socially approved and sanctioned by custom and law. Having a successful relationship in marriage is crucial for a couple because it will have an optimistic impact on the overall wellbeing of both the couples and their children. The current study aims to explore the factors that have contributed for a successful marriage relationship in Sikkim. To achieve this, a snowball sampling technique method was used to discover 50 successful married couples (25 male and 25 female) who have been together for more than 20 years based on their marital relationship, satisfaction and happiness. An interview schedule was prepared to interview the respondents to find out the factors that have led to successful married life. Such study holds significance in today's society where divorce rates are increasing at an alarming rate ruining both the couples and their innocent children.

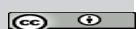
Keywords: Successful marriage life, relationship, marital satisfaction, happy couples, Sikkim

As per the census 2011, Sikkim is the third highest state in India, which accounts for 2.16 percentage of population being divorced or separated. This figure is quite alarming and disturbing. Therefore, it is very important to study the factors that have led to a successful relationship in marriage among the couples in our state.

Marriage is a societal institution and a promise where two individuals come together to form a living. Their relationship is socially approved and sanctioned by custom and law. Marriage signifies a commitment to a lifelong partnership. For those who value commitment and monogamy, marriage can be a meaningful way to express their dedication to their partner. A good marriage involves being open to each other about feelings, thoughts, beliefs, values, hopes, worries, fears, dreams and ambitions.

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Since marriage is also perceived as a foundation for raising a family, parenting plays a very important role for its success. It involves nurturing, guiding and supporting a child's development, encompassing physical, emotional, social and cognitive needs, while also setting boundaries and fostering a positive parent-child relationship. Positive parenting characterized by warmth, responsiveness and clear expectations is linked to better outcomes for children, including improved academic performance, fewer behavioral problems and stronger mental health. The success of the children lies in the hands of a happy and a successful marriage relationship.

The significance of a better youth in creating a better society can never be overlooked. As a result successful relationship in marriage is a base for a birth of a healthy and an intellectual youth which can contribute numerously for a better Sikkim's society. Therefore, it is very important to study the factors that have led to a successful relationship in marriage in the state which will save many upcoming couples from getting divorced. It will also help the couples to understand the importance of the progress of their children. This will definitely lead to a happy family and a healthy society. Hence, the study holds significance.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Marriage is a legally and socially approved unification, usually between a man and a woman, governed by laws, rules, customs, beliefs, and attitudes that define the spouses' rights and responsibilities, as well as the status of their offspring. Moreover, that marriage exists to bring a man and a woman together as husband and wife to be father and mother to any children their union produces. For a unique and sustainable relationship in marriage, couples should increase their relationship by understanding and applying relational communication skills to each other (Nyarks, Aniekan, 2023). Successful relationship in marriage is advantageous for both the couples as well as their children. The progress and the success of the children very much depend on the relationship shared by their parents.

Successful relationship in marriage is inevitable for the betterment of the society. Some of the factors for a successful married life are economic strength, communication, trust and respect, compromise, patience, family dynamics, sense of humour, emotional support, affection and balancing priorities (Mohammed, Suhail M. 2023). It is also governed by consultation with each other, honesty, prayer, duo participation in decision making, commitment and friendliness (Mohammad H. Asoodeha et.al. 2010). Intrinsic motivation among the couples has also led to the success of their married relationship (Jose Abreu-Afonso William and Maria Meireles Ramos, 2022).

Communication activities such as engaging in small talk and providing verbal and non-verbal messages of affection, constructive communication, and implementation of effective communication skills such as using "I" instead of "you" plays a crucial role in promoting high levels of marital satisfaction. Further, the quality of time spent together, optimal problem solving, and conflict management skills also promote high levels of marital satisfaction (Plooy, Kobus Du and Beer, Ronél de. 2018). In addition, factors such as intimacy between the couples and their good health can never be ignored (Zahra, Khezri. 2020). Healthy relationship depends on constructive communication rather than a destructive one (De Netto, Priscilla Maria. 2021). Some of the most common factors leading to successful relationship in marriage are friendship, love, and similar backgrounds and interests (Bachand, Leslie L. *et al.* 2001).

While exploring the attitudes of the young adults towards marriage in India, it is changing with time. Males are accepting their responsibility in marriage life while females view themselves as equal to male in roles of the society. Acceptance rate on social rituals and myths has decreased and participant's view

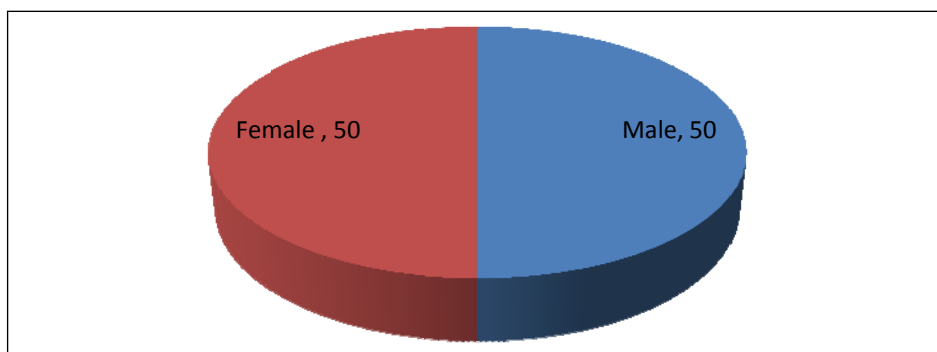
mutual compatibility as important domain for the success of marriage in life. Present youth believes that it is not only wife's responsibility to care about household chores and husbands responsibility on how to manage the finances of the family. Majority believes that status and responsibility of both male and female is important after marriage. Females give more emphasis on financial aspect of husband's family for marriage and males view that sexual relationship increases bond between couple in marriage (Yadav, Kanak and Rakhee, 2018).

It is very important to know the factors that have led to the successful relationship in marriage among the thriving couples in Sikkim. Such study will certainly enlighten our newly married couples and pave way for a successful relationship on one hand and further give birth to progressive youths on the other hand empowering the state economically, socially and culturally.

METHODOLOGY

The study is based on both secondary and primary information. The secondary data and information were collected from various journals and articles. The primary data is collected from 50 heterosexual couples from Sikkim that had been married for duration of at least 20 years. The snowball sampling technique was used to track the respondents. At the end of each interview, the researcher requested the names of other couples that they knew who were having a successful relationship in marriage for more than 20 years and might be willing to participate in the study. In this way 100 successful couples were interviewed (50 males and 50 females). The investigation was based on both exploratory and analytical methods. Simple statistical technique was utilized both for exploratory and analytical purpose. Descriptive statistics – charts and graphs were utilized mainly for exploratory and analytical purpose. The statistical software namely Microsoft Excel 2010 had been used for processing, analyzing and finally interpretation of the primary data.

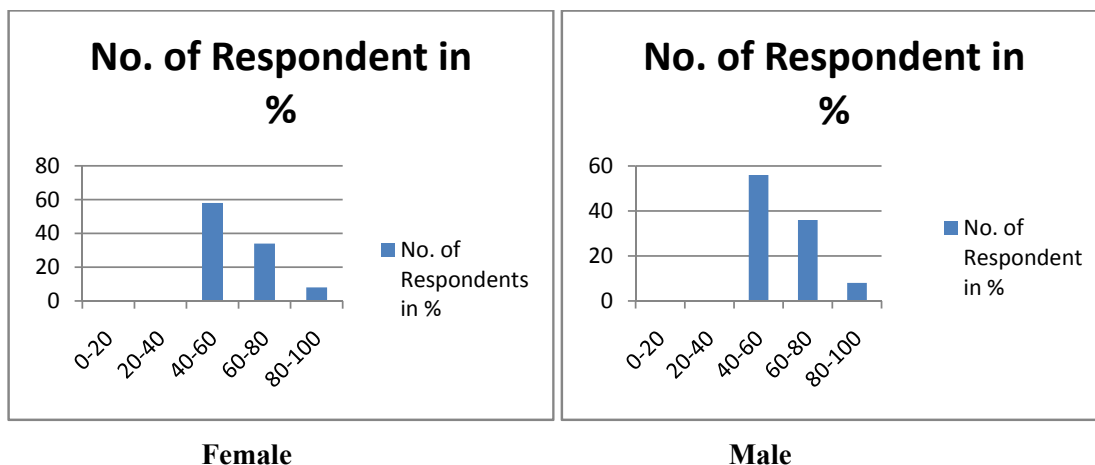
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS



Field Survey February, 2025

Fig. 1: Number of Respondents

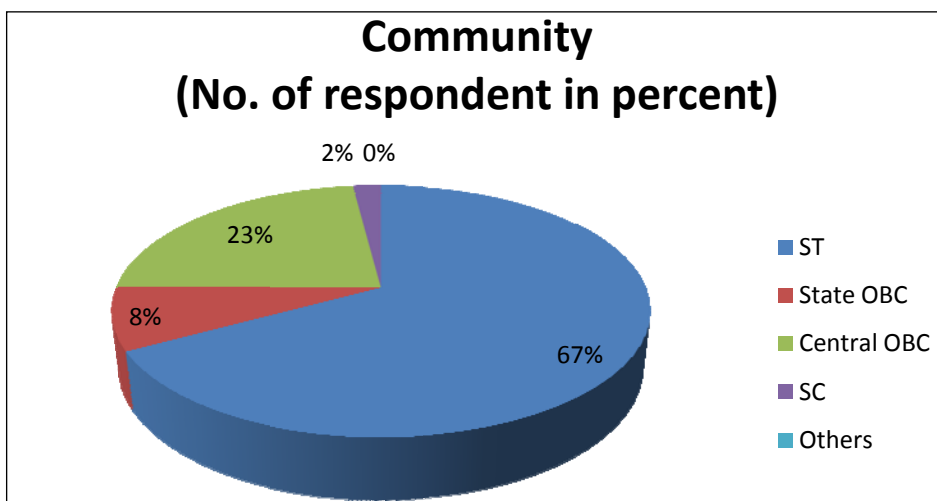
Fig. 1 above shows the number of male and female respondents. A total of 50 successful couples in Sikkim were interviewed using snowball sampling method. Out of 100 respondents, 50 were males and 50 were females.



Field Survey February, 2025

Fig. 2: Age of the respondents in percent

Fig. 2 above shows the age of the respondents. 58 percent of the female respondents fall under the age group of 40 to 60 years, 34 percent fall under the age group of 60 to 80 years and 8 percent fall under the age group above 80 years. On the other hand, 56 percent of the male respondents fall under the age group of 40 to 60 years, 36 percent were in the age group of 60 to 80 years and 8 percent fall under the age group above 80 years. There were not many differences in the age group of male and female in the study area.

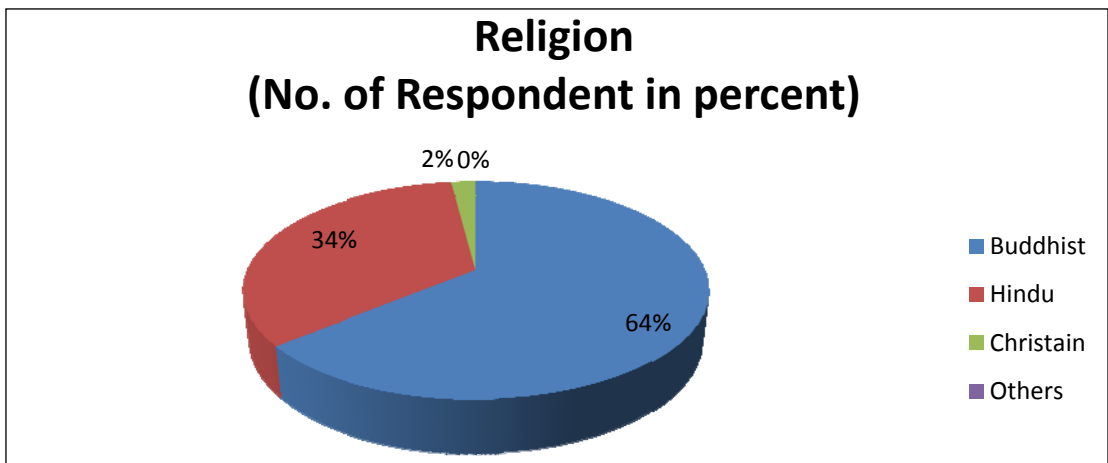


Field Survey February, 2025

Fig. 3: Community in percent

Fig. 3 above shows the community wise distribution of the respondents both male and female combined. It is found that 67 percent of the respondents were from Scheduled Tribe community; 8 percent were

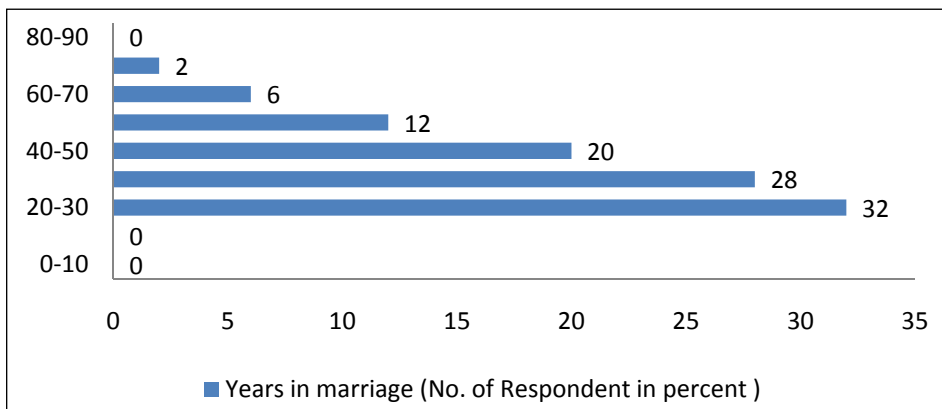
from Other Backward Class (Central) which included community such Chettri, Bahun and Pradhan; 23 percent were from Other Backward Class (State) which included Rai, Gurung and Manger here in the study. 2 percent of the respondents were from Scheduled Caste community.



Field Survey February, 2025

Fig. 4: Religion: Number of respondent in percent

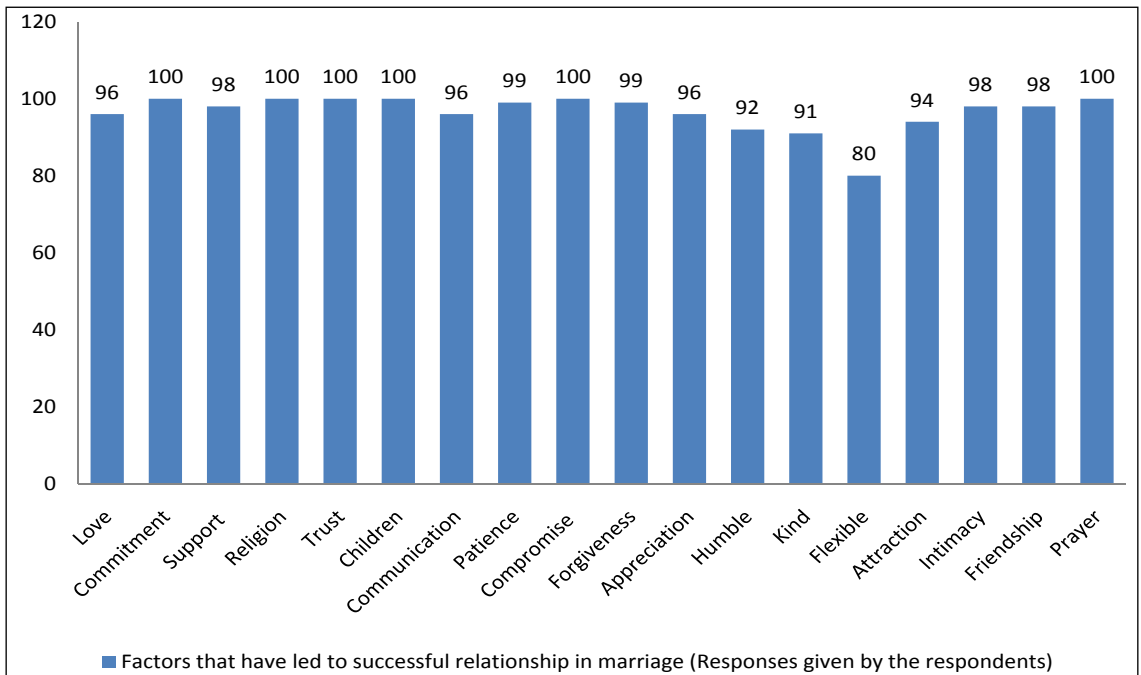
Fig. 4 above shows the religion wise distribution of the respondents both male and female combined. It is found that 64 percent of the respondents are Buddhist, 34 percent are Hindu and 2 percent are Christian.



Field Survey February, 2025

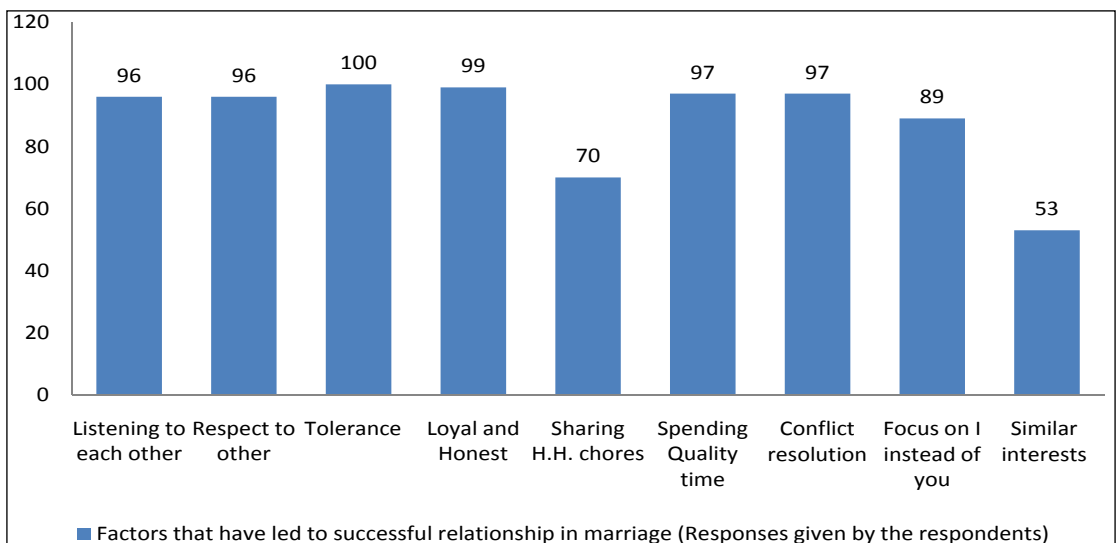
Fig. 5: Years in marriage of the respondent in percent

Fig. 5 above shows the years in marriage of the 100 respondents in the study area. It is found that 32 percent of the respondents have been in successful relationship in marriage for a period of 20 to 30 years; 28 percent for a period of 30 to 40 years; 20 percent for a period of 40 to 50 years; 12 percent are in successful relationship in marriage for a period of 50 to 60 years; 6 percent for a period of 60 to 70 years and 2 percent for a period of 70 to 80 years.



Field Survey February, 2025

Fig. 6 (a): Factors that have contributed to the successful relationship in marriage in the study area in percent



Field Survey February, 2025

Fig. 6 (b): Factors that have contributed to the successful relationship in marriage in the study area in percent

Fig. 6 (a) and 6 (b) above shows the various factors that have led to successful relationship in marriage in Sikkim. The responses given were as follows:

All the respondents agreed that commitment, religion, trust, their children, compromise, tolerance and prayers were some of the factors behind the successful relationship in their marriage. One of the respondent said she has successfully completed 25 years of her marriage on 9th February, 2025. According to her, prayer is one of the main reasons for the successful relationship in her marriage followed by children, compromise, tolerance, commitment, religion and forgiveness. 99 percent of the respondents said patience, forgiveness, loyalty and honesty were some of the factors that have led to the successful relationship in their marriage. 98 percent agreed factors such as support, intimacy and friendship have led to the success of their relationship in marriage. 97 percent believed it is because of spending quality time with each other and constructive conflict resolution method adopted by them when they were in bad times. 96 percent of the respondents said healthy communication, love, appreciation, listening to each other and respect for partner were some of the factors which were very helpful in maintaining good relationship with their partners. The other factors included attraction (supported by 94 % of the respondent); humble (supported by 92 %); kindness (supported by 91 %); focus on 'I' instead of 'You' (supported by 89 %); flexibility (supported by 80 %) and similar interest (supported by 53 % of the respondents).

SUGGESTIONS

Marriage is inherently a very humble institution where two individuals come together; raise children, enhance love affairs and domestic sharing. Successful relationship in marriage plays a very important role in the society where children will get an opportunity to be nurtured in such a way that he or she will become a responsible and a good human being. A responsible and a good human being will definitely strive to develop a society into a place where everyone can live with dignity and equality. Some of the suggestions for achieving a successful relationship in marriage in the study area include:

- ☐ Compromising is the key to every successful relationship.
- ☐ Listen to each other.
- ☐ Put your relationship first.
- ☐ Remind your partner that you appreciate them.
- ☐ Practice honesty even when you are ashamed.
- ☐ Embrace the little things.
- ☐ Do fun and new things together regularly.
- ☐ Think before you speak.
- ☐ Be humble towards your partner.
- ☐ Always be flexible.
- ☐ Be kind to your partner and yourself.

- ☐ Be free and give quality time for your partner. This will help in building emotional intimacy and make bond stronger.
- ☐ Don't take each other for granted.
- ☐ Share household chores.
- ☐ Do things that will attract your partner.
- ☐ Focus on 'I' instead of 'You': When you feel yourself ignored or unheard use language such as "I feel unheard when we have discussions and I appreciate if you listen".
- ☐ Be transparent in your relationship and develop trust.
- ☐ Conflict resolution: Handle conflicts and disagreements with patience. Learn to fight fairly.
- ☐ In order to keep the spark alight, physical intimacy is necessary.
- ☐ Grow together rather alone.

Moreover as life changes, marriage overtime your priorities, interest and needs may shift. A successful marriage requires flexibility and willingness to adapt to new circumstances. This mutual growth and adaptability ensure the relationship remains vibrant and fulfilling, even after many years of together. It requires hard work and devotion from both the partners.

CONCLUSION

A happy marriage isn't a destination, it's a continuous journey. It requires hard work, effort and dedication from both the partners. Factors governing successful relationship in marriage included commitment, trust, children, religion, compromise, prayer, tolerance, forgiveness, patience, loyalty, honesty, spending quality time with each other, constructive conflict resolution, friendship, intimacy, support, love, communication, appreciation, respect for each other,, listening to each other, attraction, humble, kind, focus on 'I' instead of 'You' and sharing household chores. These are all critical elements of a strong and lasting marriage. However, the most important secrets of all are commitment. A happy marriage is built on the understanding that both partners are in it for the long haul. There will be tough time but marriage will remain strong as long as both individuals are committed to working through challenges. Remember that marriage is not about perfection but growth, understanding and shared experiences. By applying these principles and being willing to invest on each other you can create a fulfilling, loving and a lasting marriage. You can create the happy healthy marriage you have always dreamed of with forgiveness, prayer, tolerance, patience, empathy and care.

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