



Preferences in life partner selection in Jammu and Kashmir, Srinagar, North Kashmir, Baramullah, Bandipara and Kupwara

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Abstract

Preferences in life Partner Selection the ideal spouse is the most confusing process in the life of most young marriageable boys and girls. This paper sought to examine preferences in life partner Selection in terms of their personality traits, socio-economic status and physical beauty, Govt. Employee, Economically sound Family, Working Women, younger spouse, etc. A total of 600 participated in the study. Data was analyzed using, mean, standard deviation, one way analyses of variance. The result revealed that 94 percent of the female respondents had given preference to Govt. employee socio-economic status in Life Partner selection it is very important for security of the family, 56 percent of male respondents preferred working women, 95 percent male had preferred younger character and beauty life partner.

Keywords: life partner selection, J&K, spouse

Introduction

The focus of the present study is preferences in life partners Selection among Muslims in Kashmir. The understanding how people relate life partners Selection to their lives will provide a holistic view about new ways of selection. It will also elaborate the factors involved in transition of marital patterns in our society. Certainly, attainment of modern education among both sexes has a direct impact on people's preferences of life partners Selection. Therefore, the trend of late marriages has become more acceptable in Kashmiri society than the past decades. When people consider spouse selection, it is generally not only a personal matter rather a cultural one. Various factors influence this process round the globe such as educational background, parental influence, religion, socio-economic status and occupation, etc. Thus, Selection of life partner decisions, available choices in marital market and preferences for desired partner reflect the whole spectrum of societal norms. Therefore, in spite of varied cultural patterns, religious orientations. Selection of life partner's significance is universally accepted. It is the most important event in the life of all factor existence. The society is changing very rapidly; it is the need of the time to realize the importance of changing trends for Selection of life partners and to see the effect of these trends. Selection of life partners among Muslims in Kashmir is considered very important for both the sexes. The parents of grown-up boys and girls feel un-easy in selecting life partners for their wards. As soon as the boy and girl are considered to be mature enough for marriage, hectic preparations start to find a proper match. In past, most of the Selection were seen that selected by parents with consent of their partners. "The Sir Walter Lawrence (1981) reports that "if a marriage with a near relative could not be arranged; the father of a son who had reached the years of puberty called in the services of a go-between. This go-between was usually a man of great powers of persuasion and visits the families. Life

partners Selection, people in Kashmir, though rely upon the Middle-man, from different sources to verify the details of the boy and the girl themselves work for the matchmaking. If the Selection is settled with a relative or a friend, then the two families, just after formal verification, start the process of selection of life partners both the parties make enquiries about one another on their own with the help of friends, relatives, well-wishers and, sometimes, even from the neighbors. The investigations about the would-be relative revolves round the family, individual attributes, Occupation, education, character, economic standard, social status, relatives and their professions and other related things. If the two families are satisfied with each other, they can proceed on. The consent of the boy and girl is must. The boy and the girl can see each others.

Review Literature

People value socio-economic status as a means to predict one's ability to provide for their young ones. The ability and willingness to provide their resources are traits that have been correlated with high male value. Human males can and do provide a range of resources for the female before, during and after she has produced an offspring. This can include food, shelter, and protection from other males. Females would have evolve preferences for males who had good financial prospects, were older than themselves, had higher social status, and who displayed hardworking and industrious characters as these are clear signs of resources acquisition (Mamasan, 2005). Also Hatfield and Rapson (1996) in their cross-cultural perspective of love and sex find that women value more than men, marriage partners who possess status, who had good financial prospects, and who are ambitious and industrious. Supporting this view Khallad (2005) found out that Jordian female college students show greater interest in potential marriage partners who exhibit economic ability and

commitment. This finding further indicated that women’s differential preferences for resources – and commitment-related attributes were mainly determined by socio-economic status. Gage and Hancock (2002) in their study of college students revealed that students of middle class as well as the higher class primarily choose those who are of their own socio-economic status to marry. Also the study revealed that those of high socio-economic status have previously preferred those of either the same or lower socio- economic status. It was also found in their data that both males and females prefer those of a relatively equal social class to themselves to those of lower or higher socio-economic classes. Feingold (1992) posited that women accord more weight than men to socio-economic status, as women prefer marriage partners that will be able to take care of them financially. South (1991) examined data collected from over 2,000 respondents in the United States, data collected was used to examine socio-demographic differentials in the stated willingness of individuals to marry persons with various social, economic and demographic characteristics, Socio-economic status and preferences in marriage partner selection among university undergraduates in south-south of Nigeria Maliki, A. E. 42 have children; who are of a different religion and race, who have relatively high or low earning and education, and who are not physically attractive. In another study, Westman (1999) posited that financial success level was the most important variable sought by university student in potential marriage partner from the data gathered from university students using a questionnaire covering background information, the self-perceived mating success scale, and a materialism scale.

Methodology

The data have been collected from both primary and secondary sources. Each research has its own nature and specific objective. The present research is an exploratory research.

Population of the study consists of all the Newlywed couples the stratified random sampling technique was used in this study. To achieve this, from the three Districts that make up the North Kashmir of Jammu and Kashmir was selected, The sample of the study consisted of Six Hundred respondents individually (600) 300 Males and 300 Females (Newly Wed Couples) Instrument used for data collection is a questionnaire, interview schedule titled “Preferences in life partner Selection designed by the researcher for Newly Wed Couples. The questionnaire is divided into sections: Section A of the questionnaire was designed to male information about the respondents while Sections B, were used for female groups. To determine the reliability of the instrument, a pilot testing was done using one hundred, Newly Wed Couples in North Kashmir within three Districts Kupwara, Baramullah and Bandipora The reliability of The data for this study was obtained from the use of the questionnaire, Interview Schedule which was administered in each of the District by the

researcher. The questionnaire was collected the same day of administration in each District of study. Method of statistical tools used for this study is mean, standard deviation and one way analysis of variance.

Presentation of Results

Research question states that what were the preferences in Life partner Selection in terms of Employment, Wealth, Family Status, Physical Beauty, Best in Deen and Character.

Table 1: Distribution of the female respondents with regard to their Preferences for the selection of life partners

Requirements	Important (to some extent) F %age	Very important F %age	Not important F %age	Total F %age
Employment	18 0.6	282 94.0	0 0.0	300 100.0
Character	105 35.0	195 65.0	0 0.0	300 100.0
Wealth	60 20.0	203 67.66	37 12.33	300 100.0
Family status	71 23.66	204 68.0	25 8.33	300 100.0
Physical beauty	63 21.0	18 0.6	219 73.0	300 100.0
Best in Deen	49 16.33	74 24.66	177 59.0	300 100.0

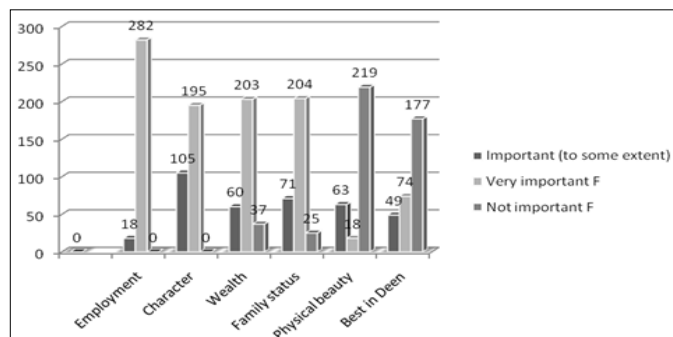


Fig 1

The above table 1 revealed that 282 i.e. 94 percent of the female respondents had given preference to employment in selecting life partner is very important for security of the family, 195 i.e. 65 percent of the female respondents had given preference to character of their life partner and self control of the life partner is very important requirement for the successful life partner, 203 i.e. 67.66 percent of the female respondents had given preference to wealth of the life partner is very important factor for the successful family and children’s future, 204 i.e. 68 percent of the female respondents had given preference to family status of the life partner is very important requirement for the successful life partner, majority of the respondents 219 i.e. 73.0% of the female respondents had not given preference to physical beauty of the male partner, is not important requirement of successful family, majority of the respondents 177 i.e. 59 percent of the female respondents had not given preference to “best in deen” of the life partner. All most, all the female respondents had given importance to high economic security.

Table 2: Distribution of the male respondents with regard to their Preference for the selection of life partners

Requirements	Important (to some extent) M %age	Very important M %age	Not important M %age	Total M %age
Employment	108 36.0	128 42.66	64 21.33	300 100.0
Character	02 0.66	298 99.33	0 0.0	300 100.0
Wealth	71 23.66	125 41.66	104 34.66	300 100.0
Family status	53 17.66	215 71.66	32 10.66	300 100.0
Physical beauty	18 0.6	275 91.66	07 2.33	300 100.0
Best in Deen	164 54.67	81 27.0	55 18.33	300 100.0

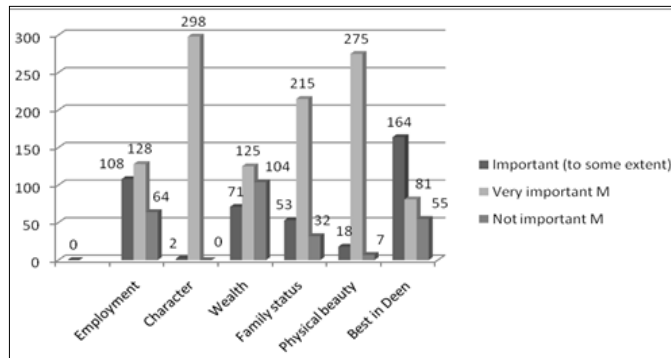


Fig 2

The above table revealed that only 42.66 percent i.e. 128 of the male respondents had given preferences to the employment is very important for security of the family, 298 i.e. 99.33 percent of the male respondents had given preferences to the character of the female partner is very important requirement of them, 125 i.e. 41.66 percent of the male respondents had given preferences to the wealth of the life partner is very important factor for the economic support, 215 i.e. 71.66 percent of the male respondents had thought that family status of the life partner is very important requirement for the successful family, 275 i.e. 91.66 percent of the male respondents had thought that physical beauty of the life partner (especially for female partner) is very important requirement for self satisfaction, 81 i.e. 27 percent of the respondents had thought that “best in deen” of the life partner is very important requirement. They reported that the good understanding of the life partners is also very important requirement for the successful family. So, according to these findings it is evident that physical beauty, character, employment, family status and wealth are important factors in selection of life partners among Muslims in Kashmir. On the other hand religion is ignored in selection of life partner. All most, all respondents had given importance to economic security.

Most of the female respondents had chosen the wealthy partners. Wealth on the other side is also given preference by most of the female youth. Because, it is considered the only economic background that may give chance to the couple to live their lives happily when the respondents were asked why wealth and why not the other thing? Most of them replied that it is wealth which makes life to run smoothly. It clearly means that these respondents select their life-partners on the basis of their wealth. This is why, the male individuals chose wealthy partners so that they may get Dowry. Physical beauty of a husband has very little role, but the beauty of a girl is the top most priority. According to the views of those who had given preference to religious partner; that partner should be of

religious nature, after marriage she can easily run her in-law’s or husband’s house in a smooth way. She will never make her husband bound in any unimportant issue.

What is preferred in the selection of life partner differs from society to society. But in Kashmiri society young men prefer character, physical beauty and family status in a girl and young girl mostly prefer economic security in a life partner. Obviously, absence of these things in women and men respectively becomes challenges and problems in selecting a life partners.

Table 3: Younger Spouse than Them in Selecting Of Life Partner

Response	Male	Female	Total Number	Total Percentage
Necessary	285(95%)	40(13.33%)	325	54.17%
Not Necessary	15(5%)	260(86.66%)	275	45.83 %
Total	300	300	600	100 %

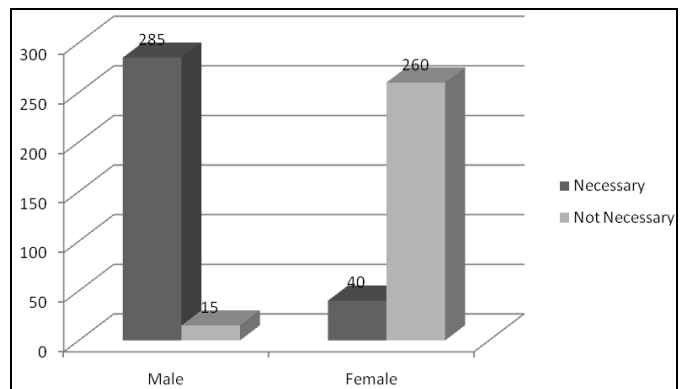


Fig 3

The Researcher enquired 600 respondents that why they had chose younger spouses than them, the table 4.4 shows that 325 i.e. 54.17 percent of the respondents selected younger spouse than themselves, among them 285 out of 300 i.e. 95.0 percent of the males. It reveals that males prefer the young and smart looking girls. When researcher enquired the respondents about the main cause of approaching younger partners, they reacted that they get satisfied when their spouses are smart, beautiful and younger than them.

275 i.e. 45.83 percent of the female respondents excluding 5.0 percent of the male respondents said that they are not in favour of finding younger spouses than them. They gave some references from Islamic scriptures that there is no age bar issue in Islam. They added that the people should prefer to select the girls of good character. Some of the respondents also said that if a girl is elder than her partner but is economically sound, good character, education, religion, she

is better than those of bad character.

Here it is clear that men prefer mostly young and beautiful girls and women neither consider young nor old but financially secure partners.

Table 4: Consideration of caste in selecting life partner

Caste	SEX		Total Number	Total Percentage
	Male	Female		
Yes	53 (17.66%)	85 (28.33%)	138	23%
No	247 (83.33%)	215 (71.67%)	462	77%
Total	300	300	600	100

The above table shows that 462 i.e. 77 percent in the study is against the consideration of caste in selecting life partner. This includes 247 i.e. 83.33 percent out of (300) of the male respondents and 215 i.e. 71.67 (300) of the female respondents, those respondents who are not in favour of taking caste into consideration in case of selection of life partner gave the following reasons to justify their point:-

1. It is against the concept of human rights.
2. It is not allowed in Islam.
3. It is quite clear that behaviour and attitude of a person cannot be judged on caste.
4. It is education which should be given preference to caste.

5. It limits the spouse selection.
6. It is the creation of some vested interests.

There are 138 i.e. 23 percent of the respondents who are in favour of considering caste in selecting life partner. There are 53 out of (300) 17.66 percent of the male respondents and 28.33 percent of the female respondents, although they are in favour of considering caste in selecting life partner. Those respondents who considered caste in case of selecting life partner gave the following reasons, for their choice.

1. There is better adjustment in one's own caste group;
2. There is a social binding.
3. There is pressure of parents and relatives;
4. There is a feeling to ensure and preserve the purity of the caste
5. There is no mutual understanding between different caste groups.

It may be inferred that modernization changed the concept of caste in selecting life partner; although it was given most priority in the selection process in past but now it is losing its roots and grounds. So caste is not problem in selection of life partners among Muslims in Kashmir.

Table 5: Preferences for Working Women as a life partner

Choice	Male	Percentage
Working women	170	56.67 %
Non-working women	130	43.33 %
Total	300	100 %

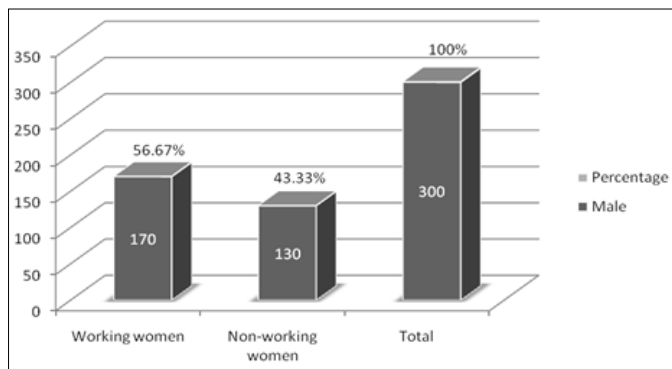


Fig 5

The above table reveals that 170 i.e. 56.67 percent of the male respondents preferred to select their life partner's employed/working women. While the rest of the male respondents 130 i.e. 43.33 percent oppose this choice, those who oppose this argument give following reasons: - A woman, according to some respondents, should be "Charag-E-Khana" light for home and not "Shama-E-Mohfil" candle of gatherings. And those who selected working wives are of the opinion that such women can take decisions independently. They have courage, dedication and tolerance. They can help their husbands to build homes economically. This also helps to raise the status of women. Further, there are less chances of conflict between the couple. These respondents said that it is very much hectic to run once life and how the person can run

his marital life when he has less income and more expenditure.

Researcher observed present life is very costly. It becomes hectic for a large family to run the whole house holdings with one single earning hand. So it is very important for a husband to manage something government or non-government facilitating services or private services/employment for his wife so that both as earning hands may do the best to run their marital life smoothly. Once women's earning was considered sin and her domain of work was within four walls of house. But now things have changed. Now women wanted to be economically independent and also ready to work shoulder to shoulder with men. They also aspire for higher jobs and higher education. It also somehow created hurdles in selecting of life partners, because due to higher education, they get aged and ultimately face problems in getting life-partner.

The above study clears that un-wealthy and non-working are facing challenges and problems in selection of life partner.

Table 6: Economically sound Family of life partner

Choice	Male	Female	Total Number	Total Percentage
Economically sound of life partner's family is necessary	206 (68.66%)	217 (72.33%)	423	70.5 %
Economically sound of life partner's family is not necessary	94 (31.33)	83 (27.66)	177	29.5 %
Total	300	300	C 600	100

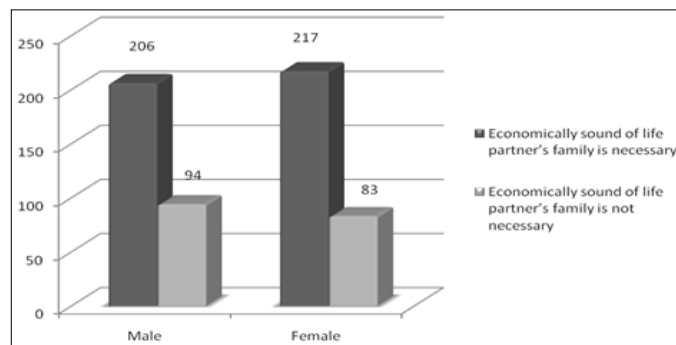


Fig 6

The table shows that 423 i.e. 70.5 percent of the respondents wish their in-laws to be well-off economically. This includes 206 out of 300 i.e. 68.66 percent males and 217 i.e. 72.33 percent out of 300 females. On the other hand 177 i.e. 29.5 percent of the respondents did not wish their in-laws to be well-off economically. Of this number, there are 31.33 percent out of 300 male respondents and 83 i.e. 27.66 percent of the female respondents. Those respondents who thought that it is necessary to have their in-laws well-off economically put forward following arguments to support their answer:-

1. It is felt by most of the respondents that the economic well-being of in-laws, especially the girl's family, is a license for dowry.
2. It also makes the boy or his parents greedy.
3. It is revealed that a good number of lady respondents feel that the groom should be efficient, hardworking and earning, they are not concerned about the economic-wellbeing of his family.

At the same time, the respondents who thought it is necessary to have their in-law well-off economically put forward following points in this regard:-

1. The better economic base can be a guarantee for good family education.
2. The quality of life in such situations is better and there is less-burden on the two partners.
3. A husband needs financial help in his house holdings when his in-laws are financially strong they can help him in every such matter, This assistance which he needs take place in the upbringing and nourishing of his children.

Researcher came to know that large number of the female respondent's desire is to their husbands to be from noble families and economically sound families, on the other hand where the male respondents shows deep inclination towards this fact that the need to be the bride's family economically sound.

So the unmarried boys/ girls whose families are not economically sound may face challenges either from their family or self.

Discussion

According to study, the hypothesis was found true that the unemployment, Socio-economic status etc. are main challenges and problems in life partner selection These variables give rise to such social crime which affects the

people badly and they indulge in provoking others to entertain such issues. The institution of marriage has undergone various alterations. The analysis of the hypothesis also reveals that newlywed couples socio-economic status and unemployment significantly influence preferences in life partner selection in terms of socio-economic status. This is supported by Nigeria Maliki, A. E. 48 the study of Gage and Hencok (2002) in their study of college students revealed that students of middle class as well as the higher classes, primarily choose those who are of their own socio-economic status also prefer those of either the same or lower socio-economic statuses. It was also found in their data that both males and females prefer those of relatively equal social classes. In the same vein, in support of this finding Mamasan (2005) found out that female prefer males that are extroverts, who are socially dominant as a result of wealth and have respect of their peers. The findings of Mamasan (2005) also revealed that females of low socio-economic status prefer to form relationship with extroverts, socially dominant and wealthy males in a high socio-economic status so that they can also raise their social status.

Conclusion

Finding of this study reveal that unemployment, Poverty and socio-economic status significantly influence preferences in life partner selection. The implication of this is that the more similar people are in their values, employment, socio-economic and family status, the more likely they are to have a successful selection. People who share common family background and similar social networks are better suited as life partners than people who are very different in their family background and social network. Almost, all the female respondents had given importance to high economic security. So, according to findings it is evident that physical beauty, character, employment, family status and wealth are important factors in selection of life partners among Muslims in Kashmir. On the other hand religion is ignored in selection of life partner. What is preferred in the selection of life partner differs from society to society. But in Kashmiri society young men prefer character, physical beauty and family status in a girl and young girl mostly prefer economic security in a life partner. Obviously, absence of these things in women and men respectively becomes challenges and problems in selecting a life partners.

Recommendations

It is therefore recommended that young Boys and girls should not choose life partner that are committed to money and pleasure alone but to loving attitude which is the most basic characteristic that every Girls and Boys should possess. Young boys and girls should know their potential life partners well enough before they make the final decision, not just looking at the potential life partner's high socio-economic status. Choosing a life partner, they should use wisdom since it is a decision that will affect marriageable ages for the rest of their lives. Finally, about to age, should seek professional advice from marriage counselors.

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