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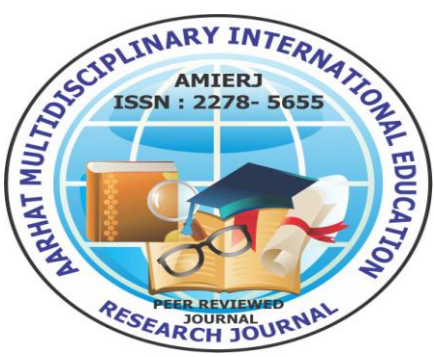
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COPING SKILLS OF COLLEGE GOING MARRIED GIRL STUDENTS

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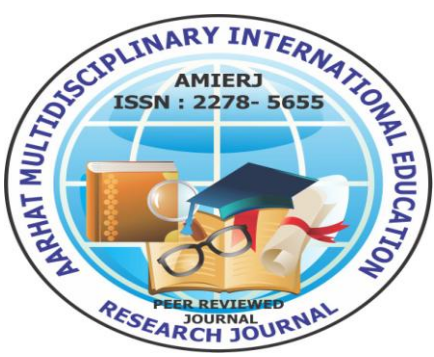
Abstract

Marriage is an important stage of every body's live. Marriage becomes a serious problem, when it is forced to affect the education and other appropriate life stages of a human being and especially to girls. Early marriage would cause damage to girls who are into education. This paper has presented the findings related to the coping of college going married girl students with their family, physic, psychology, academic and peer groups. It was found that majority of the married girl student are from rural domicile, married before the age of 21years and got married through arranged marriage. There are positive correlations among most of the coping aspects of the girls. This paper has emphasized the need for sensitizing the educational institutions, parents about the apathy and needs of the married girl students in the educational setting and at their families.

Key Words: *Coping and Married Girl Students*

Introduction

Marriage is an important stage of human life. Marriage in our culture is a covenant and mostly not contract. Lot of changes is occurring in our marriage and family systems due to changes in various aspects of our society. Marriage becomes a serious problem, when it is forced



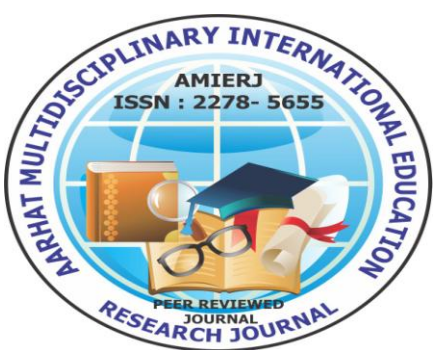
to affect the education and other appropriate life stages of a human being and especially to girls. Marriage is a social union between male and female. Early marriage would cause damage to girls who are into education. This paper has presented findings related to the coping of college going married girl students with their family, physic, psychology, academic and peer groups. This paper would be an eye opener for the educational institutions, parents to become aware of the apathy and needs of the married girl students in the educational setting and at their families.

Literature Review

When any marriages conducted before this legal age is called as child marriage. In India, the legal age for male to marry is 21 years whereas for female it is 18 years. However it is advisable for both male and female to marry 24 and 21 years respectively to ensure their maturity to lead family life. The central and state governments also advise both male and female to marry 24 and 21 years respectively. Despite various efforts to control the early marriage, the practice is still prevalent in many parts of the country. In India, nearly half of young women (45 %) marry before the legal age of 18 years and this figure rises to 53 percent in rural areas (Moore et al., 2009).

Marriage at such early age exists because of several factors, which includes conventional gender norms, the value of virginity and parental concern regarding premarital sex, demand of marriage transaction, i.e. including dowry and poverty (Amin at al., 2007). The marriage at an early age affects both male and female but female get more social, physical and psychological problems than male. Number of recent studies have narrated that early marriage is negatively related with health, education and economic outcomes of the girls (UNICEF, 2005; Mathur et al., 2003; Mensch et al., 2005).

It is also argued that young women who get married early are more likely to experience of early school departure, lower earning capacity, early childbearing, repeated pregnancies, pregnancy complications, higher maternal and infant lower birth-weights. Dixon-Mueller (1983) concluded that women who marry before age 19 have two or four times more children than those who marry after the age of 25. (Singh and Samara, 1996; UNICEF, 2001; Miller and Lester,



2003). Jensen and Thornton (2003) mentioned that young who get married early are characterized by little decision-making power in the household and a greater likelihood of suffering domestic violence. Donaldson and Billy (1984) found that the offspring of younger women had consistently

Objectives

1. To find out the demographic background of the married girl students.
2. To study the difference of the coping by their domicile, graduation, age and type of family.
3. To assess the correlations among the coping with their family, physic, psychology, academic and peer group aspects.

Methodology

The study was carried out in Sacred Heart College (Autonomous), Tirupattur, it has been reaccredited by NAAC with 'A' Grade in the year 2013. This college is a co-education college and has 8 UG & 5 PG courses. Descriptive research design was used to describe the coping of the girls. Stratified random sampling technique was used to arrive at 80 sample size. Questionnaire was used to collect the responses of the married girl students. SPSS package was used to process the data and present them in to tables. T-test and correlation were used to findout the difference and correlations among the coping of the girls.

Analysis Result

The demographic details of the married girl students shows that more than one third (55.1%) of the girls have got married before the age of 21. More than three fourth (77.5%) of the married girl students belong to rural domicile. Vast majority (91.3%) of the married girl students have got married by arranged marriage. Almost two third (65%) of the girls are residing at extended family system and the other girls are residing in nuclear family system. About one fourth (23.8%) of the married girl students are mothers.

Coping by Age of the Married Girl Students

Coping	Age in Years	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test for Equality of Means		
					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Family Coping	18-21	39	59.9359	12.88215	-1.386	78	.049
	21 and above	41	64.1768	14.39024			
Physical Coping	18-21	39	59.9715	11.26930	-1.239	78	.219
	21 and above	41	63.0081	10.65811			
Psychological Coping	18-21	39	63.2692	4.83796	1.091	78	.279
	21 and above	41	61.3415	9.97023			
Academic Coping	18-21	39	71.0136	10.33620	.083	78	.934
	21 and above	41	70.8460	7.67941			
Peer Coping	18-21	39	53.8462	17.78067	-.830	78	.041
	21 and above	41	57.0848	17.10717			

The above table shows that the coping with family and peer has significant difference ($P < .05$) by the age of the married student girls. The family and peer coping are better among the girls who are 21 and above years of age. Physical, psychological and academic coping do not significantly differ by the age of the girls.

Coping by Domicile of the Married Girl Students

Coping	Domicile	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test for Equality of Means		
					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Family coping	Rural	62	60.7863	13.72900	-1.613	78	.011
	Urban	18	66.6667	13.21485			
Physical coping	Rural	62	60.8423	11.48847	-1.035	78	.304
	Urban	18	63.8889	8.98841			
Psychological coping	Rural	62	61.4516	7.44582	-1.765	78	.032
	Urban	18	65.1389	8.97186			
Academic coping	Rural	62	71.6104	8.99586	1.262	78	.211
	Urban	18	68.5764	8.92596			
Peer coping	Rural	62	54.2243	17.30096	-1.226	78	.024
	Urban	18	59.9206	17.52016			

The above table shows that family coping, psychological coping and peer coping have significant difference ($P < .05$) by the domicile of the married girl students. Urban girls have better coping than the rural girls.

Coping by the Education of the Girls

Group Statistics	Graduation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test for Equality of Means		
					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Family Coping	UG	40	60.1563	13.47834	-1.275	78	.206
	PG	40	64.0625	13.92157			
Physical Coping	UG	40	60.0000	10.46558	-1.247	78	.216
	PG	40	63.0556	11.43059			
Psychological Coping	UG	40	62.0625	7.04581	-.246	78	.806
	PG	40	62.5000	8.77058			
Academic Coping	UG	40	71.5625	10.81201	.627	78	.042
	PG	40	70.2930	6.84627			
Peer Coping	UG	40	54.7619	17.57097	-.380	78	.705
	PG	40	56.2500	17.42716			

The above table reveals that academic coping significantly differs ($P < .05$) by the education of the girls and in that PG girls have better coping in academics than the UG girls. All the other coping are same irrespective of UG and PG girls.

Coping by the Type of Family

Group Statistics	Type of Family	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test for Equality of Means		
					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Family Coping	Nuclear	28	55.5982	13.00843	-1.202	78	.033
	Joint	52	63.4615	14.07833			
Physical Coping	Nuclear	28	63.4921	11.15512	1.175	78	.244
	Joint	52	60.4701	10.87182			
Psychological Coping	Nuclear	28	62.3214	7.16630	.033	78	.974
	Joint	52	62.2596	8.34694			

Academic Coping	Nuclear	28	72.6283	10.32836	1.242	78	.218
	Joint	52	70.0120	8.18235			
Peer Coping	Nuclear	28	52.5510	19.12384	-1.116	78	.048
	Joint	52	57.0971	16.37731			

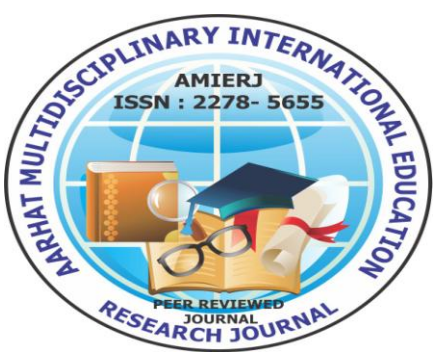
The above table shows that peer coping and family coping have significant difference ($P < .05$) by the type of families where the girls are married to. Girls from joint families have better coping with family and peer. The other coping are same by the type of family they are residing.

Correlations among Coping of Married Girl Students

Correlations among Coping		Family	Physical	Psychological	Academic	Peer
Family	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	80				
Physical	Pearson Correlation	.184	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.102				
	N	80	80			
Psychological	Pearson Correlation	.223*	.266*	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.853	.017			
	N	80	80	80		
Academic	Pearson Correlation	.214	.221*	.264*	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.057	.531	.018		.014
	N	80	80	80	80	80
Peer	Pearson Correlation	.108	.126	.171	.273*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.339	.265	.130	.014	
	N	80	80	80	80	80

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The above correlation table shows that coping with family and psychology has positive correlations ($P < .05$). Coping with physical aspects and psychological aspect has positive correlations ($P < .05$). Academic coping and physical coping has positive correlations ($P < .05$). Academic coping and peer coping has positive correlations ($P < .05$). It can be stated that coping ability with one aspect can affect the coping of the other aspect and hence, it can be concluded that holistic coping ability is essential for wellbeing of the married girl students.



Results and Discussion

This study shows that more than one third of the girls have got married before the age of 21. It is suggested to the govt. and school authorities to initiates program to increase awareness about the legal and medical age marriage. PTA of the schools should consider this issue for the betterment of the future generation.

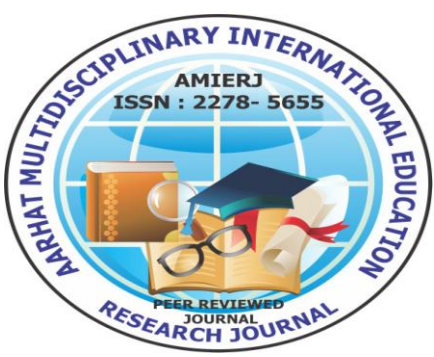
More than three fourth of the married girl students belong to rural domicile. Hence, it could be stated that lot of awareness and community based intervention is needed to help the families and girls with this challenge. Family Counseling Centers could take this for its eradication.

Vast majority (91.3%) of the married girl students have got married by arranged marriage. It indicates that culturally our parents force the girls to get married and get rid of the parent's duty. SHGs should concentrate on this and bring resolutions in their meetings to overcome this challenge.

Almost two third of the girls are residing at extended family system and the other girls are residing in nuclear family system. Generally the married girls should be taught about the effective family life. Counseling or sessions should help them understand and gain effective coping skill with their family, academics, and health, psychology and peer groups. Life skill education to the married girl students would yield good result.

Since, about one fourth of the married girl students are mothers. It is necessary to impart them skills for appropriate motherhood and parenting skills. Life skill is mandatory to them that they cope with the different aspect of challenges.

Since, most of the coping affects the other, it is essential for the married girl students to gain coping skills. Educational institutions, teachers, parents, family members, peer group



members should understand the problems and needs of the married girl students and help them have successful academic life and effective married girls.

Special focus with Focus Group Discussions, Counseling, researchers, support systems will support these girls to excel in their studies and career.

Limitations

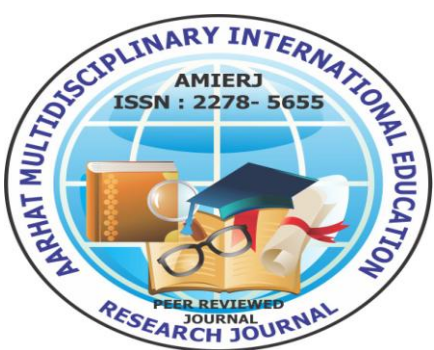
1. Study has been conducted in only one college; there could be also difference by the type and quality of colleges.
2. The sample size is small and may not represent a bigger picture.
3. It is limited only to the UG & PG women students.
4. It is limited to the girls who are married girl students.
5. Only coping has been studied and not other aspects of these girls.
6. It is only a quantitative study

Conclusion

This paper will be an eye opener for anyone in this society to understand the social pushes that force the parents and girls towards marriage. It is necessary to frame programs and policies by the government and educational institutions for the welfare of these girls. Social workers can extend their case work and other scientific skills to study needs and aspirations of these married girl students.

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