

PAS2025_026: Navigating Life Transitions: A Qualitative Study of Divorce's Impact on Indian Men

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1 Introduction

Divorce is widely recognized as one of life's most stressful events, with far-reaching effects that deeply impact the well-being and overall life circumstances of those involved (Muchena, Howcroft, & Stroud, 2018). While it is commonly believed that women face greater challenges in resuming a normal life after divorce, (Amato P. R., 2010) recent research has highlighted that men also encounter significant difficulties, including both physical and psychological health issues (Kulik & Kasa, 2014). A study of Canadian men and women aged 20 to 64 found that the incidence of depression was nearly four times higher among recently separated or divorced individuals compared to those who were still in relationships. Furthermore, the study revealed that divorced men are about twice as likely to experience depressive episodes within the two years following a divorce compared to divorced women, suggesting that men are more severely impacted by divorce (Rotermann, 2007). Amidst the evolving socio-cultural milieu, the life transforming experiences of divorce, particularly for men bear substantial significance, and warrant comprehensive understanding. This qualitative study aims to explore how divorce impacts and brings about changes and growth opportunities in the lives of divorced men.

India is a vast and diverse nation, rich in complexity and steeped in tradition. It is a multicultural, multiethnic, multilingual, and multireligious society, marked by profound heterogeneity. Amidst these sweeping changes, a longstanding power dynamic between men and women began to shift due to modernization. As women became more empowered, aware of their rights, and increasingly educated, the balance of power in relationships started to tilt. This empowerment, coupled with changing values and norms, redefined gender roles and relationships, signalling a new era in the social order. Unlike in the West, marriage in India is still regarded with great sanctity, embodying a sense of perpetual bonding and a divine element (Srivastava, 2010). In contemporary Indian society, the concept of marriage has evolved significantly (Premsingh & Philip, 2014). The early form of marriage differs from what we see today, particularly with the influence of modernization and legal reforms that began in the late 19th century (Sharma & Singh, 2024). Divorce, on the other hand, has traditionally been viewed with disapproval, often considered a social stigma that few dared to pursue. However, the landscape began to shift when divorce gained legal recognition, marking a significant turning point in Indian society. With this legal acknowledgment, the rigid perceptions surrounding marriage and divorce started to evolve. While the stigma still lingers, the growing awareness of individual rights and the increasing acceptance of personal choice have begun to

reshape societal attitudes. Divorce, once seen as a taboo, is now recognized as a legitimate option for those seeking to escape unhappy or unhealthy marriages, reflecting the broader changes in the way relationships are understood and valued in contemporary India.

According to the 2011 Census, approximately 13.6 lakh individuals in India were reported as divorced, accounting for a mere 0.24% of the married population and just 0.11% of the total population. On the surface, these numbers suggest that divorce is a rare occurrence in India and that most marriages are harmonious. However, this is only part of the story. The low divorce rate doesn't necessarily reflect widespread happy marriages; instead, it highlights the deep-rooted societal stigma surrounding divorce. While it's commonly assumed that women are the ones who find it difficult to leave unhappy marriages, the reality is more complex. National Crimes Record Bureau (NCRB) Data, 2021 revealing that married men have a suicide death rate three times higher than that of married women suggests that men, too, are struggling within their marriages (Yadav, et al., 2023). This statistic challenges the traditional narrative, indicating that men may also feel the weight of marital pressures, yet are often overlooked in discussions about the challenges of marriage.

Indian divorce literature has predominantly concentrated on the prevalence, risk factors, and effects of divorce, especially on women and children, operating under the assumption that they suffer the most post-divorce. However, it is difficult to determine definitively who suffers the most from divorce—whether it be women, children, or men—since every marriage and divorce story is unique. There remains a significant gap in understanding men's experiences, their actions during the divorce process, and the life transitions they undergo afterward. This study aims to explore how divorce impacts and brings about changes in the lives of divorced men. The purpose of this study is to explore the following research objectives:

1. How do men live and feel before the divorce?
2. How do men live and feel during the divorce process?
3. How do men live and feel after the divorce?
4. How do men grow after the major event in their lives?

1.1 Theoretical Framework

A previous study (Thomas & Ryan, 2008), incorporated Mezirow's transformative framework, to understand the challenges and growth opportunities women who have divorced experience from their own perspectives. This study employs the **Mezirow's (2000)** theory of transformational learning to explore how divorce impacts and brings about changes and growth opportunities in the lives of divorced men.

2 Data and Methodology

2.1 Data

Qualitative research methods were employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of divorce and the subsequent transitions in the lives of the participants. The study was conducted from March to September 2023, involving 30 divorced men. All interviews were conducted by the author. Data were collected using purposive sampling, which included in-depth, face-to-face interviews. A semi-structured interview guide, developed after a thorough literature review, was used to ensure consistency while allowing for a wide range of experiences to be captured. The guide focused on four main categories: sociodemographic details, and their life before, during, and after the divorce. During the interviews, prompts were used to encourage detailed responses. Some of the prompts included: 'When did the problems start?', 'Were you satisfied with your married life?', 'What led you to pursue a divorce?', 'Who initiated the divorce?', 'How was your self-confidence when the divorce was finalized?', 'What was your physical and mental health like during the divorce process?', 'Did you notice any changes in your life after the divorce?', 'How do you perceive those changes?', 'What have you learned from this major event in your life?', and 'How are you doing now?'. Before the study began, participants were informed that their participation was voluntary, with the freedom to withdraw from the study or decline to answer any questions.

2.2 Methodology

This study used a qualitative approach to deeply understand the participants' experiences of divorce, applying thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). An inductive method was taken to uncover themes that emerged directly from the data (Knafl & Patton, 1990). **Figure 1** illustrates the data analysis technique derived from (Kaur, Mogaji, Wadera, & Gupta, 2022).

3 Result

3.1 Participants' Information

Thirty men who resided in the state of West Bengal during the time of the interviews volunteered to participate. The participants involved were from lower-middle, middle, and upper-middle-class backgrounds, both socially and economically. Their ages ranged from 29 to 54, with a mean age of 40 years. The age at first marriage varied from 20 to 38 years, averaging 29 years. The dating periods before marriage spanned from 1 months to 12 years, with an average of 2.6 years. The average duration of marriage was 2.6 years. Around 60% of

participants did not have any children from their wedlock, 23% and 17% of participants have daughter and son, respectively. Approximately 27% of the participants had completed their higher secondary education, and 53% had attained education beyond the graduation level. The majority of the participants, 97%, were Hindu, with about 60% residing in urban areas. Employment-wise, 67% of the men were engaged in private sector jobs, while 3% had no job at the time of the interview. Regarding family structure, 66% of the men belonged to nuclear families. In terms of caste, 57% were from the general caste category, 11% from Scheduled Castes, and 32% from Other Backward Classes. A significant portion, 63%, had an age gap of more than 10 years with their wives. Furthermore, 60% of the marriages were arranged (**Table 1**).

4.2 Major Findings

The research identified three major themes based on participant interviews: (1) Before Divorce, (2) During Divorce, and (3) After Divorce. There are a total of 12 sub-themes under these major themes (**Supplementary Table 1; Supplementary Table 2**).

4.2.1 Before Divorce

Divorce is not a one-day decision, it takes so much of emotion, courage, and time. A research study revealed that individuals in unhappy marriages were more likely to improve their well-being by dissolving their low-quality unions. The findings indicated that remaining in such marriages did not confer any advantages in terms of overall well-being compared to those who chose to divorce (Hawkins & Booth, 2005). During this phase, participants, confronted with profound marital conflicts, experienced a fundamental disruption in their understanding of relationships and life. This critical juncture challenged their existing perceptions, prompting a re-evaluation of their future and leading to the decision to seek a divorce.

Lost Happiness in Marriage

Marriage is often entered into with the expectation of emotional fulfilment and long-term companionship. However, the gradual erosion of intimacy and emotional connection can become deeply distressing. As a previous study (Amato P., 2000) noted, emotional distance within a marital relationship is a significant source of dissatisfaction and pain. Behavioural theories of marriage further emphasize the role of conflict behaviours in shaping marital outcomes. Studies have shown that destructive patterns of interaction—such as persistent criticism, verbal aggression, and unresolved conflict—can significantly increase the likelihood

of divorce (Karney & Bradbury 2003). Participant 2 stated: *“The marriage was a source of mental and physical torture for me. One day, she spiked food and made my parents sick; another day, she tried to kill my mother by cutting the gas pipe. Every day was stressful. I left for work at 7 in the morning, returned home at 9:30 PM, and then she would start fights. I suffered a lot mentally. Not only she, but her father would come on weekends and create new disturbances between us. She shared everything with her parents, and her father once taunted me saying, ‘Don’t you guys have good bed life? You should know how to make your wife happy.’ I was deeply uncomfortable with such intrusions.”*

A study by De Boise (2016) found that individuals in long-distance marriages experience higher levels of stress, both personally and within the relationship, compared to those in closer proximity. This stress can lead to insecurity and misunderstandings, which may ultimately strain the marriage. Participant 17’s experience illustrates these challenges. He recounted: *“Our long-distance marriage did not go well, so we decided to move in together. But things started getting worse. She moved to another room and slept alone, without me. I was crying in one room while she was laughing and chatting in another. She didn’t even try to console me. Her taunts about my work, weight, and appearance gave me feelings of inferiority, jealousy, and extreme pain. Whenever I tried to show love, she mistreated me and rejected it. I developed a strong feeling that our marriage was nearing its end.”*

Trapped and Helpless

While it's commonly assumed that women are the ones who find it difficult to leave unhappy marriages, the reality is more complex. In this study, some participants reportedly mentioned that they found themselves trapped in their unhappy marriages. Participant 12 shared his experience: *“She (ex-wife) wanted me to live separately from my family. I was not ready to do that, so she and her family started to blackmail me. I felt so trapped where I do not want to be in any kind of relationship with her and I had to live with her in the same room.”*

Data from the National Crimes Record Bureau (NCRB, 2021) reveals a striking gendered disparity in suicide rates among married individuals in India, with married men dying by suicide at a rate three times higher than married women (Yadav, et al., 2023). This alarming statistic underscores that men, too, often face severe emotional and psychological distress within marriage—experiences that are frequently overlooked or stigmatized in social discourse. During the interviews, some participants shared extreme emotional breakdowns, including suicidal thoughts and attempts, as a response to sustained feelings of helplessness,

betrayal, and fear. Participant 6 shared: *“I honestly couldn’t understand what had happened. Having never been in a relationship before, I had always dreamed of a happy family life with my wife and children. When I learned of the truth, I felt overwhelming anxiety and blamed my parents for not choosing the right partner for me. This burden has weighed heavily on me ever since.”*

Anxious, Ashamed, and Heartbroken

Attachment theory conceptualized that the humans form strong emotional bonds with particular others, and when those bonds are broken unwillingly- such as through separation or divorce- it can lead to intense emotional disturbance and distress like anxiety, anger, and depression (Bowlby, 2015). Extra-marital relationships, whether casual or serious, can have devastating effects on marriages, often leading to separation or divorce. These affairs severely damage trust and emotional bonds, causing significant emotional distress. They challenge the core principles of commitment in marriage, leading to feelings of betrayal, abandonment, grief, and shame (Batabyal, 2018). Participant 5 shared: *“I got married not only because I loved her (ex-wife), but also because I wanted someone who could look after my cancer-patient mother in my absence. When all of a sudden, she left our house, I just couldn’t figure out how I would manage everything. I was constantly anxious, wondering how I could juggle office work, household chores, and caring for my bed-ridden mother.”*

And, Participant 17 said: *“Even after loving her so much, she backstabbed me and left for another person. After that, I locked myself in a room for over a month. I cried so much that even the doctor warned me, ‘Your eyes might get damaged if you don’t stop.’ No one in my family—or even in my society—had ever gone through something like this. I couldn’t process what had happened. I had supported her education, career, and growth, but she used me to get another opportunity. She made a mockery of my life. I felt like a loser.”*

Deterioration in Work life

Previous studies have consistently shown that work-family conflict negatively impacts job performance, primarily by reducing job satisfaction and increasing emotional exhaustion (Karatepe et al., 2013). Interestingly, Ahmad (2008) also found a positive correlation between work-family conflict and decreased job performance. In addition, several participants in this study reported a decline in their work performance and professional focus due to the emotional and mental burden of ongoing marital conflicts during this phase. Participant 23 said:

“Constant threats, daily vulgar fights, and the fear of false accusations made it impossible for me to concentrate on work I was so stressed that I couldn’t sleep at night and often reached the office late. Eventually, I got demoted. It reached a point where even holding on to my job became difficult. The pressure from both home and work affected my temper, and my colleagues started distancing themselves from me.”

4.2.2 During Divorce

This phase represents the core of the divorce process, encompassing the most significant legal, practical, and emotional upheavals that individuals face. During this period, most of the issues surrounding the divorce, such as property division, custody arrangements, financial settlements, and emotional adjustments, are raised, debated, and ultimately resolved. It is a deeply challenging time, marked by intense mental, physical, and financial strain. For many, this phase feels overwhelming, as they navigate complex legal procedures while grappling with the personal grief and stress of ending a marriage. In our discussions with participants, we observed how they not only went through this phase but also evolved as individuals, despite the hardships.

Lowest Phase of Life

Earlier research highlighted how both marriage and divorce can have significant impacts on an individual’s health behaviours (Umberson & Williams, 1993) and overall lifestyle (Cohen, 1991; Horwitz, 1991).

Participants in this study often described ‘During Divorce’ phase as the lowest point in their lives. For some, it led to the adoption of unhealthy lifestyle habits; for others, it was marked by low self-esteem, or entanglement in prolonged socio-legal battles. As Participant 9 mentioned: *“I couldn’t sleep without alcohol, I became so addicted to smoking and drinking. I knew that it would affect my health but I could not stop myself. I lost all motivation in life.”*

Even Participant 11 added: *“... I even started to go for paid sex.”*

In the Indian legal framework, there is often a presumption that the wife is the victim and the husband the perpetrator, particularly in cases involving marital conflict. While legal protections such as Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code were introduced to safeguard women from cruelty and dowry-related abuse, concerns regarding misuse of this provision have emerged over time. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB, 2020), a total of 1,11,549 cases were registered under Section 498A. Among them, 5,520 were found to be false after

investigation, and 16,151 were closed due to insufficient evidence, misclassification as civil disputes, or errors in filing. False allegations can be deeply damaging, both emotionally and socially, leading to prolonged legal battles, financial strain, and severe psychological consequences such as anxiety, depression, and loss of reputation (Deshpande, 2019; Bulut & Dagtas, 2022). In this study, 12 out of 30 participants reported experiencing significant stress and trauma due to false accusations. Participant 18 shared his painful journey of enduring five years of legal proceedings based on false claims: *“When she [ex-wife] claimed that I beat her, tortured her for earning more money, and even tried to kill her baby, I was shattered. Her false claims destroyed the respect my family and I had earned over the years. My father fell severely ill and was hospitalized. I was in jail when he passed away. I’ve always carried grief in my heart — that I failed to choose the right partner, and my family had to suffer such horrible days because of me. She was proven wrong in court, but by then, I had lost everything — my father, my reputation, and the confidence I needed to rebuild my life.”*

Drained by the Court Sessions

Divorce is a rare event in India (Dommaraju, 2015), and marital dispute cases often take years to be resolved in the court system. While rarely acknowledged, this study found that many participants were mentally, emotionally, and financially drained due to prolonged and exhausting legal battles. Participant 14 shared: *“I was not used to court sessions, so initially I would feel palpitations before each hearing, especially seeing how she [ex-wife] twisted her story. Eventually, I got used to it. Nowadays, it feels like divorce cases have become a business. Lawyers hardly help; I had to change lawyers 5–6 times. I was mentally and financially drained. Both her lawyer and even mine suggested me to settle the case with money, but I didn’t. Even though I was innocent, my legal battle took seven years and cost me around 8–9 lakhs.”*

Participant 3 added: *“She was happily living with her boyfriend while I ended up in jail and had to give her my hard-earned money, just because we were married. Those court sessions seriously affected my job. I’m disgusted with our legal system.”*

Major Health Issues

Many studies have noted that divorcees often experience serious health problems as a result of divorce (Rathi & Panchauri, 2018). A 2015 study even found that divorced men were significantly more likely to die early compared to divorced women (Sbarra, 2015). However, in our research, we observed that participants began experiencing health issues even before the

actual divorce—during the separation period when their marriages were deteriorating despite their efforts to save them. Participant 28 shared his experience: *“She [ex-wife] left with another one and took my life with her. I stopped eating and sleeping. My body couldn’t take it—I suffered a major stroke. My body wasn’t even responding to medicines, but somehow, by God’s grace, the doctors saved my life.”*

Learned to Fight Back

Becoming strong after the decision to divorce was a common theme among our participants. Though initially difficult, many individuals grew stronger as they gradually accepted the reality of their situation. Once they came to terms with the fact that their marriage could not be salvaged, they found themselves able to move forward with a renewed sense of clarity. Participant 25 shared: *“No one in my circle had ever experienced legal false case accusations, so there was no one to guide me. Initially, I was extremely stressed, but I began educating myself about the laws, spoke to other sufferers, and identified loopholes in the system. I developed strategies to fight the false allegations. I noticed many others paid large amounts to settle their cases, but I decided not to. I trained myself to stay calm and tried to understand the psychological aspects of the legal process. I fought my case single-handedly and won. I left my job, started freelancing, and even enrolled in law courses. Now I want to become a lawyer to help other men who suffer like I did.”*

4.2.3 After Divorce

In this phase, participants begin moving away from the immediate pain of divorce towards the process of rebuilding their lives. It’s characterized by a deep acceptance of the divorce, where individuals come to terms with the end of their marriage and start focusing on their personal development. This period often involves significant self-realization, as they reconstruct their personal values and beliefs, and recognize their potential to create a new and fulfilling life. The extent of this transition depends on how effectively they cope with the challenges of suddenly being single. While some participants make significant progress in establishing a new and healthier lifestyle, others continue to face difficulties in adjusting and maintaining their well-being.

Adapted Positive Changes in Life

Longitudinal studies have shown that, over time, divorce can lead to increased life satisfaction, particularly when it marks an escape from a highly distressing marriage (Kalmijn 2006;

Leopold 2018). These studies also suggest that re-partnering, economic recovery, and personal growth often follow after an initial period of adjustment, highlighting the potential for positive transformation in the after-divorce phase. In line with these findings, several participants in this study described how they adopted new perspectives and lifestyle changes to rebuild their lives following their divorce. For some, this period became a phase of relief, self-realization, renewed self-awareness, and healing. Participant 1 expressed a strong sense of liberation after his divorce: *“I was very happy after divorce. It gave me relief. Now I can live my life my way—there’s no resistance or threats anymore”*

Participant 13 spoke about the importance of emotional acceptance in his healing process: *“I suffered a lot because I couldn’t accept the truth of my marriage, but when the divorce happened, I had no choice but to face it. It took time, but once I accepted the reality, the suffering faded away. It doesn’t make me feel bad anymore.”*

Work, Spirituality, and Social Support

Some studies suggest that attachment to spirituality or a higher power can facilitate better adjustment following a divorce. A 2009 study identified spirituality as a key factor in post-divorce adjustment (Krumrei, Mahoney, & Pargament, 2009), while a study found that spiritual well-being often predicts higher levels of adjustment in men post-divorce (Steiner, Durand, Groves, & Rozzell, 2015). In line with these findings, several of our participants turned to spirituality as a means to navigate their post-divorce lives and regain balance. Participant 7 shared: *“Divorce took so much from me, but now I’m 100% fine. I’ve always had faith in God, and in my darkest moments, He saved me. I believe that God never sends anyone away empty-handed. I am a devotee of Shiva, and I prayed earnestly for guidance towards happiness. In response, God brought a new woman into my life who helped to mend my broken pieces. Together, we began to rebuild our lives, and I found new hope and purpose through this spiritual journey.”*

Research has documented changes in work hours, wages, self-employment, and disability leave that are attributable to becoming divorced (Wanberg et al. 2022). Self-employed individuals tend to disproportionately return to waged employment for financial reasons (Van Loon et al. 2020), and most divorcing workers who take leave quickly return back to work (Couch 2015; Dahl 2015). Participant 10 said: *“I completely gave my time to work not only to keep my mind busy but also to cover up all the financial loss that had happened for the divorce.”*

Again, Participant 7 said: *“When finally, the divorce happened and I got relieved. I started to focus on my study more. I didn’t waste a single time for anything. So, today I become what I aspired to be.”*

Social support is a key protective factor during divorce, associated with better mental health and emotional recovery (Thomas & Ryan, 2008). Participants in this study echoed these findings—emphasizing how family and friends served as pillars of strength, particularly during legal and financial hardship. Conversely, those who lacked support reported greater difficulty in coping and rebuilding. Participant 4 shared: *“Today, I’m here only because of my family. Without them, I wouldn’t have made it through.”*

Still Struggling

Despite their efforts to rebuild, some participants continue to struggle with achieving a better life post-divorce. The journey to recovery can be prolonged and fraught with challenges, including financial constraints, emotional scars, health issues and persistent uncertainties. Participant 22 reflected this ongoing struggle: *“My life is going on, and I have to live it for my daughter. Even now, I can’t sleep without drinking. Her betrayal still causes me pain, though I don’t show it. I hope that over time, I will eventually move past this phase.”*

4 Discussion

Existing studies (Thomas & Ryan, 2008), particularly those incorporating Mezirow’s transformative framework, have primarily focused on the emotional and psychological changes that occur during and after divorce, overlooking the critical period leading up to it. The Divorce-stress-adjustment perspective (Amato, 2000) also emphasizes that divorce is a process beginning while the couple is still together, continuing long after the legal proceedings are complete. Similarly, our research highlighted the significance of the "before divorce" phase—a period marked by growing dissatisfaction, internal conflict, and a gradual realization that the marriage no longer aligns with personal expectations or life goals. For many participants, the decision to divorce was not a sudden event but a gradual process of confronting long-held beliefs about marriage and identity. This period, akin to what Mezirow describes as a "disorienting dilemma," involved questioning whether their old assumptions about marriage were still valid. Including this phase in our research was crucial to capturing the early stages of transformation, when individuals began to critically reflect on their circumstances. By exploring the entire trajectory—from the initial recognition of marital problems to the eventual

rebuilding of life post-divorce—our study adds depth to existing research, emphasizing that personal transformation is an ongoing process, not confined to the legal and procedural aspects of divorce. Unlike other studies, this research places a special focus on the journey of divorced men, a topic often overlooked and underrepresented in Indian literature.

Three major themes and fourteen sub-themes emerged from the intense interviews with divorced men: Before divorce phase (Lost happiness in marriage; Trapped and Helpless; Anxious, Ashamed, and Heartbroken; Deteriorated work life), During Divorce phase (Lowest Phase of Life; Drained by court sessions; Learned to Fight Back; Major Health Issues), After Divorce (Adopting positive changes in life; Work, Spirituality, and Social Support; Still Struggling). These findings provide fresh insights into men's issues related to marriage, divorce, and personal growth. Similar to the Thomas and Ryan (2008) study, we also identified social support as a critical factor in navigating the divorce process and fostering personal development.

Every marriage and divorce story are different, but there are some common themes. Many people faced problems because their partner's mental health issues were hidden, often by the in-laws. This later created tension in the marriage. Some men also felt pressure to move in with their wife's family, leaving their own parents behind, which added emotional stress. When trust was broken through affairs, men felt shame, grief, and failure. Many also had to deal with false accusations, causing anxiety and depression. Social support played a big role in helping people recover after divorce. Some received enough support to focus on their personal growth, while others struggled without it, delaying their healing. Many delayed their decision to divorce, hoping to fix their marriage but eventually had to face the loss of their dream of a family. Some even isolated themselves out of fear of social rejection and a lack of support.

However, time has a way of healing. After reflecting on their experiences, most men in the study recognized personal growth in their lives. They stood up for themselves, even after enduring 5-12 years of legal battles to prove their innocence. They started managing their finances, embraced the singlehood, and in some cases, found love again. Many reevaluated their understanding of love, companionship, and relationships, gaining self-awareness and confidence as they moved through the different phases of divorce. While most participants emerged stronger, a few continue to struggle with building a healthy and fulfilling life.

5 Conclusion

As family structures and societal norms evolve, it's vital to recognize that men, like women, can face significant challenges of divorce, including harassment by spouses and in-laws. Their struggles must be acknowledged as serious social and public health issues, deserving of support and legal safeguards. The study's findings reveal that while divorce can be devastating, it also offers an opportunity for personal growth and transformation. By examining the experiences of these men and the phases they navigated, the research provides valuable insights for others facing similar challenges, encouraging them to approach divorce with patience, resolve issues, and reduce stress by recognizing their strengths. This perspective highlights the potential for rebuilding a fulfilling life, even after loss and also emphasizes the need for men to receive protection and understanding during these difficult times. To address these issues, the government should implement targeted policies that include enhanced counselling services, financial assistance, support groups, and increased access to legal aid. Furthermore, effective awareness campaigns aimed are essential for fostering a more supportive and empathetic environment for those undergoing this life transition.

6 Acknowledgement

I sincerely thank each participant for their valuable contributions to this research. I would also like to extend our appreciation to Deepak for providing his insightful and critical perspectives, which greatly enriched this study.

7 Data Availability

The dataset generated during and/or analysed during the current study are not publicly available due to confidentiality of participants.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1: Participant Information

Age-group	Percentage Share	Age at Marriage (Mean= 29 Years)	Percentage Share
20-30	10	20-30	63
31-40	50	31-40	37
Above 40	40	Marital Duration (Mean= 2.6 Years)	
Caste		Less than 5 Years	23
General	57	5-10 Years	47
Scheduled Castes	11	10-15 Years	13
Other Backward Castes	32	More than 15 Years	17
Religion		Known before Marriage	
Hindu	97	Less than a Year	60
Muslim	3	1-5 Years	23
Type of Residence		More than 5 years	17
Rural	40	Children	
Urban	60	No Child	60
Wealth Status (Self-reported)		Daughter	23
Poor	17	Son	17
Middle	62	Type of marriage	
Rich	21	Love	40
Education Level		Arranged	60
Higher Secondary	27		
Graduation	20		
Above Graduation	53		
Partners' Education Level			
Higher Secondary	30		
Graduation	37		
Above Graduation	33		
Occupation			
Private Job	67		
Government Job	20		
Business	10		
No Job	3		
Family Type			
Joint	34		
Nuclear	66		
Age Difference with Wife			
Less than 5 Years	30		
5-10 Years	7		
More than 10 Years	63		

Source: Author's Calculation