Chapter IV

Personality Characteristics of the Intercultural couples

The previous chapter dealt with various situations, the different motives of the intercultural marriages, reactions and the reconciliations of the natal family.

An attempt is made in this chapter to present the personality characteristics of the intercultural couples before and after marriage. Individual as a member of a particular group, factors that govern them. Self-consciousness or sense of belonging, sociability, Physical appearance, intelligence, emotional maturity and striving for goals are some of the personality characteristics identified before marriage and their adjustability after marriage.

4. Personality

Every man or woman is not an island. He or she belongs to a particular social group. They have their own caste, religious organization and they also belong to a particular linguistic group. As the member of a particular group the individual learns and acquires certain personality characteristics. According to the Psychologists personality traits are to be found out from the characteristics and distinctive way of behaving. Characteristic represent usual or typical behaviour and the distinctive differentiate a person from other people. No personality test or rating scale was attempted to measure the limited number of traits from the characteristic and distinctive ways of behaviour of the intercultural couples. However an attempt is made to discover the characteristic and distinctive ways of behaving while finding out what an intercultural partner does in specific situations.

The following personality characteristics before marriage were identified in the interaction with the male and female respondents.

4.1 Self consciousness, sense of belongingness and self assertion

Every human being is a self conscious one. Some of them are conscious of their belongingness and identity. As a member of a particular group, the couples in general
before marriage are very proud of their respective communities. Though some of them are not very much attached to the religious practices, they are very particular to follow all the customs especially the rites of passage. Sundar (case study 31) says, “I rarely go to the temple but I had the religious sentiments and I was proud to be a Hindu. I attend all my family functions”.

Some people feel detached from their own culture or peer group to be able to decide for themselves about their future. Sometimes due to the circumstances mainly in the complex societies, they are forced to experience the distance. Some feel not that much comfortable with their age-old traditional customs and practices. Still they feel that they belong to the particular group. Sukumar (case study 58) who married Valsa, a Malayali christian girl, says, “I am not very much interested and attached to my religious practices from my childhood onwards and that does not mean that I would become Christian to marry the girl I want. This may be the reason why I allow my children to follow the Christianity as my wife wishes”.

This self assertion is found in some of the male respondents (D’Silva (61), Vincent (73), Mathias (70), Kuppusamy (63). The christian male respondents said that they were very conscious of their religion and regular to the church activities and that they were trained in that way.

Some of the female respondents are also of the same opinion that they were all actively participating in their religious activities. Loretta (case study 4) says, “I was brought up by a traditional catholic family and I had a strict Christian upbringing and I was very much attached to my Christian faith”. Alphonse Mary (8), Elis (69) have the same experience. Their parents and grandparents would see that they never violated the usual practices and the norms of the religion and the society.

During the time of trials and difficulties and frustrations, some were conscious of their own self and prayed to God. When Issac (Case study 59) failed in his love, he was very much frustrated and used to pray to God to give him peace of mind. The cases of Alan (case study 69), Pravin (case study 46) and Pandian (case study 10) fall under this category.

There are 10 male respondents and three female respondents who are found to be possessing the sense of belongingness to their culture.
4.2 Sociability

By sociability we mean here is free association with people. We know more about ourselves and others in our relationship with others. Some are out going, extrovert, sociable, jovial and spontaneous. Some are moody, introvert, reserved. Some of the male and female respondents have developed this characteristic. Persons who are away from their culture tend to be more sociable. Kannan (case study 67) is from Srilanka and came to Chennai as a refugee. All his relatives are there in Srilanka. He feels their absence very much. He has earned a lot of friends by his helping tendency. He considers all his friends as his family members. The family members of Julias (case study 14) are in Coimbatore. He is not that much attached to his cultural practices. He is able to relate with every one. He makes everyone laugh in his office.

Bara (case study 75) says that she has too many friends because she is friendly with them all. This sociability in nature brought about her intercultural marriage with Anthony.

Cases of Siva (case study 19), Antony (case study 29), Paramesvaran (case study 54), Seshathiri (case study M), Gerard (case study 64), Ray (case study 66), Srinivasamoorthy (case study 74), Antony (case study 75) Rani (case study 25), Jacintha (case study 27), Charulatha (case study 72) Rabecca (case study 73), Stephen (case study 6), Mark (case study 13), Ragu (case study 24), Premkumar (case study 27), Samsudden (case study 32), Mani (case study 34), James (case study 6), Farook (case study 42), Satheese (case study 47), Senthil (case study 50), Gunasekaeran (case study 53), Valsa (case study 58), Lysa (case study 59), Usha (case study 62) have been identified as having this characteristic.

There are 21 male respondents and eight female respondents who are found to be more sociable.

4.3 Physical appearance

Physical appearance or external beauty plays considerable role for developing friendship. The other characteristics may be judged from personal appearance to some extent. The girls are likely to be attracted by the well built body and the sparkling
eyes of the boys and the boys never fail to observe the beautiful girls, they way they walk, talk and style and smile. Personal appearance includes height, weight, complexion but also voice, dress and other characteristics of personal nature.

A good number of male respondents say that they were initially attracted by the physical appearance of their wives and they also started admiring their inner beauty. Some of the female respondents say that they dressed and appeared in such way to draw the attention of the boys especially those who had interest in them.

Vasu (case study 5) was a building contractor. One of the girls named Selvi coming to work under him was very beautiful. When Selvi came to know that Vasu was very much interested in looking at her, she used to come well dressed. Vasu also began to dress well just to impress her. That was the beginning of their love.

Vani (case study 21) was very fair and good looking. When she came to know from her friends that Jerald was romantically interested in her, she began to come out with different costumes.

There is a proverb in Tamil (Aal pathi Adai pathi) meaning, “person is half and his dress is half”, says Sithic (case study 37). Though he was not fair, he impressed Navin by his dress and good appearance.

The problems in the family have made some of the female respondents to come out with good physical appearance. Jacky (case study 12) had been ill-treated by her step mother as well as by her superiors. She was not cared well when she was sick. She did not want to show out. She used to appear in such a way that nobody could guess her problems. There are some Cases who fall under this category. (Geethaanjali (case study 52), Sumathi (case study 55) Kala (case study 60), Christina vasanthi (case study 65), Anitha (case study 66).

Some other female respondents say that the more they had problem of money, more they looked attractive. They did not want to project their poor family situation out. Although Chellamma (case study 61) was very poor, she drew the attention of D'Silva by her grant dress. There are Cases of this sort: Selvi (case study 5), Kanaga (case study 28), Susheela (case study 32), Vijaya (case study 35), Rabia (case study
38), Sameema (case study 39), Krishna Devi (case study 40), Tamilselvi (case study 41), Ambika (case study 42), Aruljothy (case study 48), Annie (case study 64), Amutha (case study 68).

There are eight male respondents and 31 female respondents who had very good physical appearance which they think one of the influencing factors of their marriage.

4.4 Intelligence

Those who are able to solve the problems are intelligent. They are mentally alert, and able to learn and understand new things. They are able to be reasonable, rationalize and work hard or get along with other people. They are capable of taking decisions in any critical situation. Some intercultural couples are intelligent in solving the problems and in learning and understanding other’s situations.

Bosco (case study 12) became restless and disturbed when Jacky left her religious house. She was left alone and there was no one to take care of her. Her family members had completely deserted her. He was also pretty sure that his own family members would ignore him if he could marry her. He decided to be loyal to his friendship by becoming the spouse of Jacky.

Ashokaraja (case study 9) was shocked to see Arunmozhi all of a sudden one day coming to him and begging him to marry her. It was he who was disturbing her to the extent of her parents’ suspicion about her. When she said, she had no more strength in her body and mind to tolerate any more torture; he decided to take her to home.

Jessy (case study 70) and Mathias happened to meet each other in marriage information center in St. Antony’s Church, Broadway. Mathias expressed his willingness to marry her. Though he said that he was working in the Electricity board, she was very careful in deciding. Jessy asked her brother to go to the office of Mathias to see whether he was employed in the electricity board. He confirmed it. Mathias’ father liked her sincerity and straightforwardness and decided to have her as his daughter in law. Their marriage took place in the church according to the Christian practices.
There are 18 male respondents: Prabu (case study 4), Loganathan (case study 8) Ashokaraja (case study 9) Bosco (case study 12), Jerald (case study 21), Mano (case study 22), Rajesh (case study 55), Sampath (case study 56), Pratha (case study 51), Javid (case study 52), Stanislaus (case study 23), Gajendran (case study M), Ravi (case study 35), Venketesan (case study 39), Vincent (case study 41), Arockia William (case study 43), George (case study 44), Joseph (case study 45) and 10 female respondents: Priya (case study 6), Rathy (case study 10), Radha (case study 16), Rani (case study 17), Sheela (case study 19), Regi (case study 22), Rosy (case study 23). Rabeca (case study 34). Jansirani (case study 43), Jessy (case study 70) who were intelligent enough to be prudent in their decision making process.

4.5 Emotional maturity

Emotions are described as prime movers of behaviour, these stirred-up states of stored houses of energy which may work for both intense vigour and efficiency and strong disruption of life. Emotions are funds of energy and prepare the organism for some emergency. Emotional excitement stimulates both bodily and mental activity. The individual begins to think more rapidly and of other ways of meeting the situation (Bhatia, 1996:204). The respondents have developed the emotions like anger and fear when they had bitter experiences like sex jealousy and different problems in the family. These people say that they had emotional maturity and stability because of their friends who later became their spouses.

Ramachandran (case study 26) was an active member in the Rastriya swayam swak (RSS) movement. He was encouraged very much by his parents. But when he came home he was not respected, recognized and treated well. His siblings were given good care and he was simply ignored. He was disturbed very much and it was in his association with Grace he became stable.

Kanimozhi (Case study 46) was terribly upset when she failed in her love with a guy of her culture. She became angry towards the boys and developed hatredness. She became normal only when Pravin was able to understand her emotions and accept her.
There are three male respondents Venketesh (case study 3), Murugan (case study 7), Ramachandran (case study 26), and 15 female respondents (Kani (case study 24), Pragathi (case study 29), Mumdhaj (case study 31), Vidhya (case study 45), Kanimozhi (case study 46), Sundari (case study 47), Leelis (case study 2), Mala (case study 3) Irudayamary (case study 7), Aruzhmozhi (case study 9), Lourdes (case study 13), Grace (case study 26), Rehema Banu (case study 36), Navin (case study 37), Pushparani (case study 49) who have handled their emotions in a mature way.

4.6 Striving for goals

Our life is goal oriented and purposive. We are forever seeking new ends and goals to meet our needs. Our needs define our goals and our interest and desires cause involvement they provide their basis. Our thinking and our behaviour is directed toward their attainment. The intercultural couples in general were striving for goals. Their main purpose was to contract the intercultural marriage. However, those respondents whose parents were not favourable on their side had to work hard. We could see some of the male and female respondents who had problems in their family like broken homes and those who wanted to visualize social equality developed this characteristic strongly.

Dheena’s (Case study 30) father had an illegal wife by whom he had three children. Deena and his brothers and sisters were not happy towards his father’s attitude of extramarital affair. Dheena was the eldest son in the family. He was employed in Ashoke Leyland Company. He left his parents and settled in some other house with his brothers and sisters. He wanted to live a disciplined life unlike his father. His goal was to play the father’s role taking care of his siblings and get them well settled. He was determined to be loyal to his wife unlike his father.

Daisy (Case study 67) was the daughter of his father’s second wife. Her father was associated with Diravida kzhagam (Social movement) founded by E. V. Ramasamy Periyar. He did not believe in casteism and superstitions. Daisy also was given this value system. She is also very much involved in diravida kzhagam. She used to attend meetings and give talks. She is interested in creating caste free society and that is her goal.
This characteristic is found more among the 15 male respondents: Vaithy (case study 1), Vijay (case study 18), Sekar (case study 28), Dheena (case study 30), John Kennedy (case study 40), Saravanan (case study 48), Subash (case study 49), Manuel (case study 2), Gaudaman (case study 15), Kandan (case study 16), Jeyakodi (case study 17), Vivekanandan (case study 20), Amalorpavanathan (case study 25), Jeevagiritharan (case study 65), Dr. Ravindranath (case study 71) and eight female respondents: (Vijaya (case study 30), Jessy (case study 33), Devi (case study 44), Fara (case study 57) Mariammal (case study 15), Arivukodi (case study 20), Dailsy Maniammai (case study 67), Dr. Shanthi (case study 71).

4.7 The Predominant personality characteristics during the time of friendly association and courting

Table 7: Personality characteristics of males and females during courting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality Characteristic</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Sense of belongingness</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.33</td>
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<td>2. Sociability</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28.00</td>
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<td>3. Physical appearance</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.66</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Intelligence</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24.00</td>
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<td>5. Emotional stability and maturity</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.00</td>
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<td>6. Striving for Goals</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20.00</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>100</td>
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N: Total number of males and females having specific personality characteristic; %: Percentage
Among the respondents, 41 present of females have given more importance to physical appearance. They are interested more in maintaining sound mind and sound body. They consider health is wealth. Everything will go on well when they are physically healthy. The upper middle class people go for the luxurious and latest designed dresses whereas the middle class and lower middle class people go for the moderate ones. Whether they are rich or poor, when they go out, they want that they should be well dressed. They strongly feel that they will be socially recognized when they appear very smart. The young boys make it a point to have the well-built physic and the young girls take extra care to keep their body lean. This is not only to draw the attention of the opposite sex, but also they feel that they should not become subject to the public mockery and comment. More than that they feel more confident and assertive. During the time of courting, the females appear in front of their lovers more handsome and smarter than males. They have also known what sort of dress their lovers or friends like them to wear. As the physical appearance gives the first impression even before they talk and relate, they do have the tendency to give the best impression.

Among the sample respondents 28 present of males are found to be more sociable. The family background and the intercultural circumstances facilitate them to be more jovial, friendly and extrovert. Human relationship is built up and maintained when we talk freely and spontaneously. Today, people are aware of the fact that they will gain friendship when they are friendly to others. Sociability is closely connected with availability. People are very much impressed when they see others are always available for them to help according to their capacity. They are confident that they could impress people by the way they talk. Today communication skill is necessary for any field. Young people also have learned to share their problems to their friends and get their opinion and guidance. It is noted in our enquiry that while men give importance the characteristic of sociability, women give more importance to their physical appearance. Men draw the attention of women by their behaviour and women draw the attention of men by their physical appearance.

24 present of male respondents are found to be intelligent in their endeavours. Today, people are more and more reasonable and think critically and act creatively.
Everybody has problem in one or the other way. How they handle the situation is that what matters. Some can solve their problems very easily while others take time and find it difficult. Some are able to adapt themselves to the new situations and others need considerable time. Taking proper decision at the appropriate time is not possible for everyone. Some of the respondents were intelligent enough to deal with the problem prudently and politely and firmly.

Comparing to men, Women are less intelligent (13.33%) in terms of taking decisions and solving their problems. They are highly emotional and sensitive and slow to decide and act. Slow and steady wins the race seems to be their impressive proverb. That is the reason why they have developed emotional stability as their second predominant characteristic (20%). Men are in a hurry to do things while the women take time to think and act. It was clearly evident in accepting the proposal of men. When men tell them ‘I love you’, they are very anxious of the women’s response whereas the women do not respond them immediately. They take months perhaps some years to accept men’s love.

Another prominent characteristic found among the male respondents is (20%) is striving for goals. Today young men strive hard to come up in life. They strongly feel that it is their duty and responsibility to take care of their parents and themselves get well settled. Their girl friends whom they intend to marry play a considerable role in encouraging them to achieve their goals.

It has been found out that the male respondents are more sociable than female respondents (Males 21 and Females 8) are. Generally, the men take initiatives to relate with the women. They introduce themselves and ask about the others. The women are little reserved in this regard. They start relating with the men once they have confidence in them. They are also little prudent that the society should not develop bad opinion about them. The society is least interested if men talk much whereas it looks at the girls differently if they are more talkative. This is the reason why the girls who are talkative at home look introvert when they go out. During their meeting with their boy friends they look at the surroundings and are very careful in their talk and behaviour lest somebody known to their family members observes them. Some girls have been sufficiently advised by their family members and friends.
to be extremely careful in their relationship with the boys. The bitter experience they or their friends have control over their sociability with the boys. The boys are not bothered about all these elements.

It has been also found out in this research that the female respondents do take more care in maintaining their physical appearance (Females 31 and Males 8). They have the feeling that they will always draw the attention of men when they appear in public. Though they do not look at the boys directly, they never fail to note indirectly that whether they are looked at by the boys. In fact they enjoy being looked at. They like that their costumes are appreciated by the boys. Even if they have problem at home, tensions and frustrations, they never show it out. They do not minimize the importance they attach to their physical appearance.

The sense of belongingness and self assertiveness is found to be more among men than women. In the research it is found out that the women do have the sense of belongingness in the beginning but later they lose interest as they are not properly treated in the family. When the family members are highly suspicious of their behaviour, when the family members exercise control over them they are frustrated and develop less attachment in their culture. When they meet with failure, they are highly sensitive and emotional (Males 3 and Females 15). The men react immediately, sometimes drink, smoke, share with their friends and women though react sometimes keep their feeling inside and never reveal it until they get friends to share. Men are least worried about public criticism whereas women take them to heart. They get the emotional stability and maturity either by their bitter experiences of the past or by their association with their boy friends.

On the whole, comparing to other personality characteristics, the sense of belongings to one’s culture is not found among the majority of the respondents. It is exclusively because of their way of life in the city and modern technology. Their friendship cuts across the barriers of caste, religion and language. Unlike the simple society, they are exposed to the complex realities, which lead them to the progressive thinking, and they are preoccupied with their economic growth in life.
4.8 The relationship of motivation with the personality characteristic

It is very well noted that the motivation of the respondents has got a great impact on their personality characteristics. The following table shows their relation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivations</th>
<th>Personality Characteristics</th>
<th>Sense of Belongingness</th>
<th>Sociability</th>
<th>Physical appearance</th>
<th>Intelligence</th>
<th>Emotionality</th>
<th>Striving for goals</th>
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M: Male; F: Female; N: Number

Note: Total No. of respondents 150: Males 75: Females 75
The 13 respondents possessing the characteristic 'sense of belongingness' are found to have the motivations sex jealousy and earlier love failure (4 persons), Intercultural family background (3 persons), Personal factors (6 persons). Except three female respondents from intercultural background, others are male respondents. Though they were from intercultural family background they were very much attached to one particular religion. At the same time they were open to other religious traditions. The four male respondents were very much offended and frustrated because of their earlier love failure that they identified themselves more to their culture, to be more obedient to their parents. The six male respondents were always conscious of their identity though they were mingling with the persons of other culture.

Respondents having separation from culture (Males 10 and Females 4) and personal factors (Males 11 and Females 4) as their motives have been found to be more sociable in our analysis. First of all they were not very attached to their own culture because they were away from their cultural practices. According to them they were not that much interested and that they were open to other cultural practices. However, the female respondents though away from their cultural practices, they used to depend on their family members more. According to them they were also interested in their cultural practices. Though they were open and respect others, they were always concerned about their identity. Respondents having personal factors (Males 11 and Females 4) as their motivations have been also found to be more sociable. This was again due to their tendency to mingle with every one and they also used to participate in other cultural practices. Their association with the members of other cultures in their place of study, work have had created the platform for their sociability more. However, the female respondents used to relate with other with caution.

Out of 39 people who have good physical appearance, six female respondents have problems in the family, two males and 13 females have, poor economic background and, six males and 12 females have personal factors. The six female respondents did not want to reveal their problems outside their family and one of the techniques they followed was to take extra care in their physical appearance. The male respondents never cared about the problems and tensions they faced in their family. The two male respondents though poor they were, wanted to create good impression and public
esteem outside. Others could manage what they had with them. There are 13 female respondents whose parents themselves took extra care in getting good dress for them thinking that they should appear well in the public. They might have had poor food and dwelling place but because they were girls they should not develop inferiority complex in front of others. Mainly the female respondents because of their frequent meetings and their daily work were very much concerned about their physical appearance outside. Their colleagues used to make comments over their dress and their friends were to feel comfortable with them.

There were nine male and 10 female respondents of intercultural background and nine male respondents of personal factors found to be more intelligent. The way they were brought in both traditions had influenced them to look at the realities from different perspectives. They were able to understand the different situations and different ways of tackling the problem. The female respondents observed them in person in their family itself. They learned what to do and what not to do in the given situation. Their parents were able to understand their problems and help them out. The nine male respondents with personal factors as the motivation for intercultural marriage had learned to handle the situation in a mature way due to their association with different types of people. They used to have constructive consultation with their friends and they get sufficient enlightenment while solving the problems.

Three males and nine females with problems in their families and six female respondents with sex jealousy as their motivations found to be emotionally disturbed. When the male respondents were frustrated, they could find some other ways to divert their attention. They could also with the help of their male friends and girl friends become emotionally balanced and mature. The female respondents were more compared to male because they were very sensitive and they did not have the courage to tell others. They could share with their friends. The male respondents who had the bitter experience of love affair took it easy to some extent but the female respondents were terribly frustrated and developed anger towards men. They were also aware of the fact that their situation would be exploited by some people who gave patient hearing to them. It was only in their personal association with their boy friends, their emotions became balanced and mature.
There were 11 respondents (Males 7 and Females 4) and 12 respondents (Males 8 and Females 4) having ‘broken home’ and ‘social reform’ as their motivations respectively found to have developed the characteristic of ‘striving for goal’. When their parents were not united or father having an illegal wife or divorced or married second wife, they were terribly affected. Mainly the male respondents would take care of their mother and siblings well and they would never develop the unwanted behaviour of their parents. They worked hard to achieve their goal. The respondents of social equality purposefully married the partners of other culture to strive for their goal. These respondents because of their involvement with the social revolutionary movement had visualized to create the caste free society. The female respondents of this motivation, though not advertised made use of the opportunity they came across the persons of such motives.

4.9 Personality characteristic after marriage: adjustments

Adjustability is one of the most important personality characteristic of any couple after marriage. Adjustments emerge from the understanding of the couples. It is the result of the reciprocal love and sacrifice of the couples. Sharing the struggles and sorrows, bearing with them and caring are part of it. The couples are to put up with lot of unfamiliar situations to lead a good and successful intercultural marriage. Adjustment starts with the celebration of marriage. The type of the celebration of intercultural marriage depends upon the approval and non-approval of the party’s parents. Only the love marriages needed the approbation of the parents. The table number nine shows the number of arranged and love marriages and their percentage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Marriage</th>
<th>Intercaste Marriages</th>
<th>Interreligious Marriages</th>
<th>Interlingual Marriages</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranged</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriages</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28.00</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>72.00</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$N$: Number of marriages; %: Percentage
The considerable percentage of intercultural marriages (28%) is arranged by the parents themselves. These parents are either intercultural parents themselves or monocultural parents. The monocultural parents are not very attached to their caste, religion and language. They see the parties’ economical status and good standing. It is evident that love marriages (72%) are increasing in the town and particularly in Chennai.

The following table shows how many parents approved and did not approve and what sort of marriage celebration was held for the intercultural couples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Love marriages</th>
<th>Intercast marriage</th>
<th>Interreligious marriage</th>
<th>Interlingual Marriage</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N  %</td>
<td>N  %</td>
<td>N  %</td>
<td>N    %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both the parents</td>
<td>6 11.11</td>
<td>5 9.25</td>
<td>10 18.51</td>
<td>21 38.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approved</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Parents approved</td>
<td>4 7.40</td>
<td>8 14.81</td>
<td>7 12.96</td>
<td>19 35.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boy’s Parents</td>
<td>5 9.25</td>
<td>1 1.85</td>
<td>3 5.55</td>
<td>9 16.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approved</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl’s Parents</td>
<td>3 5.55</td>
<td>2 3.70</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approved</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand total</td>
<td>18 100</td>
<td>14 100</td>
<td>22 100</td>
<td>54 100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N: Number of marriages; %: Percentage

38 percent of parents of both parties have agreed and accepted the intercultural marriages. The parents seem to have preferred interlingual marriages (18.51%) rather than interreligious (9.25%) and intercaste (11.11%) marriages. It is also significant to note that only 9.25 percent of girls’ parents approved their daughters’ intercultural marriages. This shows that the parents of the girls are overprotective and they see the welfare of their daughters and their husbands’ family background. They also do not want that their daughters are away from their cultural roots.
Each culture has its own traditional way of celebrating the wedding. It is closely related to the religion they are attached. In the cases of many intercultural marriages one particular traditional practice was followed and if there was no consensus the marriage was registered and the reception was held in common. In some cases the marriage was registered and no reception was held. The following table (Table 11) shows the type of marriage ceremony that was conducted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of marriage</th>
<th>Intercaste Marriages</th>
<th>Interreligious Marriages</th>
<th>Interlingual marriages</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Marriages</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>48.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self respect Marriages</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu Marriages</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Marriages</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>52.00</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N: Number of marriages; %: Percentage

Private marriages (32%) were those marriages which had no religious significance. They were of two types. The marriage parties went to the register office, exchanged the garlands, and had their marriage registered with the signature of two witnesses. Some marriages which had the approval of either parents or one party’s parents were also conducted in the register office. Though these parents agreed for the intercultural marriages of their children, they did not want to publicize this. 48 Percent of interreligious couples have conducted their marriage in the register office mainly because their parents did not approve and some times either party wanted to be converted to the other religion. The second type of private marriages was the self respect marriages (8%). Those marriages were conducted privately in front of some political leaders who were for caste and religious free societies. They never saw any particular auspicious time or month to conduct such marriages. Those marriages were conducted during the Tamil month of margali (December) which is considered to be the bad month by most of the Tamilians. They were also conducted during ragukalam (the time considered by the most of the Tamilians as bad during which no marriage
takes place). These people consider the bad month and bad time as something superstitious they never believe in. They are known as self respect marriages because of these factors. The marriage registrar was called for the registration of such marriages.

Basing on mutual agreement the parties conducted the marriage of their religious choice. It is significant to note that there was no marriage conducted in the Muslim religion. The girl or boy married to a Muslim, conducted their marriage privately. Those marriages come under private marriages.

40 Percent of marriages were conducted according to the Christian custom. One of the reasons was that such marriage was possible even without the conversion of the non Christian party. Some non-Christian respondents said that they volunteered because of their own conviction to become Christian. Some became Christians just for the sake of marriage; for one of the conditions of Christian parents was that the non Christian spouse should become Christian. It was also reported that some of the spouses became Christians for the satisfaction of their spouses. 52 Percent of intercaste couples comparing to interreligious and interlingual have opted for Christian marriage. Some of the couples happened to belong to the same religion though they were from two different castes. In the same way 28 percent of interreligious couples have conducted their marriage according to Hindu custom. They have taken place when either party’s parents completely deserted them.

4.14 Different areas of adjustments

There are different areas the intercultural couples had to be more adjustable with each other. There were following 10 areas identified and the attempt was made to know their adjustability.


4.10.1 Food habits

The intercultural couples are very much interested to know the food habits of their life partners. In some cases it was interesting to note that both of them have learned cooking the type of food of the other. Issac (case study 59) says, “I am a Tamilian and my wife is Malayali. I know to cook Malayalam dishes and my wife cooks Tamil
food”. In some cases, the wives have taken interest to learn the food habits and the way of cooking done in their husbands’ homes. Arunmozhi (case study 9) says, “I did not like the food served in my husband’s family. But for the sake my husband I learned to eat and because of the love I have for my husband I cook his favourite dishes and in the way their family prepares”. Some female respondents say that they have changed themselves to be the non-vegetarians for the sake of their husbands and their children. When a spouse who takes non-vegetarian food insists that the other should also become non-vegetarian, the Inter-spouse adjustment is impaired. Regi (case study 22) says “My husband and parents in law compelled me to eat meat and I took and vomited and they never compelled me afterwards and I learned to eat just for a better understanding”. Here is a female respondent namely Chellamma (case study 61) who says that she cooks non-vegetarian food but does not eat. Some female respondents (Charulatha case study 72), Anitha (case study 63) say that they have agreed that non-vegetarian food can be eaten at the hotels and in their relative’s house.

The intercultural couples have some adjustments when one is a vegetarian and the other a non-vegetarian. Some partners adjust themselves admirably. Three possible alternatives have been observed. The first alternative is that each partner allows the other to have his or her own choice at home as in the case of Chellamma. This reveals the true spirit of adjustment between the partners. The second alternative is the acceptance by one partner of the food habits of the other voluntarily or otherwise as in the case of Regi. We notice here a shift from vegetarianism to non-vegetarianism or vice versa. We also notice here that some females are more adaptable under such circumstances. The third alternative lies in the acceptance of a common pattern of vegetarianism at home, allowing the non-vegetarian partner to take the food of his or her choice outside home, either from hotel or from the house of any relative or friend on certain occasions, (Manoj, case study 72 and Kuppusamy, case study 63). This arrangement ensures satisfaction for both and the family is run smoothly.

When a non-vegetarian spouse insists that the other should also become so the Inter-spouse adjustment is impaired as in the case of Regi (case study 22). Couple may be
said to indicate high adjustment on food-habits when both are vegetarians or non-vegetarians or when the vegetarian spouse permits the partner to take non-vegetarian diet or when vegetarian spouse accepts non-vegetarian food. It was found that a few respondents wished that their spouse should never taste non-vegetarian food; some vegetarians became non-vegetarians precisely to avoid the practical problems and they wanted to be in the good book of their partners. Some male respondents said that they had respected their vegetarian partners and they started eating non-vegetarian in the hotels or when they visit their own family members. Some female respondents said they cook non-vegetarian food for the sake of their husbands and children though they remain to be vegetarian.

It is observed that there have been adjustments and understanding among the intercultural couples with regard to the food habits. In all the intercultural families, the female partners are generally cooking though some of the male partners know cooking. On certain occasions in some families both cook. Some male respondents say that they have taught some techniques to their spouses in cooking and their partners have adapted them.

It has been noted in the analysis that the couples of love marriages and the couples having personal factors, poor economy, family problems, social reform and the separation from culture as their motives have good and healthy adjustments in the food habits. There was some tension among the couples of arranged intercultural marriages. For they came to know their food habits only after their marriage whereas the couples of love marriages had known it even before their marriage.

4.10.2 Place of residence

The most difficult adjustment being made by the couple is probably in the house where they live. Most of the intercultural couples had their separate house soon after their marriage. Those few couples who live in the husband's house as a joint family, the wives were forced to be more adjustable to the culture of the husband's family. Ashokaraja (case study 9) told his wife in this way: "You can expect me to understand you and your way of life and I can be fully adjustable to you. You cannot expect my parents, brothers and sisters that they would be able to understand your way of life and hence you have to be prudent in your behaviour. You will be
appreciated if you live up to their expectations”. Some of the couples who happened to live in the joint family in the beginning, experienced suffering because of the cultural differences. In the beginning, some respondents said they had culture shock and it took some months to understand their way of life and thinking. The wife had to be adjustable to the way they talk, the way they cook, eat and in the religious matters. In spite of all these adjustments and adaptations, it was found out that they were not happy because of their strained relationship emerged out of the cultural differences. Alphonse Mary (case study 8) was asked to eat in the plate in which her husband ate. When she wanted to wash the plate before eating, it was remarked it was against their custom. There was no proper understanding with the in-laws which caused misunderstanding between the husband and wife. Some female respondents confessed that they had felt sometimes their rootless atmosphere and experienced alienation. Some of the female respondents said that they had to put up with everything till they had formed the nuclear family.

The couples of love marriages and those who had poor economy, family problems, sex jealousy earlier love failure as their motivations had put up with their difficulties in their residence. Even the couples of love marriages had some problems with the parents-in-law when they lived in the joint family. There was some confusion, quarrels among the couples of arranged marriages with regard to the structure and the convenience of the residence.

4.10.3 Language and communication

The intercultural couples are very good at communication and the couples of different languages have taken interest to learn the other language. Some who have not learned the other language had some problem in the initial stages. Later they have learned to be prudent in their communication. The wife does not speak her mother tongue in the presence of her husband. Valsa (case study 58) a Malayali married to a Tamilian used to talk over the phone and to the malayali visitors in Malayalam when her husband was present. There was some misunderstanding because of that and then onwards, Valsa avoided talking Malayalam and talked always Tamil whenever he was present. The couples also take real interest to teach their children both languages. As the
children live in Tamilnadu, they speak Tamil fluently. If the mother's language is the
different one, she teaches the language to her children. Though Dr. Shanthi's (case
study 71) mother tongue is Telugu, she used to talk only Tamil at home. She makes it
a point to teach her son Telugu lest he should feel out of place when her relatives
speak Telugu.

Verbal communication refers to the words we speak; it transmits the sense of what we
want to say. At best, however, words are imperfect communicators, and for people
who do not have the same mother tongue, they can be dangerous. It is not always easy
in another language to know what words should be used when or to whom. Different
rules apply in different cultures, and a wrong or inappropriate word can cause
misunderstandings. There was a misunderstanding because of the use of such words.
In a Case study of the interlingual couple who happened to be the Tamilian and
Malayali, The Tamil husband (Seshathiri case study 62) used the word in tension
'mayire' (Hair). The Malayali wife was shocked to hear such a bad word. The
husband later came to know that the same word in Malayalam carries a loaded
meaning which was not used by the decent people. The husband understood and
never used such word.

Language fluency has caused some misunderstandings among the intercultural
couples. There are some partners who fluently speak English, which creates a kind of
superiority and inferiority complexes among the couples. Navin (case study 37) says,
"Whenever I used to talk English fluently to my husband who speaks very little, he
used to feel inferior and whenever I am in tension, I use my command over the
language. Later I realized as it considerably affects the personality of my husband".
The spouse with superior linguistic facility, speed, and vocabulary can not only direct
the conversation and set its style but also manipulate it to serve personal ends. It was
through mutual dialogue and understanding they have rectified the situation. It is also
observed from the couples that they express their emotions better in their own
language.

In some cultures people gesture more than in others, and similar gestures may have
different meanings; Anitha casually put her right leg over the left one while sitting
and talking to her father in law. She was used to do so in her family for it was a
normal behaviour. But for her father in law it was a great disrespect. Her husband had
to explain to her and she was careful later on.

Silence may have different meanings to different people. When some are angry, they
keep silent. Sometimes it is very difficult to find out. Sheela (case study 19) says “My
husband always looks serious whenever he talks to me and I seldom find smile on his
face. In the beginning I thought that he was not happy with me but later I came to
know that his father used to be serious to him and that he acquired this expression”.
John (case study 40) says “My wife always speaks loudly and she has acknowledged
that her normal way of talking is such”. In some cultures silence is the sign of
approval whereas it is disapproval in the other. Some people will be silent when they
fly into passion and some others immediately react. Christy (case study 50) gave the
impression of being shy and passive because she kept her eyes lowered when talking,
which caused Senthil her husband to feel helpless. “Look at me so I can see what you
are saying” he would say. She tried, but it was awkward for her. Some do not keep
the things in order when they are out of their normal mood. Guna (case study 53) says
“When things are in disorder at home, I come to know that my wife is not happy with
me”.

One of the most frustrating things about nonverbal language for the intercultural
couples is that they cannot run to the dictionary to look up for meanings; often, it is
only learned by trial and error. Most of the couples in our enquiry have taken even
some years to learn in this way. They are able to adjust with their partners as they are
aware of all their non-verbal activities.

It has been found out in the analysis; the couples of different languages had some
problems in the beginning and gradually rectified the situation. Some couples of love
marriages had some petty issues in their communication. They were not aware of
these minute differences before their marriage. But all of them say it was not their big
issue.
4.10.4 Time factor

Each person has his or her own sense of time and of pace and lives accordingly. They have also been trained to conform to certain cultural rhythms from the moment of birth.

Some are fast in thinking and acting and some are very slow. Kandhan (case study 16) used to tell his wife ‘Hurry up, Hurry up’. His wife was little slow in doing things and getting ready to go out. She later realized that her husband was fast in doing things.

Arivukodi (case study 20) used to be very punctual for all the functions and to her work. When her husband delayed, she used to loose temper and her husband used the proverb: ‘slow and steady wins the race’. They used to have some sharp exchanges because of that and they said they settled the matter in dialogue.

Kala (case study 60) used to get up late in the morning and her husband used to advise her that it was her duty to get up early and do the household activities and prepare the children etc. She herself learned that when she saw her husband getting up early and doing what she used to do at home.

Many couples in this research have learned the other partner’s rhythm and change their own. If the husband likes to be punctual in getting up in the morning and going for job, the wife does and even if she does not the husband is able to understand her situations and the training. It took some months and some years even for some couples to follow what was best for both.

In the analysis it has been found out that the couples of social reform and the problems in the family as their motivations had to make some adjustments in their time factors. Those people who had some social consciousness were very active and always had time consciousness in attending meetings etc. Those who had some personal problems before marriage were always alert after the marriage.

4.10.5 Finance matters

Both partners go for work in some intercultural families and only men go for work in some. They maintain almost one bank account for both. In some families, both have
bank account. Some couples feel free to spend small amount on their own accord and some have to get money from the husbands to spend for each and everything. In most of the families, the wives deal with the financial matters. The husband gives to his wife whatever he earns. Almost all couples take collective decision in spending a good amount of money. A few have developed some difference of opinion in understanding the needs and desires.

Sampath (case study 56) used to tell his wife Jessy to get what she needed and not what she desired. Jessy used to argue saying ‘I desire what I need’. Sampath would understand her situation and accept whatever she would say.

Some female respondents said they used to be extraordinarily economical in spending money. Their husbands used to tell them to be generous. Amutha (case study 68) says, “My husband is usually very generous in spending money and always goes for costly things. I would save money from what he gives and meets all his personal needs and he used to appreciate me”.

Ambika (case study 42) says, “I never saw my husband in such happiness that day when I presented a very good and costly pants and shirt on the occasion of his birthday. He was surprised how I spent for it. I said I used to save money in the private chit company every month”.

Sometimes the arguments went around the financial matters like how much money was saved, how much was spent immediately, and how it was spent. This issue depended for the most part on the individual personalities involved. All most all the couples said that they used to sit and discuss a lot regarding the financial matters. Some held that though they were lavishly spending money before marriage, they had learned to be economical and that they started saving money. In one case (Annie, case study 64), there was no custom of saving money in the husband’s culture. They used to spend whatever they had earned; it was the wife, who had the saving tendency even before marriage, started this practice soon after the marriage. There were some misunderstandings in the beginning with the easygoing husband but then he realized the importance due to the repeated warnings of his partner. There had been some misunderstandings, quarrels among the couples with regard to the handling of money.
One would be very economical in spending and the other would be very lavish. It was also because of the culture of the respective families. But then these matters had been settled through dialogue.

It has been found out in the analysis that the male and female respondents of poor family background were very economical to themselves and at the same time very generous towards their spouses and children.

### 4.10.6 Religious matters

Religion plays major role in the way of life of the couples in general. Among the intercaste and interlingual couples there are some case studies of different religions also. In this research all the male and female respondents belong to the three major religions namely, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. Among the couples of different religions three things have taken place as Romano (2001:108) has pointed out.

Couple adopts beliefs, traditions and rituals from multiple sources, including ones outside the cultures and religions of origin. Spiritual practices are not traditional. Some intercultural couples say that they visit temples, churches, and masque and participate in all the traditional practices of their friends belonging to different cultures and religions.

Some couples take a nonreligious approach to life and is minimally involved in the practice of cultural and religious beliefs, rituals and traditions. One female respondent says, “We are not very much attached to any religion and we do not mind participating in them also”.

Some couples adopt a single religion - either from one partner's background or a mutually agreeable "compromise" religion - yet try to honor the beliefs and traditions of both partners in a selective, but relatively balanced way. If there are two languages, the children may or may not speak both depending upon the necessity.

One partner assimilates and converts himself or herself to the beliefs, traditions and rituals of the other partner's cultural and religious affiliations. In this research it is
found out that some couples have embraced the religion of their partners for a better understanding. Partners who are converted to Christianity say that they are converted because they are convinced.

There are seven Hindu male respondents of interreligious marriages who wanted to marry Christian girls were converted to Christianity (case studies: 26, 27, 30, 35, 46, 47, 49)

There are five Hindu male respondents of intercaste marriages who wanted to marry the Christian girls were converted to Christianity (case studies 1, 4, 7, 8, 10,).

There are five Hindu female respondents of interreligious marriages who wanted to marry Christian boys were converted to Christianity (case studies: 29, 40, 41, 43, and 45).

There is a Hindu female respondent of intercaste marriage (case study 6) who wanted to marry a Christian boy was converted to Christianity.

There are Hindu female respondents (case studies: 61, 72,) of interlingual marriages were converted to Christianity.

There is a Christian female respondent (case study 48) who wanted to marry a Hindu boy was converted to Hinduism. There is a case (case study 52) where the Hindu female was converted to Islam so as to marry the Muslim boy. There was no other option for her except converting to Islam when all her family members completely deserted her.

There are three Muslim female respondents (case studies 31, 32, and 38) who were converted to Islam as they wanted to marry the Muslim boys.

Thus there are 12 male and 13 female respondents who got converted to the religion of their partners’ religion.

As mentioned above personal conviction and interest, parents’ condition, non-support of the parents and siblings were the three reasons these respondents gave for their conversion.
Some Hindu male respondents said that because of their own conviction they became Christians. Ramachandran (case study 26) says, "I was a staunch Hindu and I was an active member in Rastrya swamyam swak (RSS; Hindu religious movement). After marrying Grace of Christianity, I continued to be the Hindu. I had some miraculous escape while driving and I felt strongly that Jesus only saved me. I became a Christian and teach my wife and children now of how to be a better Christians".

Pragathi (case study 29) a Hindu female respondent said that she became Christian because of her interest in Christianity. Studied in the Christian convent school and developed faith in Jesus.

Aruljothi (case study 4) a Christian female respondent loved Saravanakumar, a Hindu and married him. There was no support from her family. The family members had completely deserted her and she became a Hindu to identify herself with her husband’s family.

Geethanjali (case study 52) a Hindu female respondent became Muslim as there was no other option for her to marry the Muslim boy. Her family members were deadly against her marriage with the Muslim boy. She says now that she is very much convinced of Islam.

Mumdhaj (case study 31) a Muslim female respondent became a Hindu just to identity herself with her husband’s family. She says that she is not that much involved in the religious affairs of Islam.

There is culture continuity among the converted partners. Though they are formally converted, they still have their former practices. Loganathan (case study 8) a Hindu male respondent converted to Christianity continues to keep some of his Hindu practices. Every time before he eats, he keeps some food for birds. When the birds eat, he believes that as though his father who is dead eats the food offered by him. Aruljyothi (case study 4) a Christian converted to Hindu religion says that she still prays to Jesus in the Hindu temple.
There are some male and female respondents who did not like to become converted. (case studies: 19, 28, 33, 34, 36 28, 33, 34, 36, 51, 56, 57, 58, 62, 65). They wanted to remain in their own religion. Their partners also respected their religious sentiments.

Both of them follow their own religion. Their children are initiated into either that of the father’s or mother’s religion.

Some of the non-Christian respondents who married the christians said, there was provision for the Christian marriage without conversion. Seshathiri (Case study 62), a Hindu male respondent says, “Our marriage was in the church but I was not converted. I had no objection for my wife to continue her practice as a Christian. We both respect our respective religious traditions. We have both the statues of Jesus and that of Vinayaga”.

Sithic (case study 37) a male Muslim, respondent who married a Christian girl Navin says. “We are not converted to the other religion but we have our own faith and respect each other’s religion. At least one should be adjustable for the smooth running of the family. I am adjustable with my wife and I do not mind which religion she follows and she is free to train our children in her religion. We are very much concerned about our love and the family welfare”.

The couples of different religions acknowledge their religious differences, as they are the different ways of understanding the reality that sounds good. They enjoy the religious freedom. They visit both places of worship and the children are exposed to each other’s religious traditions.

There are 6 cases (67, 15, 16, 17, and 20) wherein there is no practice of religion. According to them religion brought about casteism (too many castes) and caste discrimination. These people have no regard for Christianity or Islam either as these religions also entertain caste discrimination. Associating themselves in the social reform movement, they are firm in creating the caste free society. Among these six cases, two female respondents have little religious sentiments but they are very careful in not expressing it before their husbands.
Rani (case study 17) is basically a believer in Hinduism. She has married a Christian who does not believe in Christianity. He propagates atheistic principles. In front of him Rani does not talk about God. She goes to the temple without the knowledge of her husband.

Kandhan (case study 16) says, “There is no answer for why the just should suffer and where is God when the innocent people are victimized by the great tsunami and there is no meaning in having faith in Him”.

Though the couples do not practice any religion, they respect the religious sentiments of other people. In fact they were against the anti conversion bill.

Gaudaman (case study 15) said that it was against the human freedom and he and his movement conducted some public meetings against such bill.

4.10.7 Temperamental differences

Temperament is very common that individuals differ in. The couples are of the unanimous opinion that temperamental compatibility between husband and wife is necessary for the intercultural family and wide difference in temperamental congeniality may result in poor adjustment. The couples say that they have clearly learned the temperaments of their partners and act accordingly. The main reason for happiness as frequently stated by the respondents is the temperament of the spouse. Anger is stated to be one of the major temperaments of the couples. Most of the female respondents have learned to calm down when their partners fly into passion. 90.66 percent of the female respondents say that they keep quiet when their husbands get angry (Table 8). This table also shows that the 92.59 percent of the female respondents of the love marriages are more adjustable in their temperaments comparing to the female respondents of the arranged marriages (85.71%) who have come to know the temperaments of each other after marriage and try to adjust with their partners. They say that some body has to be a patient listener and because of the love they have for their partners and for the better understanding they want to be more adjustable in regard to the temperaments. They also say that they were aware of the temperaments of their partners even before marriage. However, some of them say
that they have come to know their original temperaments after their marriage and that there is no other way other than being adjustable.

Table: 12 Gender wise temperamental adjustments of the intercultural couples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Marriages</th>
<th>Love marriages</th>
<th>Arranged marriages</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>92.59</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N: Number of the respondents; M: Male; F: Female; %: Percentage

As the couples have differences in communication in intercultural marriage, so too they have culturally different ways of handling stress and/or resolving conflict.

When dealing with life’s problems, the couples tend to go back to their root, which gives them a sense of comfort and identity. But the ways they choose may be perplexing and upsetting to their partners.

Antonyraj (case study 29) says that whenever he is in stress and conflict he wants to meet his father and talks to him but he goes without the knowledge of his wife, which upsets his wife. Pragathi tries to understand his root and she feels that when he goes without her knowledge, something is happening.

Sekar (case study 28) wants to meet his friends and get himself relaxed whenever he is in tension. His wife does not like some of his friends.

Some male respondents have developed drinking and smoking as the common ways of responding to stress.

Usha (case study 62) says, "My husband drinks and smokes a lot when he is in stress. He is able to talk to me openly when he has taken some drinks. When he smokes very frequently, I understand that he has some problem"
Ray (case study 66) says, "I am not consuming alcohol regularly, but I do it in times of struggle and tension. My wife shouts at me as she considers that it is sinful. Later she realized that consuming alcohol is not sinful and I also realised that is not the way to release tension".

Lying down and Sleeping in the bed is more common ways of responding to stress for some female respondents. Dheena (case study 30) says that he will come to know that his wife is out of mood when she is lying down and sleeping untimely. She has been doing so from her childhood onwards.

Mathias (case study 70) says, "My wife likes to talk to her friend whenever she is in stress and I encourage her to do so; sometimes I dial her friend’s number and make her talk”.

Some female respondents go to their natal homes and spend sometimes with their parents. Vijaya (case study 35), visits her parents frequently and her husband himself takes her to her home and drops and picks up.

Heavy food consumption and not eating at all are found among some male and female respondents. Mariammal (case study 15) says, "My husband eats a lot when he is in stress and conflict and I do not eat anything when I am angry”.

Some have to struggle to understand each other’s temperaments. Murugan (case study 7) says, "I do not understand what is going on with my wife and I sometimes interpret the behavior incorrectly, and react to it in a negative or inappropriate way. It is through experience and dialogue I am able to adjust to her temperaments”.

Some respondents have said that they were trying to understand the cultural origin of their partner’s behaviour to get to the source of the problem. Daisy (case study 67) says “When I come across certain strange behaviour, I try to learn his cultural background and understand him”.

Some are sensitive and some may not be sensitive and cry when they experience separation. We can not say those who cry have real and more love and affection. Some may have it in their heart and may not express it emotionally. Geethanjali (case study 52) was not able to cry when her husband left her to go abroad for a job. He
was to come back after two years. In the airport her parents-in-law including her
husband were surprised and shocked thinking that she had no real love for the
husband. She was happy that her husband knows her attitude. Marital partners work
together to resolve many problems, to negotiate solutions, which means that they
catch misunderstandings and correct them before they go beyond the limit. The
intercultural couples are convinced of the fact that not responding "appropriately" is
often mistaken for not caring about or not really loving the other.

The couples of love marriages, because of their love for their partners used to go on
asking questions on their behaviour that created tension among them and later on they
have learned to have open talk, slow down and stop probing with non stop questions.
The couples of arranged marriages have the tendency to visit their family members
and friends during the time of tension, more often than the couples of love marriages.

4.10.8 Parents-in-law

The concept behind the arranged marriage is that marriage takes place not between
two persons but between two families. After the marriage, the family members like to
maintain their relationship through marriage in a healthy way. However, relationships
with parents-in-law frequently create problems within a marriage. When this problem
is frequently found among the monocultural marriages, it is not a surprising
phenomenon in the intercultural marriages.

The most difficult situation arises when circumstances require one or more of the
parents -in-law to live with a married couple. If this really cannot be avoided, the
couples keep in mind that the most important means of establishing unity is through a
dialogue. Also essential is the recognition that one who is suffering most.
Vaithiyanathan (case study 1) says 'if for example the husband's mother lives with a
couple and does not get on well with her daughter-in-law, it is very often the husband
and not the wife who bears the greater suffering. Even though it may at first seem
other wise he has a difficult choice to make. He wants to be on good terms with his
wife as well as with his mother, and does not want to hurt anyone. If however taking
sides is unavoidable, he does always side with his wife, since unity between husband
and wife is essential particularly in the context of intercultural situations'.
Some male respondents Kuppusamy (case study 63), Prakash (case study 68), Mathias (case study 70), Manoj (case study 72), Vincent (case study 73) say that they side with their mothers and later convince their wives that it was just to make their mothers happy and that they should not feel deserted and lest they would spoil the names of their wives in public. Couples also say that they adopt the right attitude to each other. They accommodate each other, but not at any price. While being polite they obtain their partner’s consent, but do not demand it. They are willing to encourage their partner.

Anitha (case study 63) says that she waged a continuing battle with her mother-in-law over the question of her husband’s primary allegiance. While she understood, abstractly, that her husband’s culture called for stronger ties to his family and greater deference to his mother’s will than was the case in her own culture, when his family took precedence over their personal relationship, she had to fight back. She also struggled to retain her independence from her mother-in-law, who attempted to transform her into an exemplary subservient daughter-in-law. This constant tug-of-war posed many problems for the couple, especially for this particular woman, during the years she lived with her parents-in-law and was resolved only by their formation of nuclear family.

Some couples find that their marital survival depends on the distance they keep from both sets of parents in-law and so choose to live separately, where they are free to live their own lives and resolve their own problems. 98.66 percent of the intercultural couples in our research have formed their nuclear family. Table number 13 shows this data. They keep visiting both families occasionally, except a few couples whose family members have not been reconciled yet.
Table 13: Family typology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of family</th>
<th>Intercaste</th>
<th></th>
<th>Interreligious</th>
<th></th>
<th>Interlingual</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear family</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>96.00</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>98.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N: Number of families; %: Percentage*

Some female respondents say that they do not join their husbands to visit their parents-in-law as they are prejudiced against them. Anitha says that her father in law made an attempt to exploit her sexually and from that time onwards, she stopped accompanying her husband to his home. She also never shared with her husband as lest there would be commotion and havoc in the family. She also does not expect her husband to accompany her when she visits her family members.

The reason why some respondents seldom visit their parents-in-law is because some of the intercultural marriages are only tolerated and not accepted and recognized by the parents. For instance, in a particular case of intercultural marriage (Seshathiri-Usha case study 62) the girl’s father never accepts her husband as his son-in-law but introduces him to others as his daughter’s husband.

Most of the intercultural couples have mutual understanding and adjustments between themselves. They develop misunderstanding only in relation with their in laws. One of the most important solutions the couples make is that they form nuclear family.

The intercultural couples strictly observe the following principles to handle the issue in relation to their parents-in-law:

The parents-in-law are regarded as the partners’ joint responsibility. One partner should never criticize parents-in-law unilaterally. The partner must learn to agree on issues connected with their parents-in-law.
Table 14: Adjustability of the intercultural couples with parents-in-law

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjustability</th>
<th>Couples of love marriages</th>
<th>Couples of arranged marriages</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustability With parents-in-law</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>59.25</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not adjustability with parents-in-law</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>40.75</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N: Number of families; %: Percentage

56 percent of the intercultural couples follow these principles (Table number 14) though they have formed the nuclear family. It has been found out that more than the couples of arranged marriages (47.61%), the couples of love marriages (59.25%) maintain their good relationship with parents-in-law with the above-mentioned principles. The couples of love marriages maintain that they try to maintain good relationship with the parents-in-law because of the love they have for their partners.

4.10.9 Social criticism and social participation

Most of the respondents say that they have faced severe criticism from the family members and friends for the violation of the caste and religious tradition. Strong resistance was observed when the respondent had married a person of a depressed caste.

Aruzhmozh (case study 9) belonging to the forward caste married the person of the depressed caste. In the beginning of her marriage, her family members and friends made a severe criticism. She has brought a heavy damage to the reputation of family members. It was so much so that the family members decided not think of her anymore.

Some respondents could not mention any experience with their parents as they seldom visit them. Stephen raj (case study 6) belonging to the depressed caste married Priya of upper caste. He is least bothered about the public criticism. Priya is very supportive of Stephen. When they hear that her family members are talking bad about his caste, they do not visit them.
Memorable experiences as narrated by some respondents are using words of abuse, passing oblique or ridiculous remarks, maintaining untouchability with the spouse, humiliating treatment to the spouse, indifference of siblings and parents and quarrel with parents. Most of the respondents say that those things are the expected ones and at that time they offered each other comfort and support.

All the highly adjusted couples of intercultural marriages attend the social functions together. Any social function, if attended separately, which can easily be attended jointly, is indicative of low adjustment. All couples in our enquiry wherever possible, jointly attend and participate in social functions. Due to unavoidable occurrences such as sickness some have attended the functions separately but with the knowledge of their partner.

4.10.10 Friendship

Friendship is a basic need of human beings. Finding a friend, some one with whom one has shared sensibilities, is important, even with in one’s own culture. In many respects it parallels with the marital relationship in that its success depends on two people having the background, interests, and values. All cultures value friendship and all couples need friends, but maintaining them often presents unique problems for intercultural couples (Greearson, 1995).

Cultures have their own definitions of what constitutes friendship and different rules regarding fostering and maintaining their friendships. Mala (case study 3) says, a man known to her had visited her house one day. Though her husband was aware of her friendship with him he advised her not to encourage him coming home as the neighbours would suspect such friendship. It was not the problem of the neighbours, she continued, it was his own problem as he was not interested to have healthy friendship at his home. All the more he was highly possessive in nature. She says that she has decided not to invite him hereafter for the smooth running of the family.

Some female respondents of arranged marriages have developed friendship with the opposite sex because their husbands do not spend much time listening to their problem. Dhafni (the names are changed) has a close friend Ramya who used to visit
her with husband very often. Dhafni developed friendship with Ramya’s husband who used to listen to her problem unlike her husband. Ramya’s husband used to visit Dhafni very often when her husband was not at home. Their deep relationship created tension in the family. Dhafni’s husband later realized his mistake with the help of his friends and rectified the situation.

The intercultural couples in general value friendship and they are open minded towards the friends of their partners. Some couples are prudently developing their friendship. Javid (case study 52) says, “I had two girl friends before marriage and now they are also married and I ask them to visit us only with their husbands”.

Most of the respondents state that they have full confidence in the love of their spouse; and the latter was affectionate to them almost every time. They also say that conjugal affection is not much impaired for them. Some female respondents Loretta (case study 4), Priya (case study 6), Alphonse mary (case study 8) Rathy (case study 10), Radha (case study 16), Rani (case study 17), Sheela (case study 19), Regi (case study 22), Rosy (case study 23), Rabecca (case study 34), Jansirani (case study 43), Elis (case study 69), Jessy (case study 70) say, when they are sociable with other men, their husbands are not that much happy and the former could also understand their husbands’ justifiable possessiveness and act prudently in their dealings with other men. They also prove in their action that their fidelity and love are in no way weakened.

Though husbands and wives of intercultural marriages have common interest in most of the matters, each of them has some activities of personal interest. Personal activities are referred here to personal correspondence, visitors in absence of the spouse, individual visits to some places and calling on one’s friends. Both of them have got some friends before their marriage. They have also the knowledge of their friends. A couple may be said to be poorly adjusted when each spouse insists on the detailed knowledge of the activities performed by the other. In fact some couples have some difficulties in this regard. When the personal freedom is respected, there is place for responsibility. Mumdhaj (case study 31) says that her husband had received a letter written to her by one of her friends. It was given to her unopened. When she asked him why he did not open, he replied that it was addressed to her. He also
refused to read the letter when she gave it saying if she had anything to tell him she could do. The attitude of her husband, she continued made her more sincere, open and straightforward. Some female respondents say that their partners are over possessive that they feel unhappy and out of place in the presence of their friends. They take it in the positive sense. Some couples have bitter experiences of misunderstanding due to the influence of the neighbours but get everything clarified through mutual dialogue.

Adjustment in likes and dislikes may be unilateral or bilateral. When only one spouse adapts to the likes and dislikes of the other, there is unilateral adjustment. When both the spouses adapt themselves to the likings and disliking of each other, there is mutual or bilateral adjustment, which is generally expected. Rabecca (case study 73) says that she was interested in going for the movies, her partner used to accompany her though he was not interested. Some male respondents say that they also have developed their interest on the likes and dislikes of their partners.

4.10.11 Different forms of adjustment

As Romano (2001:171) has proposed the following four forms of adjustments have been found out in our analysis.

4.10.11.1 Submission/Immersion

It is found out that often one partner submits because one culture is so dominant or exclusive that it allows for no alternative. This is especially true in the cultures in which religion regulates most behaviors. All the converted respondents with for the sake of marriage come under this category.

Charulatha (case study 72) says, “My parents being staunch Hindus did not consent for marrying a Christian. Though I was not willing, I became Christian just to marry him and to give our children Christian training; but heart to heart I am still a Hindu and my husband respects that”. Submission may be thus merely superficial, however-for public appearance-while in their private life the couple maintains a more balanced relationship. In other situations, the personality of one partner may be so dominant as in the case of Regi (case study 22). Her husband forced her to cook meat and eat.
4.10.11.2 Obliteration

Some couples try to manage their differences by not giving importance to them or erasing them, by denying their individual cultures altogether. These couples form a new way of life, which has no memories, no traditions, and no cultural causes for conflict. They often give up their traditional, lifestyles, customs, and many of their beliefs and values. For Kandhan (case study 16) his traditional Hindu practices are meaningless and dehumanizing and that’s why he has his own way of life. People of this type follow their own ideology and conviction of social equality. Some couples have stopped going to the temple and the church regularly. The couples who identify themselves with no caste, religion and language fall under this category.

4.10.11.3 Compromise

Some couples try to balance the beliefs, traditions and rituals from each partner’s cultural and religious backgrounds. Philomina (case study 74) a Christian female respondent says, “I have my Christian worship coloured by the Hindu customs such as applying kungumam (red colour powder) on the forehead and taking of Aarathi (light). Since we are also of two different languages, our children and we know and speak both languages.

There is an adjustment made on the part of both. By its very definition compromise means” to adjust or settle [a difference] by mutual concessions”. This is the way some couples handle their cultural differences and compromise. In this kind of arrangement, each partner gives up certain (often-important) aspects of his or her culturally bound habits and beliefs to make room for those of the other.

Anitha Mary (case study 66) says, “My husband agreed to make the thali (wedding chain) according to our custom and I agreed not to apply Kungumam on my forehead (Only the married women apply this red colour powder in her culture) according to his custom”,

It looks a good solution for some; it indicates equality, fairness, flexibility, and openness, all of which are essential to the success of intercultural relationships. Most of the female respondents who are more adjustable than their male partners come under this category.
4.10.11.4 Consensus

In the Case study of some intercultural couples, neither partner sacrifices anything essential to his or her well-being. If a solution does not work, or they realize that the sacrifices are too great for one or the other, they try a different one. Both are whole people and full partners. They have, or develop, a solid sense of self, of their own differences, and of their individual needs, principles, and expectations. Sithic (case study 37) says, "I like to be a Muslim and I like that my wife remains as a Christian and she wants to practice her Christian customs for which I never object. Our children are exposed to both religious traditions and they are happy about it". Such couples continue searching for solutions, which work for each individually, and for both as a unit. Both are (become) strong and secure enough in themselves to allow their partners to be different without considering it a betrayal or a threat. They are able to give to one another, whenever and wherever the need is greatest—even though it may be contrary to the initial agreement-willingly and without keeping count.

The consensus-seeking relationship is a win-win situation in which the issues are worked on until a harmonious resolution is found and both partners emerge with their dignity intact. As Mahatma Gandhi puts it, winning is never simply a matter of conquest, "winning requires a transformation of relationships" (as cited in Mark Juergensmeyer, 1984:59). It also requires creative solutions in which humor, flexibility, and divergent thinking play an important part. The partners who are not converted to any religion and those converted just for the sake of marriage and some of the couples of love marriages fall under this category.

4.10.12 The challenges in the adjustments of the intercultural couples

There are various ways the couples follow to handle the challenges of adjustments and adaptation. Some (1) refuse to adapt and choose instead to reject the partner's culture entirely, continuing to think and act at home. (2) let themselves be submerged in the other culture and reject one's own, or (3) blend the two cultures into a new one that validates both (sometimes by behaving one way in one culture and another in the other, other times by moving back and forth between them to fit the demands of the particular situation).
Many who are extremely ethnocentric or have no respect for the other’s culture carry on with their lives as though they were still at home: they live in little ghettos, associate only with people of their own culture, speak their own language, follow their own religion, use their own clothes, and cook and eat primarily their own food. Some even pressurise the spouse to imitate them.

On the other hand, spouses who try to lose themselves in the other spouse’s culture often disclaim their own in doing so. They become “more Roman than the Romans”, eating, drinking, dressing, and adhering to all the accepted modes of behavior of the other culture. Some deny their instincts, beliefs, and feelings; they give up their independent sense of self.

The problem with this kind of immersion is that in the long run, these spouses never quite become part of the other culture; they only become foreigners to themselves. They are like actors who put on costumes and get so caught up in the role they are playing that they lose touch with themselves. They never fully overcome a sense of alienation; they merely add a layer to hide or disguise it. Often these kinds of spouses appear to have adjusted the best, but underneath they are conscious of the falsity of their lives. As Regi says it, “One day I woke up with the strangest sense of having lost myself somewhere along the way. Who am I? What do I believe in? I had lost all sense of my own primary identity and did not know what I’d become. I did not belong anyone anymore”.

Other spouses manage to adopt what they consider best in the other culture without rejecting or losing their own. They behave according to the demands of the situation. Sometimes they start thinking in two different ways to suit the circumstances. Beneath it all they know who they are and what they believe in, but they can also see value in the other culture style and the necessity for adapting their own behavior to it.

Enculturation without loss of identity is well expressed by some respondents: “To live in particular culture and be at peace, one must to a very considerable extent become part of that culture and adopt the attitudes, habits, beliefs and that does not mean one loses one’s identity”. The couples of intercultural marriage first learn about the other practices, and then learn to allow for, each other’s different ness without
losing their own; they get to know and accept each other as is, not as each would like the other to be. Those couples combine elements of both cultures into their marriages, sometimes sacrificing cherished but nonessential values in the process, to achieve a balance, which respects both.

4.10.13 Patriarchic stereotypes

When the researcher goes into the life of the intercultural couples, patriarchic stereotypes in terms of the male domination and control of women continue to exist in the intercultural marriages. Though all household works are shared by both the husband and wife in some of the intercultural marriages and both collectively take any decision, male superiority and female submissiveness still continue to exist. Even in decision making, in some families, the husband decides even without getting the opinion of the wife. In some families, the wife is just consulted and the wife who is consulted is trained in such a way that she asks the husband to decide.

The wife is expected to adapt the culture of the husband. She has to follow the religion of the husband and make the children involve with her.

In some intercultural families, the husbands do not allow the women to go for work. They strongly feel that sending their wives for work will be less prestigious for them. The role of the women for them is to be the housewife. The man is the figure who financially supports a family while the woman stays at home and cares for the children.

Our society is basically a patriarchic where there is always male domination over females. The father will be the decision maker though he listens sometimes to the mother and other family members. This has been the experience of the most of the couples at home. One female respondent (Sumathi) says, “Though I experienced freedom in the family I was always expected to be more submissive to my father and brothers as a girl”. This has got a great impact even after the marriage.

As the society itself is the patriarchic all men are influenced very much by it. There is no much change in the attitude of the husband in the area of the superiority complex in the intercultural family. While he listens to his wife, he always expects that his wife should do what he wants. He seldom considers the expectations of his wife.
While both are involved in convincing each other, finally the husband succeeds. One female respondent (Elis) says, “My husband used to listen to me and do whatever I wanted from him and he promised to do the same after marriage and now he is very much influenced by his family members and listens more to them than me. When I suggest something, he says he would consult his parents and do. It seems he obeys them more than me. I also hear his parents saying ‘keep her under your control’. Before marriage I used to be sociable with other boys of my age and he never mistook me and now he never encourages me. He looks at me with suspicion. All that I am doing is I should do what he wants and not what I want for the smooth running of the family”. Some of the female respondents of both arranged and love marriages have shared the same experiences.

Male dominance sometimes goes to the other extreme. Some female respondents say that their husbands never understand the feelings and the cultural background of their wives. They even use the proverb in support of their compulsion. Regi was purely a vegetarian before marriage and immediately after the marriage her husband expected and compelled her to become non vegetarian. He used the proverb to convince her. Once she is married means she has to put up with a lot of challenges. Her husband compelled her to cook meat and eat the same saying two proverbs: (Pambu thindra oorukku pona nadupakuthiyai kettu vangi thinnanum). If you happen to go to the village where snake is cooked and eaten, you have to ask for the central portion of the snake flesh and eat it. And another proverb is: (Aduppula vacha veragu yerinjethan aganum). The firewood already kept for making fire is to burn: by this he imparted the idea that she is already married to him and she had to adapt all his practices in terms of food and other things.

There are 13 female respondents who got converted to the religion of the male partners (case studies 6, 29, 31, 32, 38, 40, 41, 43, 45, 48, 52, 61, 72). Though some of them say that they themselves volunteered, they had no other option. They were indirectly forced. Some of them were promised that they could follow their own after the marriage but not permitted.

Most of the female respondents say that they have to be adjustable and adaptive to the traditions of their husbands in most of the times in the above mentioned areas. The
husbands say that they are also adjustable but in fact they expect their wives to be more adjustable. Some female respondents say that while they were on their courting period, they had decided to respect each other’s religious sentiments and cultural practices. But after marriage some of them were indirectly forced to follow the religion of their husbands and children to be trained in their way. It was a shock for them in the beginning, but later they had to abide by what they had to say for it was exclusively their survival problem. Rabia (case study38) says, “My husband just before marriage said that I could follow my religion after marriage. But he convinced me in such a way that I had to follow his religion for the sake of our children”. In the area of adjustments and adaptation in the Case study, as table number eight shows women are found to yield to the expectations of the men. The female respondents who surrender themselves to their husbands’ cultures say that they are helpless in this regard for they cannot report to anybody, as it was their own decision to marry them. They do it just because there should be peace and harmony in the family and the future of their children should in no way affected. Some of the female respondents openly say that their marriage should not be broken just because of this. Selvi (case study 5) rightly points out. “If we are divorced, my husband will have second marriage but then who will marry me”. The key factor of marital happiness for these female respondents is that as far as they are concerned, the women are to continue to be submissive.

It is with a female’s lion’s share of adjustments and adaptations the intercultural couples like all couples understand each other and try to build stable and satisfying relationships. They have found ways to build bridges across their differences. Both of their cultures shape the rhythm and intensity of family life.

4.11 Neurotic tendencies developed in the beginning days of marriage and because of poor adjustability

Some of the respondents developed the following neurotic tendencies in the beginning of their marriage.

4.11.1 Culture shock

It is a feeling of confusion, alienation, and depression some intercultural couples experience that can result from the psychological stress that commonly occurs during
the first weeks or months of a total cultural emersion in an alien culture of the other partner (Furnham and Bochner, 1986; Marx, 1993). Until the new culture becomes familiar and comfortable, it is common to have difficulty in communicating and to make frustrating mistakes. This is usually compounded by feelings of homesickness. These feelings can be emotionally debilitating. However, culture shock eventually passes for most of the intercultural couples until they become familiar to the practices. The intercultural couples of arranged marriages within two years have more experience of culture shock than the intercultural couples of love marriages who were to some extent aware of their partner’s cultures.

4.11.2 Feelings of restlessness and boredom

In the beginning of their marriage, some couples who were completely deserted by their families did lose their peace of mind. Some of the precipitating causes of restlessness as stated by the respondents are the feelings of indignity, guilt feelings, fear of being insulted, difference in standard of living, teasing treatment by the members of the family and indifferent behaviour of the members of the caste and religion.

It is observed that some of the respondents complain that jokes and funs of their friends and acquaintances are generally about their marriage. Though they do not take it serious, they feel bored when it is frequently done. The intercultural couples married within two years of their married life and whose marriages were not approved by their parents developed the feeling of restlessness and boredom.

4.11.3 Contempt for advice and feelings of solitude

The respondents were asked about their feelings when they were advised against their decision. Some of the respondents justified their contempt by complaining that they were so frequently advised at the time of marriage, and also thenceforth, that they became sick of it. Some of them even questioned the authority of others to tender such advice to them.

Some of the respondents say that they wished for solitude to avoid unwanted social contacts and disquieting social experiences. A few say that they wanted to escape from the sight of their parents as they were trying to separate them. Still others said that in solitude they could recollect past experiences and deeply plan about their
future course of married life. Some mentioned things like family discord, devotion to god, liking for solitude and deceitful behaviour of friends and acquaintances.

Some respondents expressed such feelings of loss of relations, pricking social experiences, feelings of isolation, deception, maltreatment by the spouse, scornful attitude of the relatives, weaknesses pointed out by siblings, cold and contemptuous welcome by the members of the family, expressions of ill-will, rare visits of parents, provoking interference of parents in-law, hatred by the members of the caste.

Respondents also stated that the causes like inter-familial discord, sibling rivalry, strained relations between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law are attributed to some of the factors like selfish relatives, want of appreciation, poverty, discriminatory attitude of siblings, nasty habits of the spouse

4.11.4 Constant fatigability and aversion to establishing social contacts

Constant fatigability is found to be greater among the females. The reasons reported by the respondents are frequent deliveries, old age, family discord, societal reactions, physical disorders, unamicable treatment given by the parents and siblings, painful thoughts about past frustrated life, strained relations with relatives and humiliating treatment given by the members of the caste.

Some of the respondents express aversion for establishing social contacts. Most of the respondents speak about the unwarranted inquiry by the acquaintances and friends about their marital adjustment and social experiences. Some of their friends, as respondents told, deterred them by appraising the failure of intercultural marriages. Still others advised them to dissolve the marriages.

The male and female respondents of two to five years of their marriage experience, who married without the consent of their parents, and the respondents who married the person of depressed caste, and the respondents of poor adjustability developed the above-mentioned neurotic tendencies.
4.12 The way the couples work out their differences

Most of the male and female respondents say that because it is an intercultural marriage and people have given them all the warnings, they take it as a challenge and try harder. Because of the differences they even work harder to understand each other and communicate better with each other. It is just not taken for granted that they share the same things. They have to fight quite hard to make themselves understand each other. Sometimes they just can not understand, they have to let it go, but it makes them search for other things to make a deeper connection, and so other situations become much more important than perhaps their past, and they focus more on their future.

They think that the intercultural relationships have actually a greater chance of success in overcoming all kinds of cultural differences, which they face during day-to-day transactions. They strongly feel that they have to pass over that bridge if they are going to stay together. They confidently say that the cultural things have enriched their life, and they have made it more meaningful, but they will not allow them to be an obstacle to getting to know who they are and why they are going to be together.

Some have learned to play upon their cultural differences to settle disputes. If they are annoyed with certain behaviour, they seem to console themselves that it is their culture and they were brought up in that way. This type of behaviour is observed in one of the couples. She (Sheela-case study19) is very upset with her husband because he is not really communicative. She attributes much of that not only to his culture but also to his upbringing. Probably if he were of her culture, she would blame more of it on him. Her husband also does the same with her too, because he thinks she is assertive, he thinks that she is bossy, overtly assertive and attributes the same to her cultural background.

This type of thing frequently takes place among the interlingual couples. They say something and others understand some other thing and such things become the object of their laughter. Later they try to understand themselves as it is not their problem but that of the language. Some times they are not sure whether problems are due to
personality, culture or both, but it can make it easier in an argument to blame it on culture!

Some male respondents say, "When we do not recognize just how different those lenses are, we set ourselves up to painfully misunderstand our partners' intentions and the meaning of their behavior. We may misinterpret the behavior that is intended to convey respectful thoughts. Raguraman (case study 24) who is a professor in one engineering college says, "Just as children cannot identify the complex rules of grammar and syntax that they learn and successfully use long before they study them in school, we usually cannot clearly describe the rules of our culture. But these complex and largely invisible cultural codes permeate every aspect of our beliefs and behavior and are primal in their power". Charulatha (case study 72) who is a computer scientist says "The different ways of behaving are programmed into us from birth by our mother's touch, the smells and sound of our home, and the entire social world we were raised in. They have a profound influence on our attitudes about money and work, what kind of behavior we consider to be on time or late, eating habits, child rearing and discipline, flirting and sex, small talk and big talk, why and how we get angry, or how we apologize". They cannot be known all on a sudden. They are being identified as they live. Another female respondent says "I took one year to understand how my husband expresses his body language which can clearly communicate his interest in me".

The intercultural couples have begun to recognize their differences; they do not always find them easy to deal with. However, as they learn to label them, they become better able to exercise more control over their clashing cultural sound tracks and found new ways of harmonizing them.

The extent of difference in the personality on individuals, however, varies, with the variation in culture. The reason for the different types of personality is nothing other than their culture and the environment. The way the couples were brought up of their respective families has very much influenced them in the over all growth in their personality. Some of their behavioural changes are due to their friends and the society particularly due to the influence of their life partners. Emmanuel (case study 2) says
that he was very aggressive in the family because his father was of that type. He could find some changes in his behaviour once he developed love for his wife. Most of the male respondents say the same and their experiences help them guide their children in the family. Suro (case study 47) says, “My husband was very rude and aggressive before he met me and continued to be so for some time. I do not see that now and our children are the just opposite. They are humble and obedient”.

Good development of personality entails the satisfaction of certain fundamental psychological and social motives. Affection, security of shelter, comfort and status are some of the essential psychological motives; and social recognition and acceptance by the community are the basic social motives. Mere membership of the group is not sufficient. Men want to be accepted as well as respected. There is craving for recognition and favourable responses from others.

Most of the male and female respondents are found to be extroverted. They are sociable, jovial, out going, service minded and self expressive. They do not want to be moody and they want to be always alert and active. The reason how they developed these traits was their courage and confidence before marriage. They were bold enough to enter into love affair with the persons of other culture. In fact some were little moody and introvert in the beginning before they met their future life partners. Geethanjali was totally submissive, inhibited and reserved till she met and started dating with Javid a Muslim guy. The resistance and torture of her family members and the hope and assurance given by her boy friend radically changed her personality type. She became entirely different personality so much so that both the Hindu and Muslim families were united.

Five female respondents and the fifteen male respondents were extroverted during the courting period. After the marriage, they had so much pressures form their family members, which brought about some misunderstandings. The bitter experiences they had for some years have changed their behaviours. Venketesh (case study 31) was very talkative and dominant. The tension created by his family members and that of his wife has made him very submissive. Another female respondent Jansirani (case study 43) says, “My husband was very gentle and understanding before marriage and now he has become very possessive and highly suspicious and that have changed my
behaviours and attitudes”. Very few respondents of this sort do not want to tell others that they are interculturally married and they are reserved.

Being flexible means being able to adjust, being open to trying something new and different, being willing to consider that there might be a valid alternative to the way one is used to doing or seeing things.

In an intercultural marriage, the couples have learned to feel from their experience the need of flexibility as an essential character trait of the successful spouse. Some of the respondents strongly opine that inflexible people are takers and not the givers; they force the other to do the giving, the changing, and the adjusting in marriage. Generally, they are insensitive to the other partner’s needs and selfish in pursuing their personal goals, insisting that these become their partner’s as well.

The intercultural couples of more than 15 years of successful intercultural marriage opine that being flexible means being like a reed swaying in the wind, bending this way and that according to the circumstances; pliable and strong and able to withstand the strain of sudden changes, unexpected events, or tough times without being uprooted or broken. Another female respondent (Alphonse Mary- case study 8) says a satisfying intercultural marriage is made up of two flexible people who learn to take the time and make the effort to understand as much as possible about the other’s culture; they are open to trying out different behaviors in their own lifestyle. Deena (case study 30) says, “My wife sometimes comes home late in the evening and she never tells why she is late. I take it for granted that she has some extra work in the school. In fact she used to visit her friends and come. We are trained in our culture that one should make a phone call and tell about one’s late coming. But in her culture, one need not expect the phone call but should understand that she will have some extra official work or personal work. While we are flexible to each other we also clarify our differences and try to live what is best for both of us”. In this research, it is found out that the flexible couples are able to tolerate the confusion their two different ways of living bring into their daily life. They do not rigidly adhere to agreements which no longer work but work through sensitive problems until they find a solution which hurts no one.
The key factor in marital happiness as far as intercultural marriages are concerned is nothing but the adjustment between the spouses. It depends on the inter-spouse understanding and maturity. Each couple constitutes the smallest group, and its structure pattern may be affected by the behaviour of the members of the family in particular and of caste and society in general. To lead a happy life, spouses should be aware not only of similarities between them but also of the striking differences. Willingness to settle disputes can easily bridge the gap of differences, attitudinal or temperamental, between them. In the intercultural marriages, couples may become conscious of differences in several well-defined areas in which they have to work out adjustment. Conscious awareness of adjustment in pursuance of building a successful marriage is an important factor in the success of marriage, and failure to recognize it may result in unhappiness.

The couples have learned to face cultural differences as a reality and not to deny them. They maintain that accepting and appreciating as many of the differences as they can will serve to enhance the marriage relationship. The differences are something to embrace and value in one another. No two people think alike or value the same things. They give one another the freedom to be who they are and allow themselves to be molded by the two cultures together. Most of the couples have shared that rejoicing in the richness of their varied inheritances and learning from both is a joyous experience.

Though some of the intercultural couples follow both cultures, they try to preserve their distinctive features in terms of language, religion and traditions.

Compatibility refers to the capacity for living together harmoniously, to be compassionate and suffer together. People with similar backgrounds, personality types, interests, and viewpoints tend to be attracted to one another and get along better than people who are much different in these ways. Of course, we can all think of exceptions in which "opposites attract," and even cases in which varied talents and perspectives aid coping. They are committed to mutual support. They focus on finding talents, interests, and viewpoints to fit together, rather than emphasizing the many pieces, which do not fit each other.
The couples are recognizing their potential weaknesses, within and between backgrounds. They are reconciling differences between backgrounds and recognizing limitations of each tradition and practice which increases flexibility in creating a quality marriage.

The intercultural couples are caught between their need for cultural continuity with tradition and the necessity of adapting to a rapidly changing world. They have learned how to understand, negotiate and creatively use their differences in an increasingly multicultural world.

The differences for the intercultural couples are the source of learning and creativity in all of their important relationships, and learning to recognize, appreciate, and use these differences are the keys to enriching their life.

The couples are very much interested in what they are doing to lead the successful intercultural life in the family. They are least interested about the displeasing differences of how they are doing and that is simply ignored or understood as if it helps them. This positive outlook enriches the intercultural families to reach their destiny. For instance, the group of people gathered for a meeting is very much interested only about their objectivity. Though the group of people is from different cultural backgrounds, the gathering is very much concerned about what they are talking and they are least interested to observe how they are talking. The different ways of expressions are taken as dynamics but what is spoken will draw the attention of the gathering. In the same way, cultural differences are considered to be the dynamics and assets by the intercultural couples and they contribute a lions share to the development of the third culture.