

Revisiting Marital Values through the Lens: A Study of Rabindrik Path-Oriented Values in Married Couples in Kolkata

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Abstract

This paper has explored the hierarchical order of path- and goal-oriented Rabindrik values in the context of married people in the Indian Knowledge System. With a cross-sectional design, 170 married adults (aged 18-65; 50% male, 50% female) with a variety of socio-cultural backgrounds were given a rank-based questionnaire that measured 14 path-oriented and 14 goal-oriented values. Rank data were inversely scored and categorized into high, moderate, and low preference levels. To determine patterns of preferences, descriptive statistics and chi-square goodness-of-fit tests were used. Findings indicated a hierarchical structure of values: path-oriented analysis indicated a high level of prioritization of Emotional Control, No Work-Family Conflict, Self-Awakening and Self-Acceptance, meanwhile action-related values (Resolute, Active, Challenging) were constantly deprioritized. The goal-oriented analysis demonstrated the greatest preferences to Positive Feeling, Peace, Family Security, and Universalization, and transcendental constructs (Significance in Life, Altruism, Salvation) were the lowest. The value distributions were all significantly non-uniform ($p < .001$), and this proved systematic preference clustering. The results show that married couples use emotional control, relationship stability, and psychological wellness as the primary cultural priorities rather than perseverance-oriented or abstract spiritual outcomes. These lessons provide practical information on how to develop culturally responsive marriage counseling, intervention programs, and value-based life-skill education in the context of Indian socio-cultural settings.

Keywords: Rabindrik values; Indian Knowledge System; marital value preferences; emotional regulation; family stability; cross-sectional survey

How to cite this article: Chatterjee B, Banerjee P, Roy DD. Revisiting Marital Values through the Lens: A Study of Rabindrik Path-Oriented Values in Married Couples in Kolkata. *Int J Drug Deliv Technol.* 2026;16(53s): 500-508. DOI: 10.25258/ijddt.16.53s.98

Source of support: Nil.

Conflict of interest: None.

Introduction

Marriage as a key social institution has a central role in defining the well-being of individuals, the stability of the family, and the overall cohesion of society. Marital relations are entrenched in value systems across cultures, with expectations, roles, and interpersonal dynamics being governed by these systems (Gogu, 2025). Marital satisfaction, adjustment, and relational quality are some of the constructs that have been studied widely in modern psychological research, and many studies have been done on these constructs within the context of Western individualistic paradigms (Fakher, 2018). Nevertheless, they might fail to address culturally subtle aspects of marital ideals in non-Western contexts, especially in the Indian context, where interpersonal life is based on relational ethics, spirituality, and collective harmony.

The research rationale, shows the modern urban marriages in Kolkata, an urban metropolis in India, that are becoming more and more burdened by the antagonistic demands of modernity, consumerism, individualism and digital disconnection leading to the

escalation of the divorce rate, separation, and the emotional detachment of educated couples. In the face of this crisis, the deeply humanistic philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore, based on principles of reciprocal respect, mutual affect, spiritual companionship, self-creativity and the harmonious wholeness of the individual soul with the universal, has been little studied as a model of comprehending and cultivating marital well-being. Although western psychological models have dominated the sphere of marital counselling and relationship studies in urban India, little academic attention has been given to indigenous philosophical traditions that could be more in tune with Bengali cultural consciousness. The significance of this study lies in the fact that it attempts to fill this gap of critical importance, by studying whether Rabindrik path-oriented values, which are based on the works of Tagore, including his poetry, prose, letters, and philosophy, play a meaningful role in influencing the marital attitudes, expectations of relationships, and emotional stability of married couples in modern

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Kolkata, and thus provide an alternative culturally informed perspective on understanding the conjug

Literature Review

Marriage in India has always been regarded not only as a contractual union of two people but also as a sacred and everlasting relationship that unites family, social, and spiritual aspects. Grounded in the wider context of the Indian traditional societal value system, marital values are framed by philosophical traditions that focus on duty (dharma), mutual respect, self-regulation, and the pursuit of higher moral and existential aims (Parihar et al., 2023). The Indian views of marriage are not the same as the strictly individualistic ones since the Indian views are structured based on the idea of the interactive relationships between the duties and mutual development, where the self-realization is connected with the harmony in relations and the prosperity of society (Babbar & Jóhannsdóttir, 2024).

In India, marriage is much more than just a union between a man and a woman, it is a social institution which is sacred and a meeting of families, communities, religions and cultures which is a thousand-year-old. Indian marriage is characterized by remarkable diversity and is governed by both religious traditions and regional customs, as well as statutory provisions governed by the Hindu Marriage Act (1955), the Special Marriage Act (1954) and personal laws, which apply to Muslim communities, Christian communities or Parsi communities. The rich seven step Saptapadi ceremony of Hindu marriages, the Nikah of Muslim marriages, and the loud-bang processions of Punjabi Baraat, and the silent somberness of a South Indian Brahmin wedding all have their own aesthetic, symbolic and spiritual language. Marriage in India is also a strong social control, which strengthens caste structures, economic coalitions, and gender. But the modern India is a place of gradual change - as more inter-caste, inter-religion, and love marriages occur - as inherited custom and changing individual aspiration are negotiated in a modernising society.

Marriage is a highly ritualized event in West Bengal, with its roots in the Bengali culture, romanticism of literature, and Shakta-Vaishnava religion. A classic Bengali Hindu marriage is performed in various rites: the Aiburo Bhaat (last meal of the bachelor), Gaye Holud (turmeric ceremony), Subho Drishti (auspicious first glimpse of the couple), Mala Badal (exchange of garlands), Saat Paak (carrying the bride seven times around the groom), and Sindoor Daan (vermilion application). The sound of the shankha (conch), the ululation of women, and the recitation of Sanskrit shlokas by a purohit make a rich sensorial carpet. Bengali marriage is also marked by its literary and musical sensibility - Rabindra Sangeet is frequently used to highlight the various ceremonial occasions and the philosophy of Tagore of love and companionship is infused into the marriage ceremony. Increasing blended ceremonies in urban Kolkata are blending tradition with modernity, but basic rituals continue to have their emotional and familial centrality across class and generational boundaries.

Although these indigenous views are quite rich, there is still a large gap in the incorporation of Indian views on philosophy into empirical marital studies. The majority of current research on marital relationships in India is based on scaled Western measures and theories, without considering native constructs that can potentially provide more significant information about the functioning of relationships (Myers et al., 2005). This disconnection underscores the necessity to re-examine marital values using culturally based models that are manifestations of lived realities and philosophical inclinations of Indian couples. Another of these unexplored points of view is based on the works of Rabindrik, whose philosophy has spilled over into literature into the fields of education, human relations, and ethical living (Valmiki, 2018). The sense of human relationship as envisioned by Tagore is based on harmony, freedom, empathy, and spiritual interrelatedness. He has conceived the relational life based on the equilibrium of individuality and unity, and he argues in favor of the relationships that can support personal development while preserving emotional and moral ties (Banerjee, 2021). In this context, the concept of a Rabindrik path may be viewed as a value-based life philosophy, which places emphasis on compassion, aesthetics, a sense of conscience, and the development of meaningful relationships.

Rabindrik Path-Oriented Values:

Using Rabindrik's principles in the marital relationship gives a special insight into marital values in the Indian context. This view is flexible, supports understanding and emotional depth in relationships as opposed to rigid or prescriptive models (Allendorf, 2010). It also concurs with the modern psychological concepts of empathy, emotional intelligence, and resilience in relationships, as well as introduces those constructs into a more comprehensive spiritual and cultural context. Moreover, the changing socio-cultural environment in India prompts the reconsideration of marital values. High urbanization, shift in gender roles, more personal autonomy, and exposure to external forms of culture have altered the character of marital relations. Although such changes have given more people opportunities to express themselves, they have also brought new challenges, such as role conflicts, breakdowns in communication, and changes in expectations in marriage (Hoelter et al., 2004). In this regard, re-examining the value systems of the indigenous people can present a stabilizing system that can enable adaptive and meaningful relationships.

Rabindrik Path-Oriented Values: The Academic Conceptualisation.

Rabindrik Path-Oriented Values are the set of humanistic, spiritual, aesthetic, and relational values, woven into the vast literary, philosophical and musical corpus of Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), which taken together outline a unique pathway - or 'path' - to genuine human living, worthy relationships, and personal fulfilment. Based on the Bengali term, path, or poth (path) meaning way or journey, the concept positions the philosophy of Tagore as not an

immutable doctrine but as a living, experiential sense of direction towards self, other, nature, and the universal. Rabindrik Path-Oriented Values, in the context of the marital and relational studies, is a native conceptual model in terms of which the nature, richness, and stability of conjugal relationships can be explored outside of Western psychology.

Core Dimensions

The initial one is the Emotional Reciprocity and Compassionate Understanding (Anubhuti) - Tagore insists that true love requires a complete acknowledgment of the inner world of the other, of his/her delights, silences, and weaknesses, but never possession and domination.

The second is Spiritual Companionship, which is called Atmiyata - the feeling that the marriage at the best level is the encounter of souls, which is aimed at attaining a common transcendence, which is not a social or a biological contract.

Third is Creative Self-Expression in Union (Srijanshilata) - the importance of the individual creative and intellectual development of each partner as a strengthening of the relationship and not a danger to it.

The fourth is Harmony with Nature and the Cosmos (Prakriti-Chetana) - the realization of love expressed through the greater cycles of nature, and the seasons and universal beauty, the development of gratitude and humility in the conjugal relationship.

The fifth dimension is that of Dignity, Freedom, and Non-Possessiveness (Mukti-Chetana), which is based on Tagore's critical thinking about ownership in the love relationships, stating that the genuine marital devotion sets the beloved free instead of a slave.

The sixth is the Aesthetic Sensitivity and Cultural Bonding (Sundaram) - mutual enjoyment of music, literature and beauty as a bonding factor in relationships that brings emotional closeness to the partners.

These six dimensions taken collectively will form a culturally resonant whole in which Rabindrik Path-Oriented Values shed crucial light not on what marriage is, but on what, according to Tagore, it should be, namely, a sacred, evolving, mutually ennobling human experience.

The value-oriented marital functioning is very much applicable in the context of the way couples cope with these transitions. Values serve as guiding principles that inform attitudes, behaviors, and decision-making in relationships. As partners are aligned, they can lead to a stronger cohesion, faith, and lasting fulfillment. On the other hand, the incongruence of values can cause conflict and dissatisfaction (Ambrož et al., 2021). Thus, the analysis of marital values in terms of culturally resonant systems like the Indian Knowledge System and Rabindrik philosophy may provide a more in-depth understanding of the processes of marital harmony and discord.

It is on this background that this study seeks to re-examine the values of marriage in the context of the traditional Indian family structure and system, and

more specifically, the Rabindrik path-oriented values of married people. The study aims to provide a contribution to an increasingly more culturally inclusive perspective on marital relationships by examining the ways these values are reflected in modern marital relationships and dynamics in marriage. It further seeks to fill in gaps between the traditional philosophical knowledge and the contemporary empirical studies with an aim of providing a comprehensive perspective of understanding and improving marital relationships in the Indian setting.

Methodology

The research design used in this study was a cross-sectional and quantitative research design to examine the hierarchical nature of path-oriented and goal-oriented values, among married people in the concept of the Indian Knowledge System (Roy & Ahmed, 2025). The research was carried out in various regions in India so as to be representative of various socio-cultural backgrounds.

There were 170 participants (N = 170) who were recruited via a non-probability convenience sampling technique in the city of Kolkata, India. The participants who qualified are married, aged 18 to 65 years, who were living with their spouse and has extensive exposure to Rabindranath Tagore literary works from early childhood to adult stage. The sample was representative of a balanced gender (50% male and 50% female) and diverse educational, economic, and regional backgrounds.

A structured questionnaire containing three sections was used to gather the data. The initial one collected demographic and socio-cultural data such as age, gender, level of education, income, employment, years of married life, number of children, family structure, area of residence, and marital satisfaction. There were continuous and categorical variables recorded. The second part was dedicated to path-oriented Rabindrik values, wherein the participants were requested to rank 14 values (PV1-PV14) in terms of personal preference. These were the values of behavioral and attitudinal characteristics like emotional control, self-awareness, and work-family balance that were ranked as 1 (most preferred) to 14 (least preferred). The third part measured goal-oriented values (GV1-GV14), which are the outcome and aspirational constructs (peace, enlightenment, self-respect), and were rated on the same scale.

The rank data gathered were converted by an inverse scoring system, with Rank 1 having 14 points (the highest preference) and Rank 14 having 1 point (the lowest preference). To facilitate easier interpretation, values were further divided into three levels of preference: High preference (Ranks 1-4), Moderate preference (Ranks 5 -10), and Low preference (Ranks 11 -14).

Standard statistical software was used to perform statistical analysis. Demographic variables and value rankings were summarized using descriptive statistics, such as mean, standard deviation (SD), percentages,

and frequency distributions. Chi-square (χ^2) Goodness of fit tests were used in inferential analysis to establish whether the distribution of values in the High, Moderate, and Low preference categories was significantly different from a uniform distribution. The p-value of less than 0.05 was taken as statistically significant.

The analysis structure was based on determining the main values with high percentages of the means and strong clustering in the High preference category, the secondary values with moderate distribution of the values across the categories, and the low-priority values that were mostly represented in the Low Preference category. The methodology has made it possible to identify a pattern of values, which is hierarchical and structured both in the path-oriented and goal-oriented domains.

All participants volunteered to take part, and informed consent was signed by all before the data collection. Proper precautions were made to maintain confidentiality and anonymity, and any data gathered was only utilized in research.

Results

1. Demographic and Socio-Cultural Characteristics of Participants

The study involved 170 participants who had a balanced gender representation of 85 males (50%) and 85 females (50%). The average age of the respondents was 39.6 ± 8.6 years with a range of 25 to 55 years. The mean length of marriage was 13.8 ± 7.6 years (minimum/maximum: 1-29 years), and the average number of children per participant was 1.57, which is quite a small number of family members.

Educationally, most of the participants were highly educated, with 34.1% and 32.9% having graduate degrees and postgraduate qualifications, respectively, and about 16.5% were at 12th grade or professional degree. The distribution of annual household income was fairly balanced by category, with the highest percentages in ₹6-10 lakh (24.7%) and 10-20 lakh (25.3%) brackets.

Analysis of the family structure showed that 57.1% of the participants were in nuclear families, 28.8% in joint families, and 14.1% in extended households. Geographically, the participants were well spread across India, with about 20% representation of the major parts. In terms of type of residence, 35.3% lived in urban, 32.9% in rural, and 31.8% in semi-urban areas. In general, the sample is representative of a socio-culturally diverse but relatively educated and financially secure population.

Table 1. Demographic Summary of Study Participants (N = 170)

Category	Variable	Statistics / Distribution
Continuous Variables	Age (years)	Mean = 39.6, SD = 8.6, Range = 25–55
	Years Married	Mean = 13.8, SD = 7.6, Range = 1–29
	Number of Children	Mean = 1.57, Range = 0–3
Gender	Male	85 (50%)
	Female	85 (50%)
Education Level	Graduate	34.1%
	Post-Graduate	32.9%
	12th Pass	~16.5%
	Professional	~16.5%
Annual Income (INR)	< ₹3L	~16.5%
	₹3–6L	~17% (approx.)
	₹6–10L	24.7%
	₹10–20L	25.3%
	> ₹20L	~16.5%
Family Structure	Nuclear	57.1%
	Joint	28.8%
	Extended	14.1%
Region of Residence	South	~20%
	North	~20%
	East	~20%
	West	~20%
	Central	~19.4%
	Northeast	0.6%
Residence Type	Urban	35.3%
	Rural	32.9%
	Semi-Urban	31.8%

2. Path-Oriented Rabindrik Values

2.1 Overall Preference Patterns

The path-oriented Rabindrik value analysis revealed that there was a hierarchical arrangement of

preferences among the participants. The values were assigned high, moderate, and low preference scores according to the rank-based scoring. The findings showed a high ranking of intrapersonal and relational

values, especially those that are linked to emotional regulation and balance.

2.2 High Preference Values (Primary Drivers)

Emotional Control (PV2) was the most overwhelming value with a percentage mean of 87.5% and a percentage of 85.3% of the respondents rating it in the high-preference scale. On the same note, No Work Family Conflict (PV7) had a high mean score of 83.4%, with 82.9% of the participants categorizing it as the first priority. Self-Awakening (PV1) and Self-Acceptance (PV4) also showed strong preference patterns, with large mean scores (>80%) and a large cluster of high-preference scores.

These results show that participants have a high level of emotional stability, self-understanding, and personal-family balance.

2.3 Moderate Preference Values

The Confidence (PV11) and Niskam Principle (PV9) values were mostly found in the moderate preference range, which implies that they are important in context. The distribution of Self-Understanding (PV10) between high (52.4%) and moderate (47.6%) also

presented a balanced view, indicating its transitional significance between the core and secondary values.

2.4 Low Preference Values

There were a number of values that were always classified as low priority. Strong (PV13) and Active (PV14) exhibited 100% clustering in the low-preference category, whereas Challenging (PV8) had 98.2% of responses in the low category. Moreover, Free from Fear of Failure (PV12) and Cleanliness (PV6) had high percentages in the low-preference range.

These findings indicate a more or less general tendency of the participants to rank lower action-oriented, struggle-driven, or high-intensity value constructs.

2.5 Statistical Significance

All values of path orientation were found to have statistically significant differences in distribution across preference categories ($p < .001$), with the exception of Self-Understanding (PV10), which was found to be significant at $p = 0.002$. The chi-square findings support the hypothesis that the patterns of preferences are not random and there is a systematic order of values in the sample.

Table 2. Statistical Analysis of Path-Oriented Rabindrik Values

Value Code	Path-Oriented Value	% Mean	% SD	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	χ^2 (df=2)	p-value
PV1	Self-Awakening	84.1%	13.2%	71.2%	22.9%	5.9%	114.71	<.001
PV2	Emotional Control	87.5%	11.4%	85.3%	14.7%	0.0%	140.24	<.001
PV3	Systematic	45.6%	12.8%	3.5%	74.7%	21.8%	129.89	<.001
PV4	Self-Acceptance	81.2%	14.3%	75.9%	24.1%	0.0%	45.74	<.001
PV5	Fearless	41.5%	10.2%	0.0%	89.4%	10.6%	105.98	<.001
PV6	Cleanliness	32.1%	15.5%	2.4%	52.9%	44.7%	68.34	<.001
PV7	No Work–Family Conflict	83.4%	13.5%	82.9%	17.1%	0.0%	73.42	<.001
PV8	Challenging	18.2%	10.7%	0.0%	1.8%	98.2%	163.81	<.001
PV9	Niskam Principle	49.3%	14.9%	18.2%	81.8%	0.0%	68.38	<.001
PV10	Self-Understanding	74.5%	12.6%	52.4%	47.6%	0.0%	12.00	0.002
PV11	Confidence	58.3%	11.2%	1.2%	98.8%	0.0%	165.91	<.001
PV12	Free from Fear of Failure	31.9%	14.1%	1.8%	35.3%	62.9%	96.04	<.001
PV13	Resolute	14.2%	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	100%	170.00	<.001
PV14	Active	7.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%	170.00	<.001

3. Goal-Oriented Values

3.1 Overall Preference Structure

The goal-oriented values analysis also indicated that there was a statistically significant and organized hierarchy of preferences. The findings revealed a relatively high tendency towards emotional well-being and psychological stability, as well as a relatively low importance of abstract or transcendental goals.

3.2 High Preference Values

Positive Feeling (GV4) was the most preferred value, with a percentage mean of 89.3% and 91.2% of the participants placing it in the highly preferred category. Peace (GV1) was also highly preferred (86.2% mean; 88.2% high category), and next was Family Security (GV5) (81.7%), and Universalization (GV2) (78.4%).

These results suggest that the participants value emotional positivity, inner calm, and family stability as the most important life goals.

3.3 Moderate Preference Values

There were values like Inner Harmony (GV8), Self-Empowerment (GV11), and Enlightenment (GV3) that were mostly found in the moderate preference category, meaning that they are important concepts but not the highest priority. Similarly, Self-Respect (GV10) was also distributed in a balanced manner with a significant amount in both high and moderate categories.

3.4 Mixed and Low Preference Values

The mixed distributions were observed in Sense of Accomplishment (GV6) and Security (GV12), as there is a variation in the priorities of individuals.

Conversely, Pleasure (GV7) and Salvation (GV9) were mostly put under the low-preference category. Interestingly, Significance in Life (GV13) and Altruism (GV14) were the lowest ranked, with 100% of participants categorizing them in the low-preference group. This indicates little stress on abstract purposive or self-transcendent objectives in this sample.

Table 3. Statistical Analysis of Goal-Oriented Values (GV1–GV14)

Value Code	Value Name	% Mean	% SD	High %	Moderate %	Low %	χ^2 (df=2)	p-value
GV1	Peace	86.2%	10.8%	88.2%	11.8%	0.0%	142.35	< .001
GV2	Universalization	78.4%	12.6%	65.9%	34.1%	0.0%	58.21	< .001
GV3	Enlightenment	62.5%	13.9%	24.7%	75.3%	0.0%	72.48	< .001
GV4	Positive Feeling	89.3%	9.7%	91.2%	8.8%	0.0%	150.67	< .001
GV5	Family Security	81.7%	11.5%	70.6%	29.4%	0.0%	64.39	< .001
GV6	Sense of Accomplishment	52.8%	14.2%	5.3%	88.8%	5.9%	121.55	< .001
GV7	Pleasure	34.6%	13.7%	0.0%	41.2%	58.8%	95.73	< .001
GV8	Inner Harmony	57.9%	12.9%	8.2%	91.8%	0.0%	134.10	< .001
GV9	Salvation	28.3%	12.1%	0.0%	17.6%	82.4%	138.44	< .001
GV10	Self-Respect	69.5%	11.8%	41.2%	58.8%	0.0%	44.62	< .001
GV11	Self-Empowerment	61.3%	10.6%	11.8%	88.2%	0.0%	152.88	< .001
GV12	Security	48.7%	13.4%	2.4%	70.6%	27.0%	109.76	< .001
GV13	Significance in Life	14.3%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%	100%	170.00	< .001
GV14	Altruism	7.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%	170.00	< .001

Discussion

The objective of the current study was to explain the hierarchical order of path-oriented and goal-oriented Rabindrik values of married people in the framework of the Indian Knowledge System. Applying a rank-based preference approach, the results showed a clear and statistically significant value hierarchy with a high level of prioritization of intrapersonal regulation and relational harmony. Values of path were found to be the Emotional Control, Self-Awakening, Self-Acceptance, and No Work-Family Conflict were the major drivers, and the most endorsed were the goal-oriented constructs, which included the Positive Feeling, Peace, Family Security, and Universalization. On the other hand, action-intensive and transcendental values such as Resolute, Active, Challenging, Altruism, and Significance in Life were always de-emphasized. Chi-square goodness-of-fit tests established that the distributions were highly non-random, which highlights a consistent cultural and psychological orientation of emotional stability, family well-being, and introspective balance to other forms of striving or abstract spiritual interests.

The strong orientation towards emotional regulation and introspective values of path-oriented orientation is consistent with the existing paradigms of psychological well-being and life-skills formation. Self-awareness and emotional regulation are highlighted by the World Health Organization (1997) as competencies of adaptive functioning that can be supported by current studies showing that more and more people are seeking internal balance rather than external success in their complex occupations and marital life (Lane & Smith, 2021). Similarly, the theory of basic human values identifies self-direction and

3.5 Statistical Significance

The values of all goal-oriented values showed very high chi-square values ($p < .001$), the observed distributions are systematic and non-random. This strengthens the occurrence of a well-articulated and coherent value orientation among participants.

internal harmony as central to personal growth, yet in collectivistic contexts, these often manifest as emotional control and self-acceptance rather than individualistic ambition (Maurer & Daukantaitė, 2020). The present results are consistent with the previous research of Roy and Ahmed (2025) on Rabindrik value orientation, which also reported a cultural predisposition to mindfulness and affective control as the main channels of moral and psychological development.

The high support of No Work-Family Conflict, Family Security, and Universalization indicates the long-term effect of collectivistic socio-cultural norms in India, where the value of an interdependent family and social peace has long been a tradition. In Wang (2025), the author points to the concomitance of personal ambitions in a collectivist system, where individual ambitions are usually absorbed into the family and societal standards. This trend is further supported by recent research on Indian marital relationships, which has shown that in many instances, married adults will often juggle between role demands by focusing on the relational balance and collective ownership instead of individual aspirations (Seema & Pooja, 2021). The fact that Universalization is one of the most desirable and goal-oriented values also indicates the extension of this ethos of relations to outside the immediate household, as Tagore, in his philosophical focus, insisted on transcendentalizing to interconnected humanistic values.

The systematic devaluation of transcendental and altruistic values, including Altruism, Significance in life, and Salvation, can be explained by the theories of developmental and value crystallization. Coelho (2025) hypothesized that the terminal values of

spiritual fulfillment and self-transcendence usually come together later in life, after the development of instrumental competencies and relational safety. Weinberger's (2008) psychosocial framework also indicates that the intimacy versus isolation stage, the type of intimacy that defines early to mid-adulthood, is more of a partnership and emotional attachment than abstract existential connections. The present sample, which is mostly represented by married people in their late 30s-mid 40s, seems to be walking the line of pragmatic life-stage interests and needs, which instinctively increases security and positive affect and pushes metaphysical or sacrificial ideals to the background until later developmental shifts.

The significantly low score of action-oriented and struggle-focused values like Resolute, Active, Challenging, and Free from Fear of Failure is in contrast with Western meritocratic discourses, where perseverance and risk-taking are idolized. These results, instead, reflect Rabindranath's philosophical traditions, which suggest a mindful practice applied with moderation through a sense of compassion and inner calmness, as opposed to straining. Psychological studies across cultures also suggest that members of harmony-oriented cultures tend to think that too much struggle or conflict is very psychologically disorganizing and disturbing to the balance of society (Anjum & Aziz, 2024). The existing findings indicate that married adult Indians might understand resilience as the capacity to flex and adapt, emotionally control, and uphold work-family balance, redefining the concept of strength as a concept of sustainable harmony, as opposed to unyielding effort.

Rank-based preference scaling and chi-square distributional analysis used in the present study provide a methodologically sound means to capture relative value hierarchies by addressing limitations inherent in Likert-type rating scales, which tend to have acquiescence and ceiling effects. As shown by Templin et al. (2026), the forced-ranking methods are more effective in showing trade-offs in value prioritization, especially within culturally sensitive constructs where two or more values can be both accepted but with varying levels of emphasis. Moreover, Roy and Ahmed (2025) confirmed the psychometric stability of rank-transformed Rabindrik value measures, which indicated that ordinal associations are preserved by percentile-based conversions and allow for strict comparative analyses. The statistically significant chi-square results in the current study in almost all the domains of values, including the ones that are statistically significant, support the usefulness of this analytical construct to identify structured and non-random preferences that are indicative of true cultural and psychological orientations.

Although this study has contributed to the understanding of the topic, it has a number of limitations that should be taken into consideration when interpreting the findings. First, the cross-sectional design does not allow for causal conclusions and cannot reflect the dynamics of value hierarchies in

various marital or life stages. Second, non-probability convenience sampling, although it provides a socio-demographically diverse group, can restrict the external validity of findings to a larger Indian group or unmarried groups. Third, the categorical dichotomies between high, moderate, and low preferences (Ranks 1-4, 5-10, 11-14) are rather arbitrary and can be misleading when it comes to subtle changes in the intensity of values. Fourth, self-report rank data can be vulnerable to social desirability and contextual framing effects, especially in the case of culturally salient measures such as family security or altruism. Lastly, the lack of qualitative contextualization will limit an in-depth examination of how the participants understand and bargain these values in their everyday marital existence. Longitudinal designs, stratified probability samples, and mixed methods should be used to substantiate these hierarchical patterns in future studies and test the couple level behavioral and relational outcomes of these patterns over time.

Conclusion

This research explains a hierarchical preference of values of Rabindrik amongst the married adult Indians, having a preference for intrapersonal control and relationship harmony rather than the action-oriented or transcendental goals. Respondents have always given a higher rating to path-based values, such as Emotional Control, No Work-Family Conflict, Self-Awakening, and Self-Acceptance, which indicated a cultural tendency towards emotional stability and balanced engagement with family. Equally, Positive Feeling, Peace, Family Security, and Universalization preferences, which focus on goal setting, also reflect the importance of psychological well-being and collective interest in the Indian Knowledge System. On the other hand, systematically lower-prioritized values were those that focused on perseverance, struggle, or self-transcendence (e.g., Resolute, Active, Altruism). These patterns are statistically significant chi-square distributions that affirm that they are coherent and non-random value architectures. These results confirm that the above marital value systems of any collectivistic setting place adaptive emotional control and relational security first, which agrees with WHO life-skills paradigms. It requires culturally based approaches specific to West Bengal as a state (province) that impacts a way of living or following values of Rabindrik by both couples. Therefore, indigenously tested survey measures to go beyond the typical Western psychometric measures which is evident from materialism, consumerism and western influence in Indian marriage relationships between couples. The dimensions and capturing aspects of marital quality such as spiritual companionship, emotional reciprocity, aesthetic bonding, and non-possessive love that traditional measures effectively ignore. Such a framework is familiar to married couples in Kolkata, and may result in more rich and authentic responses. It also establishes Indian traditions of thought as valid scientific entities bearing traditional societal tenets, questioning the paradigm of western hegemony in

relationship psychology and providing fruitful interdisciplinary communication between the literary humanities, social psychology, and practice of marital counselling. The research implies that incorporation of these hierarchies of Rabindrik values into marital counseling, family education, and community interventions has the potential of increasing marital satisfaction and psychosocial resiliency. Future longitudinal studies need to investigate the changes in these preferences over marital stages and their consequences to family functioning and intergenerational value transmission.

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