

# Youth Attitude towards Marriage and Changing Trends in Marriage

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**Abstract:** *Marriage is one of the oldest socially recognized institution and essential for the procreation of children and satisfaction of sexual urges. The aim of present study was to assess and compare the attitude of youth towards marriage and changing trends in marriage. The sample consisted of 300 youths, of which 150 were males and 150 were females between the age ranges from 18 to 23 years who were studying in bachelor of degree courses. The questionnaire was developed by the investigator on the different aspects of marriage and recent trends in marriage. The analysis was carried out for different variables applying t-test and chi-square test. The findings revealed that majority of youth had moderate and favorable attitude towards marriage. When compared to male respondents, female respondents had favorable attitude towards marriage and changing trends in marriage. Male respondents showed moderate attitude level towards marriage compared to female respondents. Some of the male and female respondents showed unfavorable attitude towards marriage and changing trends in marriage. Further, there is no significant difference found between male and female respondent's attitude towards the concept of marriage, social expectation and changing trends in marriage whereas, there is a significant difference found between the male and female respondents with regard to sexual relationship, type of marriage, criteria for choosing life partner and specific motives for successful marriage.*

**Keywords:** Marriage, attitude, changing trends, youth

## 1. Introduction

Marriage is one of the universal social institutions. Marriage involves the union of two individuals who decide to live in an intimate relationship throughout their life. Marriage is the approved social pattern whereby two to more persons establish a family. The real meaning of marriage is the acceptance of a new status, with a new set of privileges and obligations, and the recognition of this new status by others. A legal marriage legitimizes a social status and creates a set of legally recognized rights and duties.

Edward Westermarck in the "History of human marriage" defines marriage as the more or less durable connection between male and female lasting beyond the mere act of propagation till after the birth of offspring. According to Robert H Lowie, "Marriage is a relatively permanent bond between permissible mates".

### Concept of love and arrange marriage

The custom of arranged marriages has been a part of Indian culture since the fourth century. The practice was begun primarily to maintain and pass on the family traditions from one generation to the other. It is still prevalent in both rural and urban parts of India, former being more inclined towards the system.

In fact, arranged marriages are in majority, because not all people have accepted the concept of love marriage. However, with the changing time, people in India have accepted the concept of love marriage, which is otherwise considered against the Indian culture. People in the rural India are now more liberal, when it comes to love marriages.

Therefore, both arranged and love marriage find equal importance in the wedding scenario of India.

### Attitude towards marriage

With the change from parent arranged marriages to dating individual choice courtship emerged as an activity in its own right, creating a new institution in culture. It involves individual choice with a defined time period. It also differs from parent arranged marriages in the aspect of sexual permissiveness (the extent to which couples physically intimate before marriage). Although increases in the incidence of premarital sex represent a departure from the strict association of sex, love and marriage research evidenced strongly suggests that love is still a major justification, for premarital sex.

Nonetheless, the attributes of marriage are changing. Historically, marriage signified the formation of a new household unit, the initiation of a sexual relationship, and the birth of children. With the increasing social acceptance of premarital sex, cohabitation, childbirth outside of marriage, and same-sex partnerships, the fundamental aspects of this institution have been separated and, for some, redefined.

### Changing Trends in Marriages

The India of today is the land of changes. As noble laureate Amartya Sen., has said "If time can change India, then India can change the times". The last two decades has seen a tremendous drift in morals and values existing in the Indian society. Marriage has always been a very important part of the Indian society.

The changing times have greatly influenced the marriage trends existing in the society. In the modern era we see the youth giving importance to changing trends in marriage viz. love marriage, inter-caste marriage, live in relationship, lesbian Gay Bisexual transgender marriage etc.

The Indian society is also undergoing a drastic change due to economic prosperity and the Internet revolution that has exposed people to social trends prevalent across the world. Traditionally, parents found the match for their children and the marriage was formalized strictly as per the rituals. But today, many youth are choosing their own partners. Earlier, the boy and the girl were not allowed to meet before the marriage. They saw each other only on the day of marriage.

Eventually, it gave way to phone chats and then few meetings in the presence of a family member before the marriage. But today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, both the partners try to spend maximum time together before marriage. Unlike yesterday, many girls are working before marriage and they put forward their condition to continue working after marriage. As a result, girls are managing both their personal and professional lives smoothly. This, in turn, has dissolved the demarcation between gender roles. Today, boys are equally involved in household chores as girls. On the other hand, girls are also providing financial support in time of need.

As joint family system is being replaced by nuclear families, the closeness and the level of comfort between the partners is increasing. They have ample space to talk and strengthen their relationships. In a joint system, the partners spent very few hours together because of lack of space due to a large number of members in the family. This acted as a bottleneck in removing communication gap between the couple.

An increase in the women employment ratio and the number of women-centric laws has led to the empowerment of women financially and mentally. Now, it is not easy to subject her to any sort of harassment because she is equipped with all the means to live an independent life. In the light of above discussion, an attempt was made to study the attitude of youth towards marriage and changing trends in marriage.

## 2. Methodology

### Objectives

1. To study the attitude of youth towards marriage.
2. To assess and compare the attitude of male and female towards marriage with respect to:-
  - a) Concept of marriage
  - b) Age of marriage
  - c) Criteria for choosing a life partner
  - d) Type of marriage
  - e) Sexual relationship
  - f) Social expectation
  - g) Specific motives for successful marriage
3. To assess and compare the attitude of male and female towards changing trends in marriage.

### Hypothesis:

- 1) There is a positive attitude of youth towards marriage.

- 2) There is a significant difference between male and female attitude towards marriage with regard to concept of marriage, age of marriage, criteria for choosing life partner, type of marriage, sexual relationship, social expectation, specific motives for successful marriage.
- 3) There is a significant difference between the attitude of male and female on changing trends in marriage.

### Selection of Sample and Sampling Technique:

Purposive random technique was adopted. A total number of 300 youths of which 150 were males and 150 were females constituted the sample. The youth age ranges from 18 to 23 years who were studying in the final year degree were selected for the study.

The samples were drawn from the three government colleges in Bangalore City:

- R.C. College, Palace road, Bangalore.
- Government Arts and Science College, Bangalore.
- Smt. VHD. Central Institute of Home Science, Bangalore.

### Tool

A questionnaire was developed by the investigator for the purpose of studying attitude of youth towards marriage and changing trends in marriage with respect to concept of marriage, sexual relationship, social expectation, type of marriage, criteria for choosing life partner, changing trends in marriage, specific motives for successful marriage.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts Part-A and B. Part-A consisted of basic data with regard to education, religion, number of siblings, type of family, educational qualification of parents, occupation of parents, and family income. Part-B specific data related to youth attitude towards marriage and changing trends in marriage comprising of 65 statements with 5 point rating scale. The scoring procedure of this scale is as follows Strongly agree-01, agree-02, neither agree nor disagree-03, disagree-04 and strongly disagree-05.

### Procedure

The investigator surveyed the various institutions offering under graduate courses of which three colleges were selected for the study in Bangalore city. Official permission were taken from the administrators of the institution seeking permission to collect the data from the students for research work. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents with a request to answer the questionnaire.

## 3. Results and Discussion

The data collected from the respondents were tabulated and statistically analyzed by applying percentage, chi-square and t- test.

**Table 1:** Classification of Respondents by Age group, N=300

Age Group (years)	Male		Female		Combined		$\chi^2$ Value
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
18-19	12	8.0	29	19.3	41	13.7	<b>11.86*</b>
20-21	107	71.3	105	70.0	212	70.7	
22-23	31	20.7	16	10.7	47	15.6	
Total	150	100.0	150	100.0	300	100.0	

\*Significant at 5% level,  $\chi^2 (0.05, 2df) = 5.991$

The above table shows the classification of respondents by age group. It is inferred that majority of male respondents (71.3%) were from between the age group of 20-21 years 20.7 percent of them were from between the age group of 22-23 years and only 8.0 percent of the respondents were from the age group of 18-19 years.

Majority of female respondents (70.0%) were from the age group of 20-21 years, 19.3 percent of the respondents were from between 18-19 years age group and only 10.7 percent of them were from the age group of 22-23 years. Combined result showed that majority of male respondents and female respondents (70.7%) were from between the age group of 20-21 years. The chi-square test value found to be 11.86 and significant at 5% level.

**Table 2:** Classification of Respondents by Educational qualification  
N=300

Educational qualification	Male		Female		Combined		$\chi^2$ Value
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
BSc	73	48.7	29	19.3	102	34.0	<b>51.33*</b>
BBM	25	16.7	29	19.3	54	18.0	
BA	21	14.0	13	8.7	34	11.3	
BCom	29	19.3	48	32.0	77	25.7	
BCA	2	1.3	31	20.7	33	11.0	
Total	150	100.0	150	100.0	300	100.0	

**\*Significant at 5% level,  $\chi^2 (0.05, 4df) = 9.488$**

Table-2 reveals the data regarding the educational qualification of respondents. From the above table, it is inferred that all the respondents were under graduates of which 48.7 percent of the male respondents who were studying Bachelor of Science, 19.3 percent of them were studying Bachelor of Commerce followed by 16.7 percent of them were studying Bachelor of Management, 14.0 percent of the respondents were studying Bachelor of Arts and only 1.3 percent of them were in Bachelor of Computer application degree.

With regard to female respondents, 32.0 percent of the respondents were from the Bachelor of Commerce degree, 20.7 percent of them studying Bachelor of Computer application, equal percentage (19.3%) of them were studying Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Management respectively and only 8.7 percent of the respondents were studying the Bachelor of Arts degree.

Combined results showed that 34.0 percent of male and female respondents were studying Bachelor of Science followed by 25.7 percent of them studying Bachelor of commerce degree. The chi-square test value found to be 51.33 and it showed significant at 5% level.

**Table 3:** Classification of Respondents Attitude towards Marriage and Changing trends in Marriage

Attitude Level	Scores	Respondents						$\chi^2$ Value
		Male		Female		Combined		
		N	%	N	%	N	%	
Unfavorable attitude	< 71.29	33	22.0	52	34.7	85	28.3	<b>17.69*</b>
Moderate attitude	71.29-78.29	82	54.7	46	30.7	128	42.7	
Favorable attitude	> 78.29	35	23.3	52	34.6	87	29.0	
Total		150	100.0	150	100.0	300	100.0	

Mean (%) = 74.79, SD (%) = 7.0,

**\*Significant at 5% level.**

The above table shows the respondents attitude towards marriage and changing trends in marriage. The scores on attitude level of respondents with regard to marriage and changing trends in marriage was classified into three levels. The scores less than 71.29 is considered as unfavorable attitude, the scores between 71.29-78.29 considered as moderate attitude and scores obtained above 78.29 considered as favorable attitude towards marriage and changing trends in marriage. It is observed that majority of male respondents (54.7%) had moderate attitude towards marriage and changing trends in marriage followed by 23.3 percent had favorable and 22.0 percent of them had unfavorable attitude towards marriage and changing trends in marriage respectively.

With regard to female respondents, 34.7 percent of them showed unfavorable attitude towards marriage and changing trends in marriage followed by 34.6 percent of them had favorable attitude and 30.7 percent of them had moderate attitude towards marriage and changing trends in marriage.

It is also discerned from the above table that, majority of female respondents (64.7%) had unfavorable attitude towards marriage whereas in case of male respondents less percent of them (22.0%) showed unfavorable attitude towards marriage and its changing trends.

Majority of male respondents (54.7%) had moderate level of attitude towards marriage and its changing trends whereas only 30.7 percent of female respondents had moderate level of attitude towards marriage and its changing trends.

In category of favorable attitude towards marriage, majority of female respondents (34.6%) had favorable attitude towards marriage and only 23.3 percent of male respondents had favorable attitude towards marriage and its changing trends.

Combined results showed that majority (42.7%) of male and female respondents had moderate level of attitude towards marriage and changing trends in marriage. The statistical results showed that gender was associated with attitude towards marriage and its changing trends, with 5%

significant level accepting the hypothesis postulated for the study that there is a positive attitude of youth towards marriage and changing trends in marriage. The findings of the present study is also supported the research work carried out by Clarksberg et.al., (1981) which concludes that majority of adolescents expressed positive attitude towards marriage.

**Table 4:** Aspect wise Mean Attitude score of Respondents on Marriage and Changing trends in Marriage  
 N = 300

SL NO	Aspects of marriage	Respondents Attitude (%)						't' Test
		Male		Female		Combined		
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
I	Concept of Marriage	83.7	12.0	84.2	9.1	83.9	10.6	0.44 <sup>NS</sup>
II	Sexual Relationship	65.4	13.2	62.6	9.1	64.0	11.5	2.13*
III	Social Expectation	74.0	7.5	74.8	8.8	74.4	8.2	0.82 <sup>NS</sup>
IV	Type of Marriage	62.6	15.0	74.6	10.4	68.6	14.2	7.99*
V	Criteria for choosing a life partner	77.9	10.5	84.4	9.7	81.1	10.6	5.56*
VI	Changing trends in marriage	62.0	10.7	63.2	11.1	62.6	10.9	0.89 <sup>NS</sup>
VII	Specific motives for Successful in marriage	80.2	7.6	83.0	10.4	81.6	9.2	2.61*
	Combined	73.6	7.0	76.0	6.8	74.8	7.0	<b>3.01*</b>

\* Significant at 5% level,  $t(0.05, 298df) = 1.96$

Table-4 shows the aspect wise mean attitude score of male and female respondents on marriage and changing trends in marriage.

The mean attitude score of female respondents (84.2%) found to be higher when compared to male respondents (83.7%) in the area of concept of marriage. The concept of marriage did not have significant association with gender among the respondents. There was positive and significant association found between genders among the respondents in the area of attitude towards sexual relationship in that 65.4 percent of male respondents showed higher mean attitude score as compared to female respondents (62.6%). The t-test value found to be 2.13 which is significant at 5% level.

A higher mean score obtained by the female respondents (74.8%) as compared to male respondents (74.0%) in the area of attitude towards social expectation. However, the aspect of social expectation was not associated with gender among the respondents (with t-value being 0.82 NS).

On statistical analysis it was found that the attitude of respondents with regard to type of marriage had positive and significant association with gender among the respondents. A higher mean score of female respondents (74.6%) showed favorable attitude towards type of marriage compared to male respondents (62.6%). The t- test value found to be 7.99 significant at 5% level.

In the area of attitude towards criteria for selecting the life partner, female respondents showed higher mean score (84.4%) as compared to male respondents (77.9%). Hence t-value being 5.56 found to be highly significant at 5% level. The study conducted by O'Reilly et al. (2009) also highlights that female participant's primary qualities in a marital partner as being considerate, dependable, and intelligent. Finding a partner who is intelligent is an indication to their own intellectual pursuits. Females also want males who have the ability to develop an intimate and satisfying relationship.

The mean score obtained by female respondents (63.2%) was little higher as compared to male respondents (62.0%) in the area of attitude towards changing trends in marriage. This could be attributed to the fact that, the aspects of changing trends in marriage among male and female respondents found to be non-significant with the t-value being (t=0.8). It means that both male and female were more or less reported similar attitude in the area of changing trends in marriage.

With regard to the area of attitude towards specific motives for successful in marriage higher mean score obtained by female respondents (83.0%) as compared to male respondents (80.2%) and the calculated 't' – value 2.61 is greater than the table value and is highly significant.

With regard to the aspect on concept of marriage the results revealed that, majority of male and female respondents strongly agreed by responding that marriage is one of the social institutions. Male respondents considered marriage is sacred contact in most religious whereas in case of female respondents it is neutral state. It was also observed that both male and female respondent's responded that marriage is union of two individuals and it is closely established which last as long as life lasts. Female respondent's responded that marriage provides a psychological security to a person but in case of male respondents they disagreed the statement. Both the male and female respondents responded that marriage is a lifelong commitment and after marriage they can share the responsibilities of house hold work, and it provides the most intimate relationship to a person and it makes life more meaningful.

Majority of both male and female respondents strongly agreed to the statement that marriage is powerful instrument for regulating sex life and most of them responded that they neither agree nor disagree to the statement that sexual relationship prior to marriage should be prohibited. Most of male respondents strongly disagree to the statement that HIV test before marriage should be made mandatory whereas majority of female respondents strongly agreed to the statement. Even though the living together relationship is accepted in the developed countries but it is not still accepting in India due to high moral standards. None of the respondents gave positive opinion for the statement that sexual relationship after engagement leads to better adjustment in marriage. Most of the respondents agree to the statement that having children should be planned by mutual discussion and also of the opinion that it is ideal to have children within two years of marriage. The study supports



the findings of the study conducted by Jason li (2003) also highlights that sex before marriage is no longer a problem for most young people in Shanghai. Many of the city's single young people still believe sex before marriage remains the wrong thing to do.

With regard to the aspect of social expectation, most of the male respondents strongly agree that boys should be little older than girls as they will be more matured in thinking and in case of female respondents they disagreed with the statement. Both male and female respondents strongly agreed that marriage gives a license for production of children. Even though dowry system is prohibited in the society still some of the country's practicing the dowry system, in view of this both male and female respondents strongly agreed that demanding dowry should be prohibited, and it was surprising to see that both the male and female respondents strongly disagreed to the statement that marriage should be celebrated in a simple way.

With reference to type of marriage, female respondents strongly agreed to the statement that love marriage should be encouraged for better adjustment of the couples and also they should encourage the inter-caste marriage and treat all the individual in equality without discriminating the caste. They were of the opinion that arranged marriage leads to more number of divorce as there is a lack of understanding between the couples. Most of the male and female respondents disagree to the statement that in an inter caste marriage boys/girls should be made to change the caste.

In case of criteria's for choosing a life partner, both the male and female respondents strongly agreed that for choosing a life partner they consider the criteria's like, education, physical looks and family backgrounds. With regard to financial condition and ancestral property majority of the female respondents agreed that it plays an important role in marriage whereas the male respondents disagreed for the statement. However, both the respondent's strongly agreed that they look into the social status while choosing the life partner. Male respondents responded that they do not like to take parental preferences for choosing a life partner whereas females responded that parents preferences plays an important role in choosing life partner.

With regard to changing trends in marriage most of the male and female respondents strongly agree that love marriage, inter caste marriage, register marriage and love cum arrange marriages should be encouraged in the society. They disagreed that pre-marital counseling is important. Most of them strongly disagree for live in relationship, extra marital affair and also for the lesbian gay bisexual trans-gender marriage.

The findings is also supported by the research work carried out by Rabita, S. M. (2012) on attitude towards inter-caste marriage among youth's the findings revealed that the respondents showed higher degree of acceptance of inter-caste marriage regardless of caste and social class.

Majority of the female respondents strongly agree that love and affection, companionship, emotional interdependence and emotional security, sexual fulfillment, trust in each other, working out plans together are the specific motives for

successful in marriage whereas, male respondents agree for the above motives and strongly agree that sexual fulfillment leads to successful in marriage.

There is not much variation with the mean score obtained on attitude of youth with respect to concept of marriage, social expectation and changing trends in marriage among different areas of classified for the study. Therefore the hypothesis postulated for the study was rejected. However, the difference in the other areas was apparent when compared with male and female respondents.

The calculated "t" – value is greater than the table value in the categorized areas of sexual relationship, type of marriage, criteria for choosing life partner and specific motives for successful in marriage and the test found to be highly significant at 5% level.

Further, the study revealed that there is a significant difference between male and female respondents with regard to attitude towards sexual relationship, type of marriage, criteria for choosing life partner and specific motives for successful marriage leading to the acceptance of the hypothesis.

#### 4. Conclusion

Study on "Youth attitude towards marriage and changing trends in marriage" revealed that, majority of youth had moderate and favorable attitude towards marriage. Some of them showed unfavorable attitude towards marriage and also changing trends in marriage. The study also highlighted that compared to male respondents, female respondents had favorable attitude towards marriage and changing trends in marriage. Male respondents showed moderate attitude level towards marriage compared to female respondents.

Further there is no significant difference found between male and female respondent's attitude with respect to the concept of marriage, social expectation and changing trends in marriage whereas, there is a significant difference found between the respondents with regard to sexual relationship, type of marriage, criteria for choosing life partner and specific motives for successful marriage.

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