Research Article

Changing Scenarios, Perspectives, and Implications on Society: A Study of the Indian Marriage System

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Abstract

In India, marriage system which is traditionally deep-rooted in culture and community is transforming due to urbanization, globalization, education, legal reforms, and digital influences. These transformations are affecting and reshaping the social aspects along with family values and raising questions about identity, gender equality, and generational values. This research paper titled *"Changing Scenarios, Perspectives, and Implications on Society: A Study of the Indian Marriage System"* highlights the importance of exploration about evolvement of perceptions of marriage influence family structures, social cohesion, and cultural harmony. The need for this research lies in the fact that marriage, while deeply traditional, is also one of the most dynamic social foundations—reflecting rigidities between new aspirations and conventional customs. Exploring issues such as delayed marriages, inter-caste and interfaith unions, live-in relationships, and the growing role of digital matchmaking can provide valuable insights into how Indian society transforming towards change. At the same time though the transformations happening due to modern education, globalization and digital technology, some of the old customs like dowry practices, caste considerations, and gender disparities are still strong and continue to influence decisions in some regions of India. By analysing these changing aspects, the study intent to contextualize the Indian marriage system as both a mirror and a driver of social change. The importance of this study lies in generating critical perspectives for policymakers, educators, and social institutions to balance tradition with emerging values of equality, inclusivity, and autonomy—an approach in harmony with NEP-2020's vision of cultural rootedness and progressive reform.

Keywords: Indian marriage system, societal change, cultural harmony, gender equality, NEP-2020.

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Introduction

Background of the Study:

In India the marriage is historically a holy foundation which is extremely rooted in social and cultural traditions. It has considered as a basis of family, heredity, and community life, indicating the union not only of two individuals but of families, values, and social responsibilities. Deep-rooted in sacred customs and governed by caste, relationship, and community customs, marriage has conventionally strengthened social stability and the continuity of family tradition. However, due to the inception of modernization, globalization, and urbanization has significantly transformed these ancient constructions of the marriage system. Increase in educational achievement, flexibility, exposure to diverse lifestyles, and the impact of media and technology have changed how individuals perceive relationships, gender roles, and family responsibilities. These changes reflect a larger redefinition of identity, autonomy, and personal accomplishment in modern Indian society.

Statement of the Problem

In spite of India's fast socio-economic advancement, the foundation of marriage endures to struggle with contradictions between tradition and modernity. While at one side, urban and educated sections of society in India willingly accept values such as gender equality, emotional harmony, and individual choice increasingly, but another side larger groups still stick to traditional practices like arranged marriages, caste endogamy such as in-marriage and in-group marriage, and paternalistic nature of family structures. Some of the emerging challenges such as increase in the rate of divorce, delay in marriages, inter-caste, inter-religious marriages and transformation of wedding ceremony to more commercialization. These challenges are increasing societal pressure and increasing tensions between evolving aspirations and cultural expectations. These changing aspects raise vital questions about how marriage, as a social foundation, is adapting to the changing scene of Indian society and what these transformations indicate for social unity, gender relations, and family life.

Objectives of the Study

The key objectives of the research work are basically focusing to study and examine the changing nature of the marriage system in India in the context of urbanization, globalization, education, legal reforms, and digital influences. Following are important objectives of this research work are listed:

1. To analyse the literature to study historical and cultural foundation of marriage in India and see how people's views about marriage are changing.

2. To explore how modernization, urbanization and digitalization affect marriage system in India.

3. To understand how old customs and new values exist and conflict together.

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4. To identify and critically analyze the problems persisting in the Indian marriage system such as increase in the rate of divorce, delay in marriages, inter-caste, inter-religious marriages and transformation of wedding ceremony to more commercialization, live-in-relationship, etc.

5. To link these changes with NEP-2020, which talks about cultural roots and inclusivity.

Significance of the Study

As marriage reflects the social, cultural, and moral values of the societies in India, exploration and analysis of the changing dynamics are important to understand India's path toward modernization. The analysis and findings from such research study can be helpful to educators, sociologists, and policy makers in the promoting inclusivity, equality, and cultural rootedness. This will reflect balance between heritage and progress & development.

Related Literature Studied :

The literature study has been performed focusing on the major views such as traditional foundation of marriage in India, impact of modernization & urbanization, globalization & digital influence, gender equality & legal reforms, cultural aspects & the change in relation to Indian marriage system.

Singh, M. (2025) have examined the notion of marriage in Indian tradition. They also have done the comparison between the Indian marriage standards with the western approach of monogamy [1]. Vikram, K. (2024) has worked about modern marriage in a traditional society to study the influence of college education on marriage in India. They have focused on the role of female college education based on dimensions such as age at marriage, autonomy in the choice of spouse, work & financial empowerment and quality of martial relationship. They have used sample dataset from India Human Development Survey (IHDS). They found that educational homogamy and hypogamy afford greater autonomy to women [2]. Dey, T., & Goli, S. (2025) have performed data analysis using macro-level panel data (1991-2021) to examine the role of modernization and urbanization in family changes in India. They observed that the nucleation of families is accelerated by factors such as rising literacy, economic shifts, and women's autonomy. In their research they concluded that India's rural-urban transition remains, sustained urbanization and modernization will likely deepen family nucleation, signalling an approaching second demographic transition in the near future [3]. Rana, A. K. (2025) studied about the changing nature of marriage in India by the sociological perspective. He has put some of the observations in his essay such as earlier Indian marriage system like a family arranged union based on caste, religion, and social customs but now it is changing to the model where more emphasis is given on factors like individual choice, emotional compatibility [4]. Senthilkumar, S., & Periyasamy, S. K. (2025) have recorded substantive literature review to learn about the cultural transformation in India. They have identified collectively driven cultural and social change due to dynamic factors such as economic liberalization, technological advancements, migration patterns, and the rising education of women. This also leads to shifting cohesive joint-families toward more autonomous nuclear units, as well as a sustained migration from the

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countryside to cities [5]. Pesando, L. M., Sarkar, K., & Kornrich, S. (2025) investigated the role of digital technologies in shaping partnership ideals among unmarried women in India. They have stated that their findings reveal that digital technologies may be increasingly contributing to shifting views about marriage and family formation, even in a context such as India, which has traditionally revealed strong resistance to modernization forces, at least in the realm of the family [6]. In the article by Malik, T. (2025), he has critically examined the consequences of restitution of conjugal rights (RCR) from historical, sociological, and human rights standpoints in relation with Indian marriage system [7]. In the research work done by Simon, R., & Hasan, S. (2025), the wide-ranging investigation of gender inequality and the status of women's empowerment in modern Indian society is provided. This work is concentrating on the persistent effect of patriarchy [8]. KT, A. K., & Ahmed, A. (2025), discussed about the changing expectations and relationship concerns among unmarried young adults in Kerala. They have done qualitative study in which they conducted 20 purposively semi structured interviews. They concluded that autonomy, shared interests, and relationships based on consent and mutual respect are the factors emphasized by young adults. Further they put observation that their desire for independence from in-laws replicates a wider aim to preserve identity while balancing relationship obligations. These results highlight the need for social structures and norms to adapt to the changing expectations of marriage among younger generations [9]. Gupta, G. R. (2023) have studied about the pattern of change in an Indian village considering relation between marriage, religion and the society. They have focused on the problem about how the themes of the Dharmasastras were interpreted and acted upon in village life. And about the types of reinforcements and incentives to change they offer to the various units of social structure.

Proposed Framework:

The proposed framework particularly describes about how Indian marriage systems are creating changes in modern society. To describe and study about this the three main dimensions are considered such as socio-cultural, economic & educational, and technological & global. This section also proposes mixed method approach to capture the pattern in different societies along with human experiences.

- **Socio-Cultural Dimension:**

This dimension aspects at how traditional social factors such as caste, religion, and relationship remain to impact marriage choices. In several societies, these reasons still decide who people marry, how matches are decided, and what family expectations exist. However society is going towards more modernization, these cultural and religious rules keep on strong and form the social structure of marriage.

- **Economic and Educational Dimension:**

This dimension of the framework emphases on how education and economic status affect marriage choices. Nowadays people are more likely to select partners with comparable educational backgrounds, income levels, or professional areas. Employment prospects, financial freedom, and literateness have transformed how people

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deliberate about marriage — moving from family-oriented structures to more personal and practical structures & life styles.

- **Technological and Global Dimension:**

With the spread of technology and globalization, marriage patterns are also altering. Online platforms, social media, and matrimonial websites have unlocked new paths for people to find partners outside their immediate communities. Exposure to global cultures and modern values has changed individuals more open-minded and independent in selecting life partners. This dimension highlights how digital communication and cross-cultural experiences are reforming traditional marriage customs and encouraging diversity in matrimonial choices.

- **Methodological Approach:**

The mixed-method approach is proposed to study these transformations broadly.

i. Quantitative Component: Structured surveys will be useful to measure people's attitudes, preferences, and insights about marriages. This survey can be carried across both urban and rural areas. This data will be useful to understand key trends, such as changing priorities in partner selection, the role of education, and the use of technology & digital media in matchmaking.

ii. Qualitative Component: In-depth interviews and focused group discussions are proposed to be carried out with married individuals, parents, and matchmakers. These interactions will discover individual experiences, values, and emotional aspects. These aspects cannot be captured through numbers alone in the quantitative component. These type of interactions and discussions helps to understand how traditional views and modern impacts work in real-life decision-making.

iii. Comparative Analysis: To observe the inter-state differences the cross-regional comparison is proposed. Since India has diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, this analysis will be helpful to expose how regional customs and languages form diverse marriage practices and attitudes.

Further these methods can be combined to understand a balanced and holistic view of how socio-cultural traditions, economic progress, and technological change together transform the scenery of Indian marriage system.

Analysis

This section describes the analysis based on the proposed conceptual framework which based on application of mixed method approach and its interpretation. The following are major concerns.

- Changing patterns of Indian marriage: The changing pattern of the Indian marriage involves growing acceptance of inter-caste and inter-faith marriages especially amongst the educated urban youth. But the spread of such changes is limiting to rural areas may be due to traditional social pressures.

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- Rise in delayed and Impact of digital media: It can also be observed that due to the educational levels and the increasing desire for career stability before the marriage is leading to rise in delayed marriages. With the help of digital media and online matchmaking the partner selection is becoming easy and diverse but leading to more commercial and transactional process.

- Gender roles and decision making: Women's financial independence and educational progress increasing the women's participation in marriage related decisions. On the contrary, the traditional expectations such as dowry, family approval and gender-based responsibilities are still can be observed.

- Tradition persistence: Though there is exposure to modern values in Indian marriage system, on the other hand some part of societies is following customary practices like horoscope matching, community endogamy, and parental involvement. This can be keeping the balance between modern aspirations and social stability.

- Society Implications: The proposed study anticipates that these developing marriage trends will have widespread social implications. Family structures, inter-generational relations, and social bonds may undertake gradual change. The probable result is a hybrid pattern of marriage—one that combines traditional values with modern choices—reflecting the adaptability and cultural resilience of Indian society.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the currently the Indian marriage system is standing at a significant point of transition. At this point of transition, the traditional cultural heritage is intersecting with emerging ideals of autonomy and equality. The factors such as urbanization, globalization, and technological advancement are restructuring marital selections and hopes. However, deeply rooted traditions related to caste, religion, and relationship continue to employ a solid impact. Thus, the transformation of marriage in India replicates a gradual and negotiated procedure rather than a complete shift away from tradition. The proposed study carries several practical implications that can help bridge the gap between theory and practice such as educational reforms, legal & social awareness, technological ethics, and policy alignment. It can be concluded that the Indian marriage system is the mirror reflecting social change and the maker of it. The nation's capacity for adaptation without losing its cultural essence can be possible with the proper communication between the old and new in all sense. Balancing this dialogue with principles of equality, inclusivity, and mutual respect is very much important in creation of the future of India's social and cultural aspects.

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