

Sociological Challenges of Marriage and Family in India

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Introduction

Marriage is one of the deepest and most complex web of human relations. It is the most essential part of society and the social system as well. Radhakrishnan, the eminent philosopher and former president of India, writes 'Marriage is not a mere convention but an implicit condition of human society. It is an adjustment between the biological purposes of nature and the sociological purpose of man'¹.

In its primitive form, marriage was based on two opposite needs or desires of men and women. Men are more independent and power controlling. Women, on the other hand, are more dependent and have a desire to submit. Thus, the union of the two satisfied each other's enduring needs. The primitive form of marriage was different from what we see today. In Hindu *dharma*, marriage is viewed as a sacrament and not a contract. Hindu marriage is a lifelong commitment of one wife and one husband, and is the strongest social bond that exists between a man and a woman. In the Hindu view marriage is not a concession to human weakness, but a means of spiritual growth. It is a religious bond that cannot be dissolved

at will. The aims of Hindu marriage are *dharma* (righteousness), *praja* (progeny) and *rati* (pleasure). Ideally, today, the purpose of marriage is not only the generation and nurturing of children to become useful citizens but also the enrichment of the personality of husband and wife. The Western ideology of marriage is finding its way in India now with the impact of globalisation. Like the West, people here also regard marriage as a personal matter concerned with love-making, home-making and living together just as the *de facto* unions. The traditional concept of love was complete submission of the wife to her husband. Both man and woman are said to be incomplete without each other. The Indian philosophy views it as fulfilling obligations towards the family, society and mankind, whereas in the West, marriage is considered essential for the fulfilment of personal needs and happiness.²

1. Types of Marriages

India is a sub-continent with many cultures, customs, languages and ethnic groups. Hence in each sphere of her life we find diverse customs in practice. Marriage is also no exception to this generic norm. All the same the various customary celebrations of marriages may be summed up under two categories namely, arranged marriage and love marriage.

1.1. Arranged Marriages

Arranged marriages reflect the social, economic, geographical and historical diversity of India itself. More like a continent than a country, India is made up of many States, with as many languages, thousands of dialects, major world religions, hundreds of religious denominations, an outlawed

but still practised caste system among Hindus, and an informal class and economic differentiation among Christians and Muslims. Arranged marriage ceremonies in India differ from community to community and from place to place. Those ceremonies are indispensable, highly religious and significant. The rites of marriage are also social and are meant to increase intimacy between two families. However, with little variation, the usual customs and rituals are more or less the same throughout India.

A recent survey by the Family Planning Association of India published in the 'Times of India' daily newspaper found almost 60 percent of the youth aged 15 to 29 chose arranged over love marriages. Arranged marriages today do not look at the traditional factors. In fact with increasing Westernisation, a number of families are shedding their obsession with family backgrounds, compatibility, ethnic and caste group and are entering the lexicon of arranged marriages giving due respect on education, professional status and monthly income. Arranged marriages have been around in India as long as probably the institution of marriage itself. Intermediaries or marriage brokers in the arrangement of marriage have often played an intrinsic and pivotal role from its conception to the implementation. As times, advertising in daily newspapers remains a well established tradition for parents of prospective brides and grooms to state their requirements. While for people raised in the West, this might sound odd, it is important to remember, that in India an arranged marriage can be seen as an act of love. Since marriage is one of the most important decisions and because divorce is not accepted among most Indians, it is imperative that the marriage choice is carefully planned. Traditionally many families would not let the bride

and groom see each other until marriage. Today, while most marriages are still arranged, the bride and groom can meet and talk under the careful supervision of guardians or parents during the brief courtship period that follows after the engagement. Also, if one of the parties is not happy with the partner, the marriage is likely to be cancelled. Very few families today force marriages upon their children.³ Thus the arranged marriage has adjusted to modernisation. The prospective spouses were once not even allowed to converse with each other until marriage. Such a trend has changed into courtship and telephone conversation and exchange of pleasantries, etc. Many Indians contend that arranged marriages are more successful than marriages in the West, given the staggering divorce rates of the latter.

There are distinctive advantages to an arranged marriage system. The system cares for the elderly parents and grandparents who are generally isolated in Western society. As it tends to be a union of two families of strong moral and cultural values, it provides checks and balances against areas that may splinter it such as infidelity. It also develops collectivist societies which are based on strong extended family ties. In these societies marriage is a union between two families or kin groups rather than just two young persons. In arranged marriages love is expected to grow after the wedding. For them, the marital relationship is not so much about finding the right person but creating the right relationship; it is not how much love you have in the beginning but how much love you build till the end. ⁴

1.2. Love Marriages

For some couples romantic love sparks the relationship which then grows into mature love. Family sociologists have

traditionally viewed romantic love as a carefully conditioned social product. Romantic love is perhaps the most complex manifestation of the emotion of love. Values in romantic love are personal while values in marriage are family-oriented. In marriage each person is concerned about the well-being of the other person. They are committed to finding and doing what is best for each other. This leads to the stage in which both feel their personal needs are being met in the relationship, their need for acceptance, respect, caring, understanding and belonging.⁵

Love marriages are those in which both (or either parent) parents don't approve the wedding of their child with their chosen beloved and the young people have to marry against the wishes of (either parent) both parents and, therefore, forego the traditional wedding ceremony. Despite the strong hold on the arranged marriages, with the impact of globalisation and modernisation, the adaptation of the Western cultural norms and values tend to play a pivotal role in the minds of the young people of India. People are moving from collective society to individual society. Change from concerning others' welfare to one's own welfare is much motivated. With Global Westernisation, 'love marriage' is replacing 'arranged marriage' as the preferred way to select mates throughout the world. People want freedom to choose their own mates and at the same time want approval of their family, parents and elders for their marriage. This love-cum-arranged marriage is becoming more popular these days especially among the urban Indian culture.⁶

In modern urban India today young people are falling in love in far larger numbers than ever before and the love marriage is no longer considered a taboo as it used to be.

More interesting is the fact that such events do not provoke the same degree of hysteria, panic and rage as they used to do. Elopement is no longer a necessity today as there is a higher probability of parental permission and the elders' blessings being obtained. As regards love marriage, the most widespread myth is that love marriages are better than arranged marriages because you know your partner well even before you get married. However, there may be a long courtship and however intense the love may be, it is only when you get married that you actually start getting to know your partner.⁷ Some people in love seem to believe that love marriages are more enduring because they are based on love and compatibility. It is often hoped that sex is better in love marriages because the partners are less self-conscious. This is not exactly true. Couples in love marriages may end up having good sex, but it is more likely that this will happen after several factors. A similar scenario is seen in arranged marriages as well, once the many misconceptions about sex that exist in the partners' mind are sorted out.

1.3. Differences between Love and Arranged Marriage⁸

Love Marriage	Arranged Marriage
Free will to choose life partner	May or may not have freedom to choose
Parents' will not considered	Parents' will is essential
Based on instant desire for each other	Based on desirable qualities
Love may decrease over time	Love deeps and grows over time
Leaves areas that you do not want to question	Accepting the other with imperfections

Trusting and secure	Trusting and secure
Support of friends and parents may or may not be present	Support of family and friends
Increased fear that relationship may end	Allows time to build relationship
Increased feelings of guilt	Freedom from guilt
Allows growth of romantic love which may or may not change to mature love	Allows growth of mature love
Increase in divorce rate	Comparatively low divorce rate
Marriage without traditions	Marriage with traditions

2. Changing Phase of Marriage

Each family is unique in its style of living. While some characteristics of the family are fundamental others keep on changing through different phases. Every change brings with it the inevitable necessity for making adjustments. Families are vulnerable to disorganisation through the death of a partner, desertion, separation or divorce of the couple. The effects of continued home conflicts are more harmful to children than divorce in itself. Another cause of disorganisation may be separation and legal divorce. The legal stamp of separation is called divorce. In both situations the family gets disorganised and the partners and children undergo traumatic psychological experience because of the loss of the other.⁹ Marriage is an institution, which provides the optimum environment required for child development. Research has shown that when partners are equally

supportive they are more involved with their children and that their relationship with their children demonstrates affection, sensitivity and competent childrearing practices.¹⁰

The purpose of marriage today is emotional fulfilment. Marriage is no longer merely a procreational or recreational activity. It is seen as an active vibrant area of life in which one needs to perform well if one is to have a meaningful existence. Unfortunately since most people lack the necessary tools to formulate their marriages to fulfil their expectations they turn to other domains in their lives and ultimately return to their personal emotional crisis. In recent times the average age for marriage in urban India has gone up to about 26 for women and thirty for men. In short, marriage is seen today as a vehicle of personal fulfilment and not merely as something that everyone does, or a legal method of having sex and children. Marriage is a partnership, a contract between two consenting adults who are both in a state of preparedness to make a commitment to facilitating each other's growth and personal development by creating a safe, loving, respectful and trusting space as a joint venture.¹¹

2.1. Factors Contributing to Divorce

In the past, divorce was neither acceptable nor practical. Couples did not have the option of divorce. A broken family was seen as a personal failure and most women were economically dependent. Cultural appraisal of divorce is now changing. Now divorce is considered as an alternative to an unhealthy marriage. People may stay together for the sake of the children or to avoid disapproval from the social structure. Researchers have identified several factors that often contribute to divorce. Background differences, personal immaturity and lack of relationship skills can lead to divorce.

In Indian society poor relationship skills often account for the biggest number of divorces. Divorce is regarded as a failure in personal relationships. Divorces are less frequent in India as compared with the Western countries. Some of the major causes of divorce are disparity in social or economic background, bad habits like excessive liquor intake, nagging, improper sex relations, physical incompatibility, adultery, troublesome relatives, disparity in religious faith or other ideologies, personality problems, cruelty-conflicting ambitions, ill health and poverty. Divorces are always traumatic in some way for everyone concerned. It is due to poor marital adjustment and it comes when husband and wife have been unable to find any other satisfactory solution to their problems. Many unhappy marriages do not end in divorce because of religious, moral and economic reasons. Some carry on living together with their internal problems; some separate or desert and some enter into legal separation. The peak year for separation is the first year of marriage and for divorce mostly in the third year with spouses living in their late twenties.¹² Desertion is more common among the lower social class and divorce is among the upper-middle and upper class. Divorce is much more common among the couples who have different cultural, racial, religious or socio-economic backgrounds. Divorce rate is high when they marry at an early age because they were immature and feel that they can remarry easily.

India has the most complex family laws in the world. As regards the latest divorce rate, we are pleased to give you the statistics. These reveal a steep rise in marriages in India ending in divorce courts. In fact, 70 per cent of these figures represent young people in the age group of 25-35. Amicable separation within the first year of marriage has increased by

30 per cent since 2000, while 85 per cent went in for a divorce within the first five years of marriage.¹³ According to the latest census of 2001, divorce rates have gone up sharply over recent years mainly in cities from 4 per cent in 1980s to 14 per cent in 2001.¹⁴ According to the Indian Statistical Institute over 8000 divorce petitions were filed in Mumbai (Bombay) in 2001 and these figures have in recent years gone up. Interestingly, women make up a huge percentage of divorce suits due to mental or physical cruelty or some compelling reasons cutting across economic and social strata in rural and urban India. This is probably due to better education, more awareness and a greater degree of economic independence.¹⁵

2.2. Marital and Family Counselling

In Indian culture there was no trend to go to counselling centres but in Western culture family ties are not so closely knit, people preferred to go to experts who were qualified, trained and experienced in specific fields. In Indian culture, families were so closely knit, that as a problem arises many friends and relatives come forward to settle the scores. Now with a changing scenario, more and more people are seeking outside help which is evident from the mushrooming of marriage and family counselling centres in small cities also.

In marriage counselling the counsellor helps the individuals explore their own problems and solutions. Marriage counsellors help in dating, mate selection and personality changes favouring pre-marital qualities and later on finding solutions to arising problems in husband and wife relationships. It is argued that pre-marital sex or trial marriage has an adverse effect on marriage. Sex in Indian society is permitted after marriage, though, it is at present seeing a revolution, but still the cultural norms are adhered to by

most of the members of society. A recent Indian survey has said, of married couples spanning over fifteen years between 1988 and 2000 that the average Indian couple have sex every alternate day during the first five years of marriage and every third day between five and ten years of marriage. It shows that Indians are sexually very active and innovative, willing to be unconventional and experimental to seek their peaks of pleasure.¹⁶

2.3. The New Indian Marriage

The fact that more divorces take place now does not mean that marriage is irrelevant in today's life. What it means is that the new Indian marriage has to be structured differently. The following items may be classified as the components of the new Indian marriage:

1. It focuses on emotional fulfilment for both partners, and not merely procreation or recreation;
2. it is owned by both partners in marriage and not by anyone else;
3. it recognises two sets of personal spaces (I and We) and pays due attention to the marriage space (we) as well;
4. it appreciates that fights, issues and conflicts are inevitable when two individuals engage in a close and intense relationship;
5. it uses rational process to manage these fights, issues and conflicts;
6. it employs zero tolerance policy towards abuse whether physical, verbal, sexual or emotional;

7. it pays adequate attention to the experience and expression of sexual intimacy;
8. it believes that parents and children need their own spaces and these should not rest outside the marriage space;
9. it does not hesitate to seek professional help when things get difficult between the partners or they find it hard to find solutions to their issues; and,
10. it understands that divorce is a legitimate option, (if the marriage does not work despite the best efforts of both partners) but only the final one.¹⁷

3. Marriage and Family in the Indian Civil Code

Modern trends have affected the traditional marriage arrangements of Indians. Even the independent India, which formulated its constitution in 1950, had to make amendments in the field of marriage and family life, giving due respect to the change in the life pattern of the people. Marriage and divorce in India are governed by personal laws of the various religious groups. There are three main religious groups in India: Hindu, Muslim and Christian. Each religion has its own separate system of personal laws. When the Indian constitution was adopted in 1950, the government also adopted a non-interference policy in the personal laws of its religious communities. This means that the development of many laws regarding marriage, divorce and inheritance and maintenance did not reflect the values of equality and non-discrimination espoused by the Indian constitution. The Indian government tolerates it as a result of its constitution guaranteeing the

'freedom of religion' to all citizens and groups. Moreover, with the impact of modernisation the existing laws were given new outlooks and freedom of the individuals is given utmost importance over communitarian aspects.

3.1. Marriage Legislations in Major Religions

There are provisions of various personal laws that are common to all religious groups on India. Historically all groups, barring Christianity, have permitted marriage at very early ages. Pre-pubescent children were allowed to marry with their guardian's consent. Later reforms were passed by the Indian colonial government in the form of the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929. The act established that males could not marry below the age of 18, and females were prohibited from marrying before turning 14. The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 raised the marrying age to 18 for females and 21 for males. The issue of a Dowry is present in all religion's personal laws regarding the marriage. Originally a dowry was given to a daughter by her parents at the time of the marriage in order to ensure her and her husband's fiscal and material security after the wedding. The practice was exploited by the families of the grooms and in the long run encouraged female infanticide and the neglect of female children in certain poor quarters. In response to the negative effect, the Dowry Prohibition Act was enacted in 1961 which declared the dowry system illegal. The Act was later amended twice, once in 1984 and later in 1986 to widen the definition of dowry.¹⁸

The Hindu religion defines marriage as a holy union for the permanence of religious duties and marriage is one of the primary Hindu sacraments. Eight forms of marriage were recognised under the ancient Hindu law, four approved and four disapproved. Currently the Brahman form and the Asura

form remain salient in Hindu Society. In the Brahman form a bride is offered for marriage to a bridegroom without the bridegroom's consideration. In the Asura form, the bridegroom is given the right to consider the bride as the prospective wife. The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 adopted the modern definition of marriage and the obligations contained therein: polygamy was abolished, marriage of individuals from different caste was legalised, and grounds for divorce were established.

Muslim marriage law indicates that marriage is a civil contract, not a religious sacrament. Polygamy is permissible for males to have up to four wives. As per Islamic law, the following must be observed: (a) the free consent of the parties should not be vitiated by fraud or force; (b) if the party is a minor he or she should be represented by a guardian; (c) marriage is prohibited between individuals who hold a relationship through their mother or father on the ascending side or between individuals who are related by affinity (i.e., through the wife) and (d) it is unlawful to marry a fifth wife, to marry a non-Muslim, not to have proper witnesses, to marry a pregnant woman, to marry one's own divorced wife and to marry during pilgrimage.¹⁹

Christian marriage law requires that the two parties enter marriage voluntarily as per the age stipulated in the civil Code in front of at least two witnesses. A marriage may be performed by anyone given authority to do so under the Christian marriage Act of 1872. Christian inheritance practices are ruled by the Indian Succession Act of 1925 which recognises the equality of sexes and prohibits discrimination based on gender. The widow is entitled to one third of her husband's estate, and the children could inherit equal portions of the estate.²⁰ The median marriage age for Hindu women is

17.3 years; for Muslim women it is 18.1 years. Among women of other religious groups such as Christians and Parsis, Buddhists, Jains, etc., the median age for women is 20.1 years. There are indications that women seeking higher education in India tend to marry later in life than those who do not.

3.2. Divorce and Remarriage

Each of the three main religions' regulations regarding divorce is dictated by different pieces of legislation. The grounds for divorce that appear to be common among the three major religions are those of adultery, cruelty, impotence and chronic disease. The Hindu religion deems marriage as an eternal union, one that not only exists during one's present life time but during all future lifetimes. As a result marital dissolution was not legalised for Hindus until the Hindu Marriage Act was passed in 1955. The Marriage Laws Amendment Act of 1976 changed the law to make additions such as desertion, conversion to a non-Hindu religion, incurable insanity or mental disorder, incurable leprosy and presumption of death. In addition, there are specific grounds which women can claim to sue for divorce from their husbands: pre-marriage bigamy, husband's perpetration of rape, sodomy and bestiality. Should the couple wish to divorce by mutual consent, they must prove that they have been living separately for one year without any means and hope for reconciliation.²¹

Muslim law regards marriage as a contract, not an indissoluble union as do Hindus and Christians. Men are free to divorce their wives without cause, while women must obtain their husband's agreement and compensate the husband for the wife's breakage of the marriage contract. When the divorce is initiated by the husband, it is called

talak, and may be pronounced with or without the wife's presence. Wives have the right to divorce by a judicial decree if the husband has been absent for four years or the husband has not provided maintenance for two years or the husband has failed to fulfil marital obligations for three years or the husband is impotent or the husband is insane for a period of two years or he has contracted leprosy or incurable venereal diseases. Should a wife petition for divorce, she loses her right to maintenance.²² This was challenged in the civil court. The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act 1986, was passed, which was later challenged for its constitutional validity. In 2001, the Supreme Court ruled that this Act was not unconstitutional at all and was in line with the spirit of the judgement. Thus the position today is that a divorced Muslim woman is entitled to a fair and reasonable maintenance from her husband as long as she remains unmarried.²³

Christian divorce policy is regulated by the Indian Divorce Act of 1869 and the Indian Marriage act of 1982. Under section 10 of the Indian Divorce Act, either spouse may seek marital dissolution, but the husband can only seek it on the grounds of adultery. A wife, however, may divorce her husband based on his apostasy and marriage with another woman, rape, sodomy, adultery and with desertion. To obtain a divorce a wife must prove her husband guilty of offenses. A wife may ask for maintenance after a divorce and she may be entitled to obtain one fifth of her husband's property.²⁴ The amendment in 2001 made some revolutionary changes to the Act, and sought to remove the gender bias that was prevalent. Sections 36 and 37 of the Act deal with alimony or maintenance (*pendente lite*), which can only be claimed by the wife, even if

she has a separate income. The husband is, not however, entitled to claim maintenance as is similar to the provisions of Muslim and Hindu laws.

Due to its diversity, India has several laws under which marriages are solemnised and a divorce can be obtained. In addition to various legal provisions for divorce in major religions in India, amendments were added taking into consideration the various developments that take place in the social strata of society with the influence of globalisation and modernisation. The protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 has ensured the slow but steady progress and recognition of individual rights. While there is certainly scope for much more fair and progressive laws, it is encouraging to note that attitudes are changing and that judges today, in courts at all levels, are more sensitive towards gender issues and are more willing to recognise practical difficulties and address the concerns involved in a particular case.²⁵

The Rajya Sabha on 26 August 2013 passed *The Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2010* by voice vote. It seeks to amend the Hindu Marriage Act 1955 and the Special Marriages Act, 1954 which provides for irretrievable breakdown on marriage as a ground for divorce as well as grants women the right to a share in the property of their husbands.

Under the new bill, a provision has been made to restrict the grant of decree of divorce on the ground of irretrievable breakdown of marriage if the court is satisfied that adequate provision for the maintenance of children born out of the marriage has not been made consistently with the financial capacities of the parents.

The bill allows wife to oppose grant of divorce on the basis that a dissolution of marriage will lead to grave financial hardships. The court can also restrict grant of divorce if it is not satisfied about adequate provision for maintenance of children born of marriage. The bill also has provisions that the court shall not hold marriage to have broken down irretrievably unless it is satisfied that the parties to the marriage have lived apart for a continuous period of not less than three years before filing petition for divorce.

4. Guidelines: Sociological Point of View

The contemporary Indian family faces challenges both from internal or external forces. A difference in adherence to old traditions and in the acceptance of new ways of life and thought at different levels of various sections of the population develops a constraint in family solidarity from internal and external forces which include industrialisation, modernisation, urbanisation and mobility patterns. They have challenged the traditional conceptions of family life. The establishment of the nuclear family because of economic necessities and personal reasons brings a strong emotional involvement with the family of origin even after separation. The influence of Western culture to date has not been able to eradicate the joint family system or weaken the family ties. Though disintegration of the joint family is evident in certain spheres, yet it is manifest only to a small extent. On the whole the family is still intact in Indian society.²⁶ Under this diverse scenario, we are pleased to outline the criteria for a successful marriage, difficulties in marital adjustment, and then conclude with some necessities for a happy married life.

4.1. Conditions Contributing to Difficulties in Marriage

Herewith we are pleased to bring to the knowledge of the readers certain conditions that contribute to difficulties in marriage:

1. Limited preparation for marriage: the talk of sex openly is taboo. The future couples are not oriented towards domestic skills, child-rearing, getting along with in-laws and, in particular, lack of sex education in the educational institutions.
2. Roles in marriage: a different understanding of the roles of husband and wife hampered by religious and social concepts.
3. Early marriage: the concept of early marriage without being mature enough.
4. Mixed marriage: inter-religious, inter-caste, inter-linguistic marriages find it difficult for adjustments in an arranged marriage system.
5. Courtship: a brief period of courtship or no courtship which makes the couple's unknown personalities coming together suddenly a difficult burden to bear for entire life.
6. Romantic concept of marriage: such a notion created in adulthood makes it hard to understand the demands and sacrifice needed for the responsibilities of marriage.

4.2. Necessities for a Happy Married Life

There are some guidelines herewith given for the newlywed couples and already married couples to have a

peaceful co-existence in the new social outlook influenced by diverse and changing scenario: ²⁷

1. Be physically affectionate with verbal expressions of the love, caring, appreciation and admiration for the other;
2. faithfulness and fidelity in marriage just as the two sides of a single coin;
3. openness, focus on common interests such as hobbies and recreations that do agree with the partner;
4. spend time with each other: communicate, talk and listen to each other;
5. feel committed and enjoy each other's company;
6. respect and care for your partner's feelings and their family members;
7. tend to establish a sense of solidarity and modify competing interpersonal ties;
8. accept your partner's demands and put up with your partner's short-comings;
9. maintain physical and mental attractiveness;
10. use discussions during conflicts and find solutions to problems at hand;
11. tend to establish a sense of cordial relationship with your partner's family, relatives and friends; and,
12. Try to have fewer expectations of your partner, that is, try to fulfil the aspirations of the other.

To sum up, after an explosion of love marriages in the 1970s and 1980s, arranged marriages are back in fashion

among India's growing breed of busy professionals. Many Indians who spend the better part of their day with just a computer for company are turning to their parents to arrange their marriages. The customs of arranged marriages in India has survived migration and modernisation remaining central to the fabric of the society. In Indian society the emphasis on the family is much stronger than in the Western world. There is a common cultural idea that love follows a marriage, that love is learned as your ties to the marriage partner grow. Many believe that love alone is an immature, romantic frivolity and a poor foundation on which to base a life-long partnership. It is important to remember that, in India, an arranged marriage is to be seen as a school of love rather than product of love as seen in the Western world. As marriage is generally considered a life-long binding decision and divorce is not accepted among most Indians, it is imperative that the marriage choice is to be carefully executed with the help of the parents or elders of the family.

Conclusion

At the end of the second millennium, new forms of unions categorised as 'de facto unions' became substitutes for the institution of marriage in the Western part of the world. Unfettered access to freedom and individual happiness led to the disintegration of the institution of marriage in certain areas of the Western world. Though the institution of marriage is at stake in the West, it did not make its expected impact on the arranged/assisted marriage system of India right now. However, the concepts of 'love' and 'freedom' have taken precedence in the arranged marriage system of India which is a paradigm shift from the traditional outlook with the impact

of modern trends. However, one can foresee in future of the western concept of marriage giving undue freedom to the parties in marriage at the cost of the children. It will, I am sure, jeopardise the traditional institutionalised form of marriage in India.

(Endnotes)

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- ⁶ Ratra, A., Kaur, P., & Chhikara, S., *Marriage and Family: In Diverse and Changing Scenario*, pp. 28-29.
- ⁷ Nagaswamy, V., *The 24 X 7 Marriage: Smart Strategies for Good Beginning*, New Delhi, Thomson Press, 2008, pp. 22-24. The author is a psychiatrist who worked closely on relationship with the couples all over India for 25 years.
- ⁸ Nagaswamy, V., *The 24 X 7 Marriage: Smart Strategies for Good Beginning*, p. 29.
- ⁹ Cowan, C., *When Partners Became Parents: The Big Life Change for Couples*, New York, Basic Books, 1992. Quoted in: Ratra, A., Kaur, P., & Chhikara, S., *Marriage and Family: In Diverse and Changing Scenario*, pp. 452-453.
- ¹⁰ Ratra, A., Kaur, P., & Chhikara, S., *Marriage and Family: In Diverse and Changing Scenario*, pp. 451-452.
- ¹¹ Nagaswamy, V., *The 24 X 7 Marriage: Smart Strategies for Good Beginning*, New Delhi, Thomson Press, 2008. pp. 19-22.
- ¹² Ratra, A., Kaur, P., & Chhikara, S., *Marriage and Family: In Diverse and Changing Scenario*, pp. 456-457.
- ¹³ Cf., *India Today*, 4 December 2006, Weekly Magazine. The first half of this paragraph contains information on statistics from the newsmagazine.
- ¹⁴ In India census and other statistics are taken once in 10 years. The last statistics were officially taken in 2001.
- ¹⁵ Kirloskar, L., *Dealing with Divorce Made Easy*, New Delhi, Rakmo Press, 2007, pp. 2-3.

- ¹⁶ Ratra, A., Kaur, P., & Chhikara, S., *Marriage and Family: In Diverse and Changing Scenario*, pp. 485-486.
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- ¹⁸ Simon, R., and Alstein, H., *Global Perspectives on Social Issues: Marriage and Divorce*, Oxford, Lexington Books, 2003, pp. 103-104.
- ¹⁹ Ratra, A., Kaur, P., & Chhikara, S., *Marriage and Family: In Diverse and Changing Scenario*, pp. 436-437.
- ²⁰ Cf., Foblets, M.C., "Success of Feminist Jurisprudence in India", in <http://www.sos-net.eu.org/red&s/dhdi44>.
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- ²² Cf., Foblets, 52.
- ²³ Kirloskar. L., *Dealing with Divorce Made Easy*, p. 89.
- ²⁴ Cf., Foblets, 56., cf. Ratra, A., Kaur, P., & Chhikara, S., *Marriage and Family: In Diverse and Changing Scenario*, pp. 456-457.
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