

Perception of values of present college youth towards marriage

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ABSTRACT

Marriage is one of the deepest and most complex involvements of human relationships. It is a corner stone of society and a very necessary part of the social system. The present study was undertaken with the main objective to study the perception of values of unmarried college going boys and girls towards various aspects of marriage. The study was conducted in Dharwad city of Karnataka state during 2009. The population for the study comprised of randomly selected thirty students studying in Rural Home Science College and Agriculture College of University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad. A structured questionnaire on three point value rating scale with 42 statements was used to elicit the information. The perception of values in general towards marriage has not changed much among the present college youths. They are still in agreement with the conventional values. Youth were of the strong feeling that in present days it is also a duty of wife to support her husband economically. Another interesting point to note was that the present youth felt that marriage does not curb the personal freedom.

Keywords: College youth, marriage, values, perception

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is one of the deepest and most complex involvements of human relationships. It is a corner stone of society and a very necessary part of the social system. It is a crucial and sacred bond between two personalities merging into one for ideas, attitudes, habits and likes and dislikes. Every boy and girl has great expectations from marriage in his or her life. In earlier days marriage used to be the decision of elders but now changes have been reflected both in the acts and thoughts.

Boys' attitudes towards inter-caste marriage are more liberal than those of girls. Boys have exhibited higher scale value than girls towards freedom in marriage (Aneja and Kaul 2005). Boys and girls differed in expressing their views towards decision of elders in the marriage. Girls felt that marriage should be decided by the elders while boys strongly felt the choice of selection of marriage partner should be left to the boy/girl (Sumangala and Hasalkar 1999). These differences are due to one's system of values which grow, develop and get modified as time

passes. The word 'value' indicates both reasons and feelings. It often underlines an attitude. It may be defined as a conception, explicit or implicit. It is distinctive characteristic of an individual or a group (Gross et al 1980). Also certain factors in the environment influence one's attitude and values and these could be the cause for changing trend in the youths' perception of values towards marriage.

Values are motivating factors in human behaviour. They provide a basis for judgment, discrimination and analysis. Value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group. Value contains both reason and feeling. It is a disposition like an attitude but more basic because it often underlies an attitude. Values held by an individual differ for different aspects and concepts. They develop with a given society and with a cultural background. Therefore a system of values grows as time goes on, gets modified and changes with experiences. Each individual has got his/her own perception of values about marriage. Therefore it is necessary to study the development or growth of new sets of values and one's feelings or opinions towards marriage. Hence the present study was undertaken with the main objective to study the values of unmarried college going boys and girls towards various aspects of marriage.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Dharwad city of Karnataka state during 2009. The population for the study comprised of randomly selected thirty students studying in Rural Home Science College and Agriculture College of University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad. A structured questionnaire on three point value rating scale with 42 statements depicting the general, economic, psychological and social values of marriage was used to collect the required information. In the value rating scale the answers ranged from Agree through Neutral to Disagree. The rating of values ranged from 3 to 1, 2 being the neutral score. Mean and Standard Deviations were computed for analyzing the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Perception of values towards marriage

There was a strong feeling among the youth that marriage should provide equal opportunity for partners in decision making or parents should take the consent of their children for marriage. It shows that present youth wanted that the parents should not independently arrange the marriages of their spouses rather give equal opportunity to the latter in the selection process. However there were somewhat conflicting responses as well. The respondents on one hand strongly felt that the marriage should be

decided by the elders they were also of the view that selection of marriage partner should be left to the boy/girl.

Economic values of marriage

Marriage fulfils various needs of the individuals. However fulfilling the needs depend upon the economic resources that each partner brings in marriage. A glance at Table 2 reveals the attitude of boys and girls towards economic values of marriage. The students expressed that in selecting the marriage partner economic status of the family must be counted (mean value=2.33) and also that the husband should handle family finance as he is responsible for care of family (mean value=2.30). Respondents were of the strong feeling that in present

days it was also a duty of wife to support her husband economically (mean value=2.93). Thus it could be concluded that today's girls are no more in the state of accepting their traditional role ie duty of home making alone. Probably to meet the present needs and to maintain the quality of life this shift in the value system over the time is essential.

Psychological values of marriage

The marriage is usually expected to meet the individual's need for love and emotional security (Table 3). Most of the respondents expressed that marriage was essential for emotional security (mean value = 2.77) and a good marriage was based on mutual adjustment of the partners (mean

Table 1. Views expressed by college youth about marriage

| SI No | Statement | Mean | SD |
|-------|---|------|------|
| 1 | Marriage should be decided by the elders | 2.73 | 0.52 |
| 2 | Selection of marriage partner should be left to the boy/girls | 2.60 | 0.67 |
| 3 | In choosing the marriage partner preference should be to nuclear family set up | 2.03 | 0.89 |
| 4 | Marriage should involve match makes of matrimonial bureau | 1.87 | 0.73 |
| 5 | Marriage should be celebrated without much delay after engagement | 2.40 | 0.86 |
| 6 | Marriage is purely for procreation | 2.13 | 0.86 |
| 7 | Parents should take the consent of their children for marriage | 2.83 | 0.46 |
| 8 | One should be allowed to marry any person of his/her liking | 2.30 | 0.84 |
| 9 | Marriage must be a contract so that divorce can be obtained | 1.40 | 0.62 |
| 10 | Marriage is a personal affair of husband and wife and others should not interfere | 2.30 | 0.88 |
| 11 | Marriage is for social status | 2.17 | 0.87 |
| 12 | Marriage should provide equal opportunity for partners in decision making | 2.87 | 0.43 |

Table 2. Perception of respondents towards economic values of marriage

| Sl No | Statements | Mean | SD |
|-------|---|------|------|
| 1 | In selecting the marriage partner economic status of the family must be counted | 2.30 | 0.88 |
| 2 | Marriage is a economic security for a girl | 1.93 | 0.91 |
| 3 | Husband should handle family finance as he is responsible for care of family | 2.33 | 0.84 |
| 4 | Family finance should be left to a wife to have economic independence | 2.07 | 0.83 |

Table 3. Perception of respondents towards psychological values of marriage

| Sl No | Statements | Mean | SD |
|-------|---|------|------|
| 1 | Sexual satisfaction is important in marriage | 2.47 | 0.78 |
| 2 | If one is not satisfied in sexual life he / she should break marriage | 1.67 | 0.61 |
| 3 | Sex in marriage is for enjoyment | 1.83 | 0.65 |
| 4 | Marriage is essential for emotional security | 2.77 | 0.63 |
| 5 | Marriage curbs personal freedom | 1.43 | 0.68 |
| 6 | Successful marriage is based on wife's sacrifice | 1.80 | 0.85 |
| 7 | A good marriage is based on mutual adjustment of the partners | 2.73 | 0.69 |
| 8 | Sex in marriage strengthens the love bondage between husband and wife | 2.43 | 0.82 |
| 5 | In present days it is also a duty of wife to support her husband economically | 2.93 | 0.37 |

value = 2.73). They also felt that sex played an important role in strengthening the marriage. Interesting point to note was that the present youth felt that marriage did not curb the personal freedom (mean value = 1.43).

Values towards Inter Caste Marriage (ICM)

In our caste based society the endogamic principle has always promoted marriages between boys and girls of the same caste. The rituals and feelings of elders

towards marriage were deep rooted and strong. Now a days youth have started selecting their partners sometimes even outside the caste. But in the present study it was surprising to observe that highest value was given to the statement that ICM break away the caste system (mean values = 2.63). It was revealed from the study that youth favoured inter caste marriages. Similar results were found by Choudhary (1998), Jyothi (1993) and Balikai (2007). But they preferred for both boy's and girl's caste of similar levels (mean values = 2.73)

(Table 4). Hence it can be concluded that the marriage is an event of great social and religious significance which has strong caste base and youth are still in agreement with the traditional values of caste system.

Social values of marriage

There existed a strong feeling that Hindu marriage was a religious tie but not a contract. Due attention should also be given

to the fact that while choosing a wife man has to pay attention to whether she will get along with his family. The youth were also of the opinion that inter caste marriage lessened the problem of dowry and one should not hesitate to break the marriage if necessary even though society objected to it. This indicates that environment has played a major role in modifying the social values of marriage among the present youth.

Table 4. Perception of respondents towards Inter Caste Marriage (ICM)

| Sl No | Statements | Mean | SD |
|-------|--|------|------|
| 1 | Children of ICM will have better genetic influence of characteristics | 2.20 | 0.76 |
| 2 | ICM break away the caste system | 2.63 | 0.61 |
| 3 | ICM limit the matrimonial prospects of other members of family especially girls | 2.20 | 0.81 |
| 4 | Because of differences in tradition and customs it is difficult for the couple to adjust | 1.90 | 0.92 |
| 5 | ICM couple may have different food habits which will affect their adjustment | 2.07 | 0.94 |
| 6 | If you have favourable opinion for ICM then you would prefer | | |
| | a. A higher caste boy marrying a low caste girl | 2.03 | 0.93 |
| | b. A lower caste boy marrying a higher caste girl | 1.70 | 0.88 |
| | c. Both boy's and girl's caste of similar levels | 2.73 | 0.58 |

Table 5. Perception towards social values of marriage

| Sl No | Statements | Mean | SD |
|-------|---|------|------|
| 1 | Woman should tolerate ill treatment from husband rather than going for divorce | 1.20 | 0.48 |
| 2 | Introduction of widow remarriage is the down fall of social moral | 1.37 | 0.61 |
| 3 | One should not hesitate to break the marriage if necessary even though society objects | 2.50 | 0.63 |
| 4 | In choosing a wife man has to pay attention to whether she will get along with his family | 2.73 | 0.52 |
| 5 | Inter religious marriage is an evil | 1.23 | 0.57 |
| 6 | Wife should carry dowry for her husband at the time of marriage | 1.27 | 0.58 |
| 7 | A wife should silently bear all sorts of authorities of her husband and maintain marriage | 1.47 | 0.83 |
| 8 | Hindu marriage is a religious tie but not a contract | 2.97 | 2.03 |
| 9 | Courtship to know spouse before marriage is essential | 2.30 | 0.79 |
| 10 | Living together before marriage is essential | 1.37 | 0.61 |
| 11 | Inter caste marriage lessens the problem of dowry | 2.57 | 0.73 |

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study it could be concluded that the values in general towards marriage have not changed much among the present college youth. Today's girls are no more in the state of accepting their traditional role ie duty of home making alone. They are still in agreement with the conventional values. Young students also felt that sex plays an important role in strengthening the marriage. Another interesting point to note was that the present youth felt that marriage does not curb the personal freedom. Marriage is an event of great social and religious significance which has strong caste base and youth are still in agreement with the traditional values of caste system. It is interesting to learn that present youth are

still honoring some of the traditional values of marriage.

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