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Exploration of modified matrimonial trends in Ludhiana district of Punjab

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Abstract
Marriage is one of the social institutions prevalent in all societies of the world. The present study deals with the altered matrimonial trends prevalent in Ludhiana district of Punjab State. 320 women respondents from the Urban Area were studied through interview method. Duration between their engagement and marriage, permission of parents to interact with the partner, education of the spouse, place of wedding, reasons of getting married and various reasons pertaining to early and late marriage were also seen. About 45 percent of the respondents had a duration of 7 to 12 months between their engagement and marriage. Majority of them had permission of parents to interact with their partners before marriage. Regarding their education, majority of them were equally educated as their spouse were. As per the urban trends nearly 43 percent of them had their marriages in Marriage palace/Resort. Parents' wish to get their daughter married was the reason behind marriage for most of them. Nearly 50 percent of respondents gave the reason that singleness is better due to which people prefer to remain unmarried. All this indicates the various alterations that have taken place in the institution of marriage, and which have affected the conception of girls.

Keywords: Matrimonial, Spouse, interact, marriage resort, conception

Introduction
Marriage is one of the important social institutions prevalent in all societies of the world with varying degree of sacramental values. In contrast to the western societies, marriage in Indian society is considered as an indispensible and durable social binding (Marriot 1990, Menski 2010) [9, 11]. Marriage is defined as a stable relationship in which man and woman are socially permitted, to have children (Johnson 1985) [6]. Sociologically, marriage whether is arranged by others or chosen for love by the individuals to be wedded. Marriage is structured and has patterned set of social relations and practices. It is embedded in norms and values regarding what marriage should be and is. There are explicit social prescriptions and sanctions by public bodies, the state, religion and community (Kaur and Palriwala 2014) [8]. The religious and mythological stock on Indian society has vividly indicated that marriage is considered as one of the pious phenomenon essential for procreating and propagating the humanity. In *Ashramas* structure of typical Hindu social life the *"Grihstha Ashram"* (married life) is considered as one of the important *Ashram* necessary for human being for leading purposeful life and getting salvation after death (Oldenburg 2002) [13].
Indian society bears lot of diversity in its fold. There are hundreds of communities and ethnic groups with varying religious, social, cultural and economic values attached to the institution of marriage (Uberoi 2013) [18]. Like the other Hindu communities, the Sikhs population, largely concentrated in the state of Punjab, considers marriage as one of the important and necessary institution (Myrvold 2004) [12]. The religious scripture of Sikhism strongly advocates the social binding of man and women at an appropriate time for continuity of humanity and well-being of the individuals. The Sikh Gurus gave a very high regard to married life and they themselves entered into matrimony. For them it was important for a person to get married and fulfill his mundane and religious duties while living in *"grihsthi"*. Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, proved with logics that *'Sidhs'* and other Saints, used to lead a reclusive life and the *"grihsthi"* (married) people are superior than *non-grihsthi*. The earliest references to the institution of marriage, in India, are found in the Vedas which consider marriage as a sacrament, a social and religious duty along with other customs and

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rituals attached to marriage (Sengupta, 1967) [17]. One of the most important institutions in the society is the marriage institution. A couple enters the journey of parenthood through marriage. Marriage inducts man and woman into family life in a socially and legally sanctioned way. Arrange marriages are no longer popular, there is a decline in its number. The attributes of individual and his family are given more importance that his caste, religion, creed. Today's generation believe in meeting, interacting, dating, knowing each other well before marriage (Kaur G, 2015) [7]. Moreover, at present late marriages are preferred both by parents and children so that the prospective bride and groom can make their own identification and should become independent. Only then become committed to someone for lifetime. So, there is a drastic change in trends in matrimonial practices. Hence, the present study is an attempt to explore the changing trends in marriages in urban city of Ludhiana.

Methodology
The present study was conducted in Ludhiana district of Punjab state as it is more developed from industrial as well agricultural point of view. A total sample of 320 respondents (women) from urban area were taken. Sample was collected from various urban societies of Ludhiana city. Data were collected personally with the help of the structured and pre-tested interview schedule. The results in the present study have been calculated by applying various statistical tools.

Results and Discussion
To know about the evolving trends in marriage, the respondents were asked about duration between their marriage and engagement, permission of parents to interact with the partner, education of the partner, place of wedding, the reasons of getting married and various reasons pertaining to early and late marriage were asked from the respondents.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to the duration between engagement and marriage

Duration	Total (N=320)
Upto 6 months	86(30.50)
7 to 12 months	125(44.33)
1 year to 1.5 years	68(24.11)
1.5 years to 2 years	36(12.77)
More than 2 years	5(1.77)

Figure in parentheses indicate percentages

The duration of courtship period (i.e., the time between engagement and marriage) is generally kept less to avoid conflict between the would be couple and between their families as well. Table 1, highlights that majority of the respondents had a courtship period of 7 to 12 months. Whereas for about 31 per cent of the respondents this time period was upto 6 months only. But nearly 2 percent of the respondents reported that the duration between their engagement and marriage was more than 2 years. While 24.11 per cent of the respondents reported the duration to be 1 year to 1.5 years. So the respondents had different reasons for early or late marriage after their engagement.
It is evident from Table 2 that majority of the respondents i.e., 63.83 per cent were permitted by their parents to interact with their partner before marriage. But 36.17 percent of the respondents were not given permission by the

family to interact with their partner before marriage. So, they were totally ignorant about each other's nature, temperament, liking, disliking etc.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to permission of parents to interact with partner

Permission	Total (N=320)
Yes	180(63.83)
No	140(36.17)

Figure in parentheses indicate percentages.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to their spouse's education in comparison to the respondents

Education of spouse	Total (N=320)
Less educated	86(30.50)
Equally educated	152(53.90)
More educated	82(29.08)

Figure in parentheses indicate percentages.

Education helps us to attain position and respect in society. Education gives us growth and development. It totally interchanges one's life, personality and knowledge. Table 3 shows that majority i.e., 53.90 per cent of the respondents have an equally educated partner i.e., the education level of the respondent and their spouse was same. While nearly 30 per cent of the respondents had a more qualified partner as compared to them. Whereas 30.50 per cent respondents have less educated partner.

Table 4: Distribution of the respondents according to the place selected to perform the marriage ceremony

Place	Total(N=320)
Gurdwara	20(6.25)
Dharamshala	42(13.13)
Home	90(28.13)
Guest House	4(1.25)
Hotel	28(8.75)
Marriage Palace/Resort	136(42.50)

Figure in parentheses indicate percentages.

Marriages in cities are a lavish affair. Lot of show off, variety of food, loud music, dance and for all this big open space is required i.e., people in cities prefer marriages in marriage palace/resort. The table 4 shows that nearly 43 per cent of the marriages takes place in marriage palaces and resorts. On the other hand, 28.13 per cent of the people organize wedding of their daughters at their home. Gurdwara and Dharamshala are opted by 6.25 per cent and 13.13 per cent of the respondents respectively. For exclusive weddings, urbanities fix the venue of wedding at guest house as reported by 1.25 per cent of the respondents.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents according to the reasons for getting married

Reasons	Total (N=320)
Emotional Security	18(5.63)
Economic Security	15(4.69)
Desire for home and raising a family	56(17.50)
Parent's wishes	244(76.25)
Social prestige	20(6.25)
Companionship	30(9.38)
Religious Sacrament	32(10.00)
Cultural expectations	12(3.75)
Imitation	24(7.50)

Figure in parentheses indicate percentages.

Marriage is considered as one of the most important institutions in the Indian Society and holds many reasons for the people to get married. The respondents were asked the reasons for getting married. Table 5 depicts that majority (76.25 per cent) of the respondents decided to get married to fulfill their parents' wishes. While about 4 per cent of the respondents got married due to cultural expectations. Whereas 17.50 per cent of the respondents gave the reason of desire for home and raising a family as the reason due to which they decided to get married. On the other hand, reasons like imitation and social prestige were given by 7.50 per cent and 6.25 per cent of the respondents. Religious sacrament, companionship, to have emotional security and economic security were the varied reasons reported by the respondents for their reasons for getting married.

Table 6: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of their reasons for early and late marriage

Reasons	Total (N=320)
In favour of early marriage	
Religious belief	10 (3.13)
Caste	6 (1.88)
Prestige issue	19 (5.94)
Social custom	31 (9.69)
Easy adjustment	26 (8.13)
In favour of late marriage	
To become independent	148 (46.25)
To acquire better education	144 (45.00)
Less procreation	54 (16.88)

Figures in the parentheses represent percentages

Everyone who gets married whether early or late have their own specified reasons. Some had to bow in front of their social economic factors while others give more preference to career and education. Table 6 highlights that respondents who were in favour of early marriage gave the reason social custom and easy adjustment as the factors due to which female should marry early. About 6 per cent respondents consider prestige issue and about 3.13 per cent feel religious belief as the reasons for early marriage.

On the other hand, 45 per cent of the respondents stressed better education for the reason for late marriage and nearly 47 per cent respondents favoured late marriage so as to become independent before marriage. With changing times late marriages are preferred so that youngsters could become independent and could attain good education.

Table 7: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of reasons of being unmarried

Reasons	Total (N=320)
Singleness is better	161 (50.31)
Disinclination to assume the responsibility	105 (32.81)
Fear of transferring genetic disorder	30 (9.37)
Disappointment in love affair	96 (30.00)

Figures in the parentheses represent percentages

Different opinion is expressed for being married / unmarried. It is evident from the Table 7 that respondents visualized that some people liked to be single (i.e. 50.31 per cent) so that there is no burden upon them i.e. they consider that singleness is better. While one third of the respondents in the total sample opined that disinclination to assume the responsibility of marriage was the reason for remaining unmarried. About 30 per cent considered disappointment in love affair as their reason to remain single in life. Whereas the fear of transferring genetic disorder was considered by 9.37 per cent of the respondents as the reason for being unmarried.

Conclusion
Change is the law of nature. Nothing is static in the world. Changes are taking place in the institution of marriage. There is an increase in the individualistic attitude and the concept of family is changing. The young generation have got liberty to make their choice in marriage. They interact with their would-be spouses with permission of their parents and are getting equally educated matches. There are many reasons for them to get married in which the parents wish to see them married is the most important one. It's important to note that the reasons of getting married or for being unmarried are exclusive and people's choices about their relationships are deeply personal, regardless of whether they choose to get married or stay single. Understanding the reasons can help the society and policymakers to address the evolving needs and desires of young people and offer support and alternatives for those who choose different paths.

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