Hindu Marriage: A Changing Concept Among Youths In Modern Times.

Basundhara Simpal
Research Scholar, Dept. Of Sociology
College Of Commerce Arts and Science, Patna
Magadh University, Bodh Gaya
Corresponding Author: Basundhara Simpal

Abstract: *Marriage is one of the most important institutions of human society. Marriage is a universal phenomenon. Marriage in the real sense is the acceptance of a new status with a new set of obligations recognised by other people. Marriage is a crucial and sacred bond between two personalities merging into one for ideas, attitudes, habits and likes and dislikes. The present study was done with the purpose to find out the views of youths towards marriage. Now a days youths are getting more influenced by modern and western values, their perceptions and ideologies are getting reshaped with the structure of westernization, modern education, urbanisation and reformed legislations. This study focuses on the changing concept of marriage values among youths in modern society.*
Keywords: *Marriage, changing concept, values, youth*

I. INTRODUCTION

Marriage is the most important institution of human society. It is a universal phenomenon. It has been the backbone of human civilisation. Marriage creates new social relationship and reciprocal rights between the spouces. It establishes the rights and the status of the children when they are born. Each society recognises certain procedures for creating such relationship and rights. Marriage in the real sense is the acceptance of a new status with new set of obligations recognised by other people. Marriage is a socially recognised universal institution which is found in every society. Marriage is one of the deepest and most complex involvements of human relationships. It is a corner stone of a society and very necessary part of the Indian Social System. It leads to the formation of family and procreation of children. Marriage is a latin word which means the connection of two opposite human sexes for the satisfaction of basic needs. Marriage as a social institution establishes a social relationship with the members of two families. It is largely regulated by the norms and values of the groups and society. Marriage is a crucial and sacred bond between two personalities merging into one for ideas, attitudes, habits, and likes and dislikes. Since the ancient times marriage has been considered as a sacrament and not a contract, even the RigVeda itself speaks of the sanctity of the institution of marriage. Marriage was a ritual which enjoyed the husband to regard his wife as a god given gift. It is basically a religious sacrament which is considered primarily a complex of obligations, religious and moral, on the one and social and economic on the other.

In early days marriage used to be the decision of elders but now changes have been reflected both in acts and thoughts. The vitality of marriage has now been drastically transformed in the modern times, today the youths of India, perceives this old established social institution with new and transformed visions. In the modern age the social institution of marriage has observed many changed trends and the ones who are responsible to bring about those changes are the young individuals for whom the meaning , significance and purposes of marriage have entirely transformed.

The youths are now getting more influenced by the modern and western values, their perceptions and ideologies are getting reshaped within the structure of westernization, modern education, urbanisation, and reformed legislations, and this had also impacted the implications of marriage within our Indian society. The youth of the modern era has come up with new and fresh dogmas and they rather seek the authenticity in the bonding of marriage, with the time numerous of things have changed and for the youth as well the institution of marriage has also been reformed as a sacrament of companionship, love, and trust.

Concept Of Hindu Marriage (Past and Present)

The concept of marriage is to constitute relationship of husband and wife.

According to Ancient Hindu Law, Marriage is the last of ten sacraments and is a sacred tie which can never be broken. It is a relation established by birth to birth.

The Hindus have been giving great importance to marriage since time immemorial.

According to Smritikars even death cannot break this relation of husband and wife which is not only sacred and religious but is a holy union also.

The object of marriage was to enable a man and a woman perform religious duties and to beget progeny. According to ancient writers a man was incomplete without a woman and a woman is half of her husband and completes him.

Every Hindu male or female had to marry where a person could not remain a perpetual student or where he did not desire to be an ascetic, he was enjoined by the Shastra to marry. Hindu marriage literally means the ceremony of carrying away the bride to the house of the groom.

According to Prabhu, Hindu vivah is in essence, a ritual and a formality of course, very important through which an individual has to go, to be able to start his other life in Grihasthasrama. Marriage among the Hindus is obligatory because because the Vedas ordain that a Hindu should perform his Dharma along with his wife. The Vedas consider vivaha or marriage as one of the important Sarira Samskaras or sacraments sanctifying the body. There was the vedic injunction that every Hindu should pass through the sacrament of marriage at the proper age.

A man is not considered perfect unless he is married a wife is the very source of the Purusharthas, not only of Dharma, Astha and Kama but even of Moksha. Those that have wives can fulfil their due obligations in this world (kriyavantah), those that have wives, truly lead a family life, and those that have wives can lead a full life. Equally emphasis is also on the marriage of woman.

During the early times marriage was decided upon by custom that enjoys the parents and other family members to assist a boy or girl in finding a suitable life- partner with whom he/she has no emotional love bond prior to his/ her marriage. Marriage in the past were held by the ultimate decision of parents. Endogamy or marrying from the same clan was the traditional system of marriage in the past. Traditional Hindu marriages were mostly held within their clan and family. People from the upper class never married to the lower class people. Hindu marriages in the past were mostly arranged marriages in their same caste. Inter- caste marriages were not found in the ancient Hindu Marriage. Hindu marriages were done by matching the horoscopes to ensure the prospective couple is compatible. Hindu marriages in the past were done for the establishment of family and procreation of children. Dharma was the most important ingredient of traditional Hindu marriage.

The modern concept of marriage is contractual in nature. Modern concept of marriage has changed a lot. It receives the ideals of liberty and equality. Today, it is an established notion of the west that marriage to be effective, must be an agreement voluntarily entered into by both parties. Both boy and girl have more personal freedom of choice in the selection of the spouse. Parents and the elders have only a minor role in modern marriages. These have favoured inter caste marriages, love marriages and even inter- racial marriages. Love marriages are on the increase, but there is still a lot of skepticism about them. Young generations has begun to think of marriage in terms of loving relationship between spouses more than any familial or communitarian value. The centrality of love in marriage has been acompanied with the idea that marriage should be the source of happiness. The emphasis on self choice, personal freedom loving emotional bond is more found in the modern form of marriages. The modern form of marriages is not meant for the procreation of children but marital love between the couple has come to be regarded as the main part behind the marriage. Modern Hindu marriage gives more importance to the life- long companionship between husband and wife. Marriage is taking place not for the performance of religious duties, but for obtaining life- long companionship between the individuals of opposite sex.

Review of literature

Marriage is one of the most important institutions of human society. It has been defined by various sociologist as well as legal luminaries.

According to Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, "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 sociology"

According to Gillin and Gillin, " Marriage is a socially approved way of establishing a family of procreation."

According to Westermarck, "It is a relation of one or more men with one or more women recognized by the law and custom having some rights and duties in case of having children."

G. A. Lundberg defined marriage as a set of rules and regulations which define the rights, duties and privileges of the husband and wife with respect to each other.

Horton and Hunt says "It is a social system us here by two or more than two persons establish a family."

Mack and Young says, " Marriage is an institution or a set of norms which determines a particular relation between parents and to their children."
According to Mr. Muhammad Niaz, "It is a union of husband and wife approved by the following for agencies i.e. religion, society, morality, law."

Statement of the problem
         In India, the selection of spouces is largely bound within the similar caste, religion and region. The practice of endogamy has been the major form of marriage in the traditional Indian society. Parent's choices are more valued in the selection of spouces for their daughters and sons. Parents arranged marriages are largely preferred to other forms of marital choices. With the process of industrialization, urbanization and expansion of higher education have brought out widespread changes in the socio – economic structure of the society. There is also close relationship between the attainment of higher education and changes in the perception on the selection of life partners.
         The current study will focus on the changing values of marriage among youths. This will show how the selection of partners have changed among the youths whether they are interested in love marriage, arranged marriage or cohabitation.

Significance of the study
         In the modern society, social values and norms of a particular group or community are influenced and shaped by the changes happening within and outside the society. The modernization process has bought about structural changes in the socio- economic condition of the people. Their positional changes in the society have led to considerable transition in the social beliefs and practices associated with educational choices, marital choices and life style. The study attempts to analyse the cultural and social significance of their marital choices.

Objectives of the study
This study has been undertaken with the basic objective to analyse legislative and social provisions regarding Hindu Marriage : A Changing Concept Among Youths In Modern Times.
1. To map out the changing perception of youth in the selection of their life partners.
2. To study the attitude of youth towards marriage.
3. To examine the interrelationship between different forms of identities based on caste, class, gender, religion and region and their roles in shaping their choices in selecting their partners.
4. To highlight the emerging trends in the selection of spouses among youths.
5. Impact of love marriages, their social acceptability and legal implications especially in inter caste marriages and inter faith marriages.
6. To examine the various provisions regarding legislative and penal provisions relating to matrimonial matters, matrimonial offences and domestic violence.
7. To assess public opinion and awareness about matrimonial matters through respectable members of society like adult students, teachers, medical professionals, women activists and social workers regarding change from traditional concept of marriage to modern thinking and the degradation of moral values.
8. To assess and compare the attitude of male youths towards changing trends in marriage.

Research Methodology
         This study demands to find out the changing marriage concept among youths in modern society.
         To find out the marriage values among youth, study will be done on both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The survey method will be adopted to collect quantitative data from the youths of Patna district. For this purpose the stratified sampling technique will be employed to select the youths of different social categories, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and General.
         A questionnaire with closed end questions will be used among youths to collect quantitative data on their opinion on different types of marital choices. In order to strengthen the reliability of data some quantitative data would be collected through a questionnaire with open ended questions.
         The purposive sampling technique will be used. The data analysis will be done on the basis of quantitative responses of youth about marriage.
         Secondary Data were collected from books, journals, website related to changing marriage concept among youths.

Analysis
         There has been some visisble changes in the rules of endogamy and exogamy. The rules of Varna, Caste and Sub-Caste endogamy, Gotra and Pravara exogamy has been banned by legislations. Now we do not find restrictions in cross cousin marriages. Cross cousin marriages were taking place but these were not very

common. It appears that the attitude of youth towards cross cousin marriage is changing. The numbers of cross cousin marriages are gradually increasing. Under certain circumstances these types of marriages are found to be accepted by youths. As regards the rules of endogamy, remarkable changes have taken place. The Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Act of 1946 allowed marriage between different sub divisions of the same caste. The Special Marriage Act of 1954 and Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 have enabled marriages between persons of different castes and religions. Arya Samaj Movement has promoted inter caste marriages. Inter caste marriages, hitherto considered unthinkable, are now not only permitted but also encouraged. Besides the legislations, the freedom in mate selection has promoted inter caste marriages.

II. CONCLUSION

The title of the proposed research work "Hindu Marriage: A Changing Concept Among Youths In Modern Times." shows the views of youth about marriage. So from the above explanations we may conclude that youths of modern society are relatively in support of inter-caste and inter-religious marriages. It clearly indicates that youths are not very much in favour of parental choice in matter of selection of marriage partners. Youths are very much interested in selecting their partners on their own. They prefer to do love marriages changed in arranged marriages. It cannot be said that caste and religious marriages are completely ignored but still the youths are very much interested in doing love marriages. It also clearly indicates that youths have started adopting pre-marital sex relationship which was totally unknown in traditional Indian society. Youths of modern society are also taking interest in live in relationship. So we can say that cultural norms and values related to marriage are changing by the youths in the modern society.

III. SUGGESTIONS

The traditional concept of hindu marriage is based upon psychobiological rules and is regulated by religious dictates of morality and humane considerations. However in recent times, individualism and egoistic mindset has upset the marital harmony resulting in marital discord of every variety. Thus, by understanding the Hindu Marriage: A Changing Concept Among Youths In Modern Times one can formulate social as well as legal strategy to preserve this all important marriage institution. Preventive and remedial measures should be taken. There can be no better way than to educate the new generation at early age. Education at school and college level should include moral human values. Public education should aim at preserving the sacramental nature of Hindu marriage as it is in the interest of spouses, family, children and society at large. Media, electronic as well as print media should be exhorted to follow social norms. An educational program of marriage counsellors with social, psychological and legal curriculum rooted in Hindu ethos, distinct from western psychologist, should be mooted at university level. A system of marriage counsellors, instead of horoscope, should be propagated in society.

REFERENCES

[1]. Upadhay S. Gupta P 2013**:** Marriage process and preparedness among youth: Insight from youth in India.
[2]. Official Home Of Your Article Library. From http://www.your article library.com/society/rules of mate-selection-in-hindu-marriages-essay/4371/(Retrieved on 10 October 2014)
[3]. Knox D,Schacht C 2009. Choices In Relationships: An introduction to marriage and the family. 10th Edition. Belmount, CA:cennage learning.
[4]. Anand, Justice(Retd.) R.L., "Marriage- a sacrament, not a one day game", The Tribune, September 23, 2007.
[5]. Anand, Justice (Retd.) R.L., "Compromise, Not Divorce, We Must Save The Institution Of Marriage", Perspective, The Tribune, August 5, 2007 At 12.
[6]. Anjali Thomas, what`s love got to do with it?, Times of India, January 30, 2010 at 27.
[7]. Editorial, "Nowhere brides – Strict laws alone can bring succour", The Tribune, June 4, 2012 at 8.
[8]. Beri, B.P., Law of Marriage And Divorce in India, 3 (Eastern Book Co., 1982).
[9]. Chatterjee, K.N., Hindu Marriage–Past and Present, 44 (Tara Publications, Varanasi, 1972).
[10]. Edward Westermarck, The Origins and Development of Moral Ideals, (Macmillan Co. London, 1906).
[11]. Avasthi Abha, "Punnamno Nakarat-Trayte Itti Putra", Hindu Marriage in Continuity and Change, 21 (Pradeep Prakashan Kendra, Lucknow, 1979).
[12]. M.N. Das & A.N. Saha (Ed), Marriage and Divorce, 25 (Eastern Law House, New Delhi, 6th Edition, 2002).
[13]. Dass, Banerjee Sir Goroo, Hindu Law of Marriage and Stridhan, 207 & 345 (Mittal Pub., Delhi, 1984).