

Youth and Marriage: A Study of Changing Marital Choices among the University Students in India

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KEYWORDS Youth. Marriage. Marital Choices. University Students

ABSTRACT Each social group in the Indian context, whether it may be a caste or religion or tribe, has its own rules and regulations that define the practices of social relations within the group and outside the group. Marriage as a social institution establishes a social relation with the members of two families. It is largely regulated by the norms and values of the groups and society. In the same way, choice of marriage is also much influenced by caste and religious norms and values. Here, the individual preferences are constrained by the groups' norms. At this juncture, higher education has the potential role in shaping the marital choices of students. This study sets out to analyse the students' views on choices of marriage in a university campus by employing qualitative and quantitative techniques. It also attempts to explain the changing forms of marital choices and types of marriages in the university campus. For this study, extensive data was collected from 450 selected students from the University of Hyderabad (UoH) through survey research questionnaire on marital choices among the students. In order to strengthen the reliability of the data, personal opinion on marital choices was drawn from 20 selected students from different caste and religious backgrounds by using open-ended questionnaire. The data analysis shows that the students' marital choices are still influenced by cultural factors like caste, religion, class, and family.