

## Arranged Marriages And Family Dynamics Of Interpersonal Relationships In India

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### Abstract

Arranged marriages in India represent a unique cultural institution that deeply influences interpersonal relationships and family dynamics. This practice involves families playing a central role in selecting life partners for their children based on various criteria, including caste, religion, and social status. This paper explores the intricate dynamics of arranged marriages, emphasizing the pivotal role of families in the matchmaking process. While family involvement can provide a sense of support and security, it can also lead to challenges as individuals navigate between their own desires and familial expectations. Additionally, the emphasis on long-term commitment and family stability in arranged marriages is discussed, along with the impact of factors like religion and caste on partner selection. The evolving landscape of arranged marriages, including the emergence of semi-arranged and love-cum-arranged marriages, is also highlighted, demonstrating the adaptability of this tradition in the face of changing societal norms and individual preferences. Overall, this study provides a glimpse into the complex interplay between arranged marriages and family dynamics in the context of interpersonal relationships in India.

**Keywords:** Arrange marriage, family dynamics, interpersonal relationships

### Introduction

Marriage holds great significance in the Indian context, as it is strongly ingrained in traditional, cultural, and familial values. One notable characteristic of Indian matrimonial customs is the prevalent tradition of arranged marriages, when families have a central role in the selection of life partners for their offspring. The longstanding tradition mentioned above exerts a significant influence on the intricacies of interpersonal interactions observed within familial structures in India. Marriage is a universal institution that takes on various forms across cultures and societies, reflecting the rich tapestry of human relationships. One such form that has long intrigued scholars, anthropologists, and individuals worldwide is the practice of arranged marriages, particularly prevalent in countries like India, where it is deeply embedded in the cultural and social fabric. Arranged marriages offer a unique lens through which to examine the intricate interplay between individual choices, familial expectations, and broader societal norms. At the heart of this practice lies the complex web of family dynamics that shape the lives of those involved.

Arranged marriages can be broadly defined as unions in which partners are selected by their families, often with limited or no direct input from the individuals themselves. This practice stands in contrast to the more common Western notion of “love marriages,” where individuals freely choose their life partners based on personal affection and compatibility.

The concept of arranged marriages is deeply rooted in tradition, cultural values, and historical context. In many societies, including India, it is seen as a way to maintain social harmony, preserve cultural identity, and ensure the compatibility of couples in terms of religion, caste, and social status. However, it is important to note that arranged marriages are not static; they are subject to evolution and adaptation over time, influenced by changing societal norms, increased education and empowerment of individuals, and globalization.

### Importance of the study

The study on “Arranged Marriages and Family Dynamics of Interpersonal Relationships In India” holds significant importance as it offers valuable insights into a unique and deeply ingrained cultural practice that shapes not only individual lives but also the broader societal fabric. Understanding the dynamics of arranged marriages provides a window into the complex interplay between tradition, family values, and personal relationships, shedding light on how these elements impact the lives of millions in India. Such research contributes to cross-cultural understanding and may inform discussions on the evolution of marriage practices, the balance between tradition and modernity, and the dynamics of family influence in shaping marital outcomes and interpersonal connections. Moreover, it can offer valuable lessons for societies worldwide in navigating the delicate balance between tradition and individual autonomy in the context of marriage and family life.

### Objectives of the study

- a. To examine the historical and cultural roots of arranged marriages in India, tracing their evolution over time.
- b. To examine the role of families in the matchmaking process of arranged marriages in India.
- c. To analyze the impact of family involvement on the dynamics of interpersonal relationships within arranged marriages.

### Methodology

This present study is completely based on primary and secondary data in nature. This study's objectives are to investigate the complex interplay between arranged marriages and family dynamics in the context of interpersonal relationships in India. Primary data have been collected with help of observation method. Research has closely observed and discussed from different demographical based families of India related to arranged marriages and family dynamics. The secondary data have been collected from books, journals, research paper, newspaper, TV programme, magazine, Social networking sites and internet etc. The collected data have been discussed and presented with help of narrative techniques.

### The practise of arranged marriages in India

The practice of arranged marriages in India is characterized by several key elements:

**Family Involvement:** Arranged marriages in India involve significant participation from the families of the bride and groom. Parents, grandparents, and sometimes even extended family members play an active role in the matchmaking process. They often take the responsibility of finding suitable matches based on various criteria such as caste, religion, social status, education, and horoscope compatibility.

**Matchmaking Intermediaries:** In many cases, professional matchmakers or marriage brokers are employed to assist in the search for potential partners. These intermediaries use their networks and databases to identify compatible matches and facilitate introductions between families.

**Emphasis on Compatibility:** Despite the perception that arranged marriages prioritize tradition over compatibility, many families place a strong emphasis on finding a compatible match for their children. Factors like shared values, family background, and personal preferences are considered to ensure a harmonious union.

**Importance of Horoscope Matching:** Astrology and horoscope compatibility are often taken into account in the matchmaking process. Families believe that matching the horoscopes of the prospective bride and groom can predict their future compatibility and marital happiness.

**Pre-Marital Social Interaction:** Once a potential match is identified, families encourage the prospective bride and groom to interact and get to know each other before making a final decision. These interactions may include meetings, phone calls, and sometimes even supervised dates.

**Family Approval:** It is customary for both families to meet and give their approval before the marriage is finalized. The families may discuss various aspects of the union, including financial arrangements, cultural practices, and the roles and responsibilities of the couple.

**Long-Term Commitment:** Arranged marriages in India are often seen as a commitment not just between two individuals but between two families. There is a strong emphasis on building a stable and enduring family unit, with the expectation of having children and supporting one another throughout life.

**Preservation of Cultural and Religious Traditions:** Many arranged marriages prioritize marrying within one's own caste or religion as a way to preserve cultural and religious traditions. This can create a sense of continuity and familiarity within the marriage.

**Social and Economic Factors:** Arranged marriages can also be influenced by social and economic factors. Families may consider factors such as dowry, financial stability, and social status when choosing a match.

**Evolving Trends:** While traditional arranged marriages are still prevalent in India, there is a growing trend toward semi-arranged and love-cum-arranged marriages. Individuals are increasingly given the opportunity to have a say in the selection process, and technologies like dating apps and matrimonial websites have also become popular tools for finding potential partners.

The practise of arranged marriages in India serves the purpose of not only facilitating the identification of a life partner but also fostering the consolidation of two families. The customary practise commonly entails parents or other relatives engaging in the pursuit of appropriate matches, employing criteria such as caste, religion, social standing, educational background, and compatibility as determined by horoscopes. Although this practise may appear outdated to certain individuals, it is crucial to comprehend that it is deeply rooted in the cultural framework of India and has undergone significant transformations over history.

The choosing procedure in arranged marriages is significantly influenced by the involvement of families. Parents, grandparents, and other older individuals frequently play an active role in the process of identifying suitable life partners

for their offspring. They serve as intermediaries, helping the arrangement of meetings between the prospective bride and groom, as well as their respective families. The inclusion of the family in the matchmaking process can present both advantages and difficulties for the persons concerned.

### **The Blessings and Challenges of Family Involvement**

Family participation in arranged marriages can offer both benefits and challenges. On the positive side, it provides a sense of security and support for the couple. With families having a say in the decision-making process, there is often an inherent support system in place for the newlyweds. Additionally, shared cultural and social backgrounds among families can facilitate a smoother transition into married life.

However, the involvement of families can also give rise to pressure and interference. Some individuals may feel that their desires and choices are secondary to familial expectations, leading to conflicts within the relationship. Navigating between personal preferences and family expectations can be a significant challenge for the couple.

### **Commitment to Family and Stability**

Arranged marriages in India often emphasize the importance of long-term commitment and family stability. These unions aim not only to unite two individuals but also to create a strong and enduring family unit. This commitment is reflected in the value placed on family traditions, respect for elders, and the expectation of starting a family of one's own.

### **Family Dynamics of Interpersonal Relationships In India**

Family Dynamics and Interpersonal Relationships explore the intricate web of familial connections, expectations, and the impact they have on the relationships between individuals in India.

**Multigenerational Living:** In India, it is common for multiple generations of a family to live together under one roof. This multigenerational living arrangement fosters strong bonds between grandparents, parents, and children. It allows for the sharing of responsibilities, childcare, and the passing down of cultural values and traditions. However, it can also lead to conflicts and tensions as different generations may have differing viewpoints and expectations.

**Respect for Elders:** Respect for elders is a fundamental aspect of Indian culture. Younger members of the family are expected to show deference to their elders in both words and actions. This respect extends to seeking their guidance and approval in important life decisions, including marriage and career choices.

**Marriage and Family Expectations:** Marriage is considered a significant milestone in an individual's life, and family plays a crucial role in this aspect. Arranged marriages, as discussed earlier, are still prevalent in India, and the family often plays a central role in matchmaking. This practice highlights the importance of familial approval and compatibility in Indian marriages.

**Gender Roles and Expectations:** Traditional gender roles are still prominent in many Indian families. Men are often seen as providers, while women are expected to manage household duties and childcare. However, there is a growing shift towards more egalitarian roles, especially in urban areas. Nevertheless, these traditional expectations can create conflicts and challenges within relationships.

**Sibling Relationships:** Siblings hold a special place in Indian families. The bond between siblings is often strong, and they provide emotional support to each other throughout their lives. Siblings also play an essential role in each other's lives, especially during times of celebration and crisis.

**Extended Family and Social Networks:** Indian families extend beyond the nuclear family, encompassing a wide network of relatives. These extended family connections often provide a sense of security and belonging. However, they can also lead to societal pressures and expectations, which individuals must navigate in their relationships.

**Collectivism vs. Individualism:** India is a collectivist society where the needs and desires of the family often take precedence over individual desires. While this can create a sense of belonging and support, it can also stifle personal aspirations and autonomy.

**Changing Dynamics:** It's important to note that India is undergoing significant social and cultural changes. Urbanization, globalization, and education have led to shifts in family dynamics and individual expectations. Younger generations are increasingly asserting their independence and making choices based on personal preferences rather than solely relying on family dictates.

Family dynamics are a central aspect of interpersonal relationships in India. While they provide a strong support system, they can also present challenges as individuals strive to balance tradition with personal aspirations. As India continues to evolve, these dynamics are also changing, reflecting the complex interplay between tradition and modernity in this vibrant and diverse country.

Family participation might contribute to a heightened sense of security and support within the partnership. Given the involvement of families in the decision-making process, a natural support structure is often established for the newly married couple. In addition, it is common for couples to come from families with comparable cultural and social backgrounds, facilitating their ability to establish a strong bond and construct a shared future.

An other noteworthy facet of arranged weddings in India pertains to the prioritisation of enduring commitment and the preservation of familial stability. In some instances, the objective of an arranged marriage extends beyond the mere union of two individuals, encompassing the establishment of a robust and enduring familial entity. This is seen in the prioritisation of family values, the sense of duty towards older generations, and the societal norm of procreation.

In conjunction with familial dynamics, the influence of religion and caste can exert a noteworthy impact on the institution of planned marriages. The practise of endogamy, wherein individuals choose to marry within their own caste or religion, is frequently favoured due to its perceived role in the preservation of cultural and religious customs. While the establishment of familiarity and compatibility can be facilitated by this phenomenon, it is important to acknowledge that it may also contribute to the perpetuation of social divisions and the constriction of individuals' autonomy in selecting mates based on personal compatibility rather than according to society expectations.

### **Arranged Marriages & Family Dynamics Influence The Relationships**

The interconnectivity observed in the context of arranged marriages in India engenders a profound perception of an expanded familial network, where ties transcend the confines of the original family structure. This interconnectedness facilitates the establishment of a network characterized by mutual assistance and concern, which can evoke feelings of solace as well as a sense of being burdened. Indian culture places great importance on respecting and honoring elders, and in the context of arranged marriages, this respect often manifests in the deference shown by younger generations towards their parents' choices. The willingness to accept the family's choice of a life partner can create a sense of gratitude and indebtedness towards parents, positively impacting the parent-child relationship. However, the pressure to conform to family expectations can lead to conflicts, with some individuals feeling compelled to marry someone chosen by their family, even if they have reservations, resulting in internal conflict and potential resentment. Moreover, the relationship with in-laws is crucial in Indian arranged marriages, as the bride often moves into her husband's family home, leading to challenges and adjustments. Navigating the dynamics of the new family, establishing one's place, and balancing expectations can be both rewarding and challenging for the newlyweds. Arranged marriages prioritize cultural and social compatibility, which can contribute to stronger relationships within the family, reducing cultural clashes and misunderstandings. However, gender roles and expectations can be deeply ingrained, reinforcing traditional expectations of wives and husbands, which, while providing stability, may limit individual freedom and self-expression. It's important to note that arranged marriages in India have evolved over the years, with a growing trend towards semi-arranged marriages, reflecting changing societal norms and a desire for greater personal autonomy in relationships.

Over the course of time, the practise of arranged marriages in India has undergone adaptations to align with shifting societal dynamics and the evolving tastes of individuals. Although traditional arranged weddings continue to be practised, there is an emerging inclination towards semi-arranged and love-cum-arranged marriages, wherein individuals are afforded greater agency in the process of partner choosing. The utilisation of dating apps and marriage websites has experienced a surge in popularity, providing individuals with the opportunity to encounter prospective partners while simultaneously including their families in the decision-making procedure.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, it can be argued that arranged weddings in India represent a multifaceted and intricate component of Indian culture and society. Family dynamics, tradition, and cultural beliefs are intricately interconnected. Although they provide certain difficulties, they also provide a distinct viewpoint of the significance of familial bonds and enduring dedication within interpersonal connections. As India undergoes societal transformation and progresses towards modernization, it is anticipated that the institution of arranged weddings would undergo adaptation and modification, mirroring the shifting preferences and ambitions of its populace. The impact of arranged marriages and family dynamics on interpersonal relationships among family members in India is multifaceted. While these marriages can create a strong sense of familial support and cultural continuity, they can also lead to conflicts and challenges when individual desires clash with family expectations. As India continues to evolve and modernize, the dynamics of arranged marriages and their effects on family relationships are likely to undergo further transformation, reflecting the changing values and aspirations of its people. Ultimately, the key lies in striking a balance between tradition and personal choice to nurture healthy and fulfilling family relationships.

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