# Changing Pattern in the Indian Arranged Marriage Market: A Longitudinal Study [1]

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*India has recently embraced open market economy, which has major social ramifications in the context of changing lifestyle aspiration of its people. Marriage, being an important indicator of social reorganization, provides an effective tool to study this relationship in terms of changing preference patterns in spouse selection through arranged marriage. However dearth of reliable longitudinal records is the main impediment in capturing this relationship. This paper attempts to overcome the hurdle using classified matrimonial advertisements from the world's highest circulated English newspaper daily -- The Times of India, for a period of over 25 years viz. 1983 to 2003 by focusing on the matrimonial pages with regular intervals of 5 years in between. The data selection is done using 10% of the representative samples using simple random method. Subsequent analysis reveals significant increase in preference towards more socially upwardly mobile educated bachelors (spinsters) who can adopt themselves to the emerging socio-economic order.*

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The institution of marriage is very important in life and thus the decisions regarding marriage are usually accorded careful deliberation. Social Scientists are interested in the behaviour of marriage for long. Marriage is also attracting policy makers and researchers as it has strong associations with other decisions of an individual. Some have argued that (Brien et.al, 2003) marriage is like an insurance policy in that it offers protection against poor health, financial insecurity and deviant behaviours. The economic context of marriage is gradually shifting its nature in India with the advent of new economic reforms and increase in the workforce participation of women.

Market analysis is one of the micro economical theory approaches for investigating either the demand side or the supply side of marriage. The insight that marriage market conditions influence individual decisions is based on Backer's (1973) competitive market model. The existence of any possible substitute heralds potential competition and if there exists competition, a market must be present. The process of competition for potential mates can be observed universally but takes different forms from one culture to the next. In India it is more likely to take the form of a list of available grooms and brides printed in the local newspaper. In Japan and Korea, the need to compete drives parents to circulate copies of Resume of their marriageable children and in the West it can be observed in social gatherings, in Churches and bars (Grossbard-Shechtman, 2003).

Individuals marry for a number of reasons: the companionship of a partner, the desire to raise children, sharing and caring, legal protection associated to assets. For some reasons, many individuals are better off after marriage. For better understanding of this behavioural process, economists have attempted to discover the underlying source of these benefits. However, why economics of marriage is so unpopular can be viewed in the following ways as opined by Grossbard-Shechtman, in 2003.

- The economics of marriage as developed by Becker and others assumed that men and women behave according to traditional gender roles. That is, homemaking is a women's job. Feminists have heavily criticized this very concept.

▪ Most economic analysis of marriage has emphasized the materialistic dimensions of marriage in contradiction to the idealistic believes i.e. holy matrimony, though it is really difficult to measure. Throwing out economic analysis of marriage because of their emphasis on measurable dimensions is ridiculous. However, still to date, market analysis remains important as long as there remains a choice between potential recipients of love because holy matrimony cannot remain totally oblivious of the hard realities involved in breadwinning and housekeeping.

▪ The third objection of economic analysis is from those who believe that biological and sociological theories matter more than economic theories.

Mc Donald (1985) studied marriage in relation to social organizations. He criticized demographers for overemphasizing the equation between marriage and fertility relations as well as the social anthropologists for being preoccupied with kinship while studying marriage (Bhagat, 2001). According to Mc Donald, in all stages of social organizations, there is a welfare shift from lineage to the family and to individual and this very shift is likely to affect marriage. For a number of reasons the study on marriage is becoming important and interesting. The foremost reason is the large-scale demographic changes that are taking place all over the world. The institution of marriage has changed markedly in the second half of the twentieth century. The west has visualized the rise in non-marital cohabitation, incidences of single parenthood, higher rates of divorce, late marriage, while the east has experienced shift in preferences of ideal partners, though the latter experience is not well explored and documented for scarcity of reliable data. Moreover, the paradox of high population growth, low status of women, low literacy, gender inequality on one hand and urbanization, modernization and economic globalization on the other are bringing substantial differentials in changes in the preferential characteristics of mate selection, age at marriage etc. Given these changes, the theoretical and empirical analysis of marriage and related behaviours has become even more important.

The subject presents further criticality from the context of the Indian social fabric as this unique civilization presents one of the most fascinating co-habitation of myriad caste, creed and religion. As one of the oldest civilizations in the world, the subcontinent carries on the legacy of age-old cultural values, traditional thinking and

rigid social structures that are extremely region specific as could be expected from the great diversity of the land. However, with the gradual unfolding of the world economic power equations and its distribution there has been a simultaneous and radical change in the social and geo-political mind frame of its people. In the 1980s, India's economy began showing the first flickers of growth after a long period of stagnation and over the last thirteen years, India's economic reforms have opened up opportunities for domestic as well as for the overseas business (Barman, 2004). The economic reforms in 1990's have ensured that the economy has grown about 6 percent per annum- that is one of the highest in the world. Globalization has surely stirred the conservative protected social cocoon with its associated neo-materialism and has thus ushered in open market economy with new age preference choices. This might have changed once and for all the poignant social status quo in a steady but gradual way over the last two decades. No wonder, the impact of this changing economic and social outlook has major socio-economic ramifications, which could be spotted in the changing behavioral patterns and preference choice within the Indian marriage market, especially in the arranged marriage records.

To an ever-increasing extent, marriage occurs as a result of partners/family's deliberate and informed decision. All these decisions are actually influenced by the prevailing economic and political situation as opined by Boalt, 1965. We have thus reason to expect that economic booms and slumps will also influence marriage statistics. However to what extent such factors are affecting the preference pattern in arranged marriage is not well explored especially in the developing world. The dearth of reliable longitudinal records provides the main research constraints in this regard. This paper attempts to overcome the hurdle using classified matrimonial advertisements from the world's highest circulated English newspaper daily -- The Times of India to see whether there is any change in the Indian marriage market with the advent of globalization in 1990s'.

## *Data and Methodology:*

In view of the above backdrop, the present endeavor is an attempt to capture the changing preference pattern in the Indian marriage market in the face of the

ongoing economic transition that the country is going through over the last twenty years. The salient feature of this study is that it is first of its kind in the Indian context as availability and reliability of proper longitudinal data has always overwhelmed the serious researchers. For our purpose we have relied upon the authentic and reproducible classified data from The Times of India publications (Largest selling English newspaper daily, in the world in terms of circulation from India). The matrimonial advertisement data columns collected from a particular month (September) starting from 1983 up to 2003 at an interval of 5 years i.e. 1983,1988,1993,1998 and 2003 formed the basis of our research.

As opined by Reddy (1978), '*modern advertisement has played an effective role in structuring the contents of matrimonial alliances in these days. The growing industrialization, the fast mobility of the people from the rural to the urban areas, the ever growing problems of social living and the demands of new education etc., have prevailed upon the present man to seek an easy means for purpose of matrimonial links of his sons and daughters and such other dependents. The matrimonial advertisements which are appearing in the dailies and weeklies are serving the purpose to a very large extent'.*

As the volume of classified data (Matrimonial Section) vary greatly over the years, we have tried to overcome the problem by focusing on 10% of the advertisements from each of the pages of the selected years. The data set thus obtained is a fair representative of the target population (focus is on the traditional arranged marriage market of India which still forms the overwhelming practice in the country).

The datasets are captured separately for both prospective bridegrooms and brides. We have used the simple random sampling to cull out the sample from the target population. Only first marriage is considered in our study. The total sample size for brides and bridegrooms varies from 30 each to 70 each depending on the volume of the advertisements. Sample sizes for the selected years in chronological order are 133 in 1980s', 131 in 1990s' and 129 in 2003 respectively with an almost equal distribution for the bride and bridegroom. We have combined the data of 1980s' and 1990s' to capture the decadal variation (i.e., three decades, 1980s', 1990s' and 2000s') with the assumption that the marital behaviour remains almost similar within

a decade. The majority of the sample belongs to Hindu religion; hence, the emphasis is also given on the Hindu tradition and practices related to marriage. Out of a total of 426 sample, majority have not specified their ethnicity though a good proportion belongs to Punjabi, Marathi, Bengali and Gujarati family, It is better to mention here that those who advertise in the matrimonial columns generally belong to urban areas and thus the sample covered are basically a representative of the urban middle and upper socio-economic classes.

The present paper is in essence a new attempt to explore the marital preference shift in the Indian arranged marriage market over three decades[1]. The sections that have enriched the paper are the discussions on the importance of marriage in Indian culture, the nature of Indian marriage and its variation, the gradual change in mate selection, correlates of marriage and ultimately the shift of the declared and demanded side of the arranged marriage in the last three decades.

## *Importance of Marriage in Indian Culture:*

Marriage is perhaps the deepest and most intricate involvements of human relationships that form the pillar of human society. Radhakrishnan (1956) marks " *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 sociological purposes of man*".

Marriage represents a compromise, gradually evolved between conflicting sets of forces, viz, the biological purpose and the socio-spiritual purpose of man (Dhar & Dhar, 86). Marriage as an institution is not as old as mankind. In primitive time, man used to imply force to hold a woman. But when man settled down, social obligations were realized. To ensure publicity of the relationship, the occasion of marriage was made. With cessation of forceful elopement, women were being purchased from parents and later parents used to give their daughters to eligible bridegrooms not for the sake of wealth but for the purpose of forming desirable alliance. With the growth of spiritual values, the sacramental character of such relationship came to be emphasized (Dhar & Dhar, 86).

Marital relationship exhibits three phases: a contract between the parties of the marriage, a status imposed by the society and a sacrament. Marriage among Muslims is a civil contract. Being a contractual relationship, it can be dissolved at any time. Christian laws consider marriage as a voluntary union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others in complete community of life for the establishment of a family (Dhar & Dhar, 86). Hindu marriage is essentially a sacrament where marriage is ordained for a Hindu for the blossoming of his ceremonial competency, as a means of having a son and constituting training in *Dharma* (religion). In Hindu marriage, a man's half is his wife, the wife is the husbands best of friends, the wife is the source of *Dharma* (religion), *Artha* (property) *Kama* (Sex), and above all, the wife is the soul of salvation (*Moksha*). According to the philosophy of Hindu traditional marriage, it is not merely a bond of two bodies but a union of two souls, it is a wealth for fulfillment of life, the true companionship in fighting the battle of life together and a device for expression and development of love (Radhakrishnan, 1956, Kapur, 1971). Thus its main aim is '*the enrichment of the personality of husband and wife, through the fulfillments of their needs for a permanent comradeship, in which each may supplement the life of the other and both may achieve completeness*' (Radhakrishnan, 1956). Marriage, in broader sense, is considered as an institution necessary for maintenance of the individual and the society. As Swami Vivekananda opines in 1946 that '*marriage is not for sense enjoyment but to perpetuate the race*' according to which individual pleasure has to be sacrificed for the good of many. In early times, marriage was considered a religious as well as social duty for Hindu man and women. For man, it was obligatory as heirs were necessary for man to achieve spiritual salvation whereas it was obligatory for women because she could not 'go to heaven' unless her body was consecrated by the sacrament of marriage (Mahabharata, IX).

In Epic ages, the practice of *swayamvara,* that is the selection of husband from amongst the men who were selected by her parents, was common. In those days, the parents with the consent of their daughters used to arranged the marriage. Later, for socio cultural and political uncertainties, child marriage came into existence in India. Marriage, under Hindu orthodoxy was not a matter of free selection between two individuals, rather it was an alliance negotiated between two families (Kapur, 1971). Till date, in majority of the Indian families, it is the parent's duty to see that all young in the family should marry. In early days, it was a difficult task in the sense that they

had to take into consideration the barriers of religion and caste. Thus, parents often used to take the help of matchmakers in selection of a suitable match and this practice is still prevalent in Indian culture[2]. Newspapers, the Internet, television advertisements and social conventions serve as the modern *nayan* (Prakasa, 1982). Indian families in metropolitan citf s use the mass media as go-between as a way of bridging cultural gaps.

The marriage comprises of two stages, *shadi* and *gauna* and this tradition is still continuing in the northern states of India. The first stage, *Shadi,* is entered into at an early age and resembles betrothal in that the girl remains in her parent's home. But the ceremony unlike betrothal is binding the bride and the groom for the rest of their lives. The young couple could not back out of the engagement. The second stage, *gauna*, is generally delayed until the girl has had her first menstruation. Thus, marriage is a bond first between two families and later between the couple since time immemorial. While concluding the study on Marriage in India, Bhagat (2002) remarks: *India is unique for simultaneous existence of different modes of social organizations. Marriage is still not an individual affair among larger sections of society, but a bond between two families. Parents and elders have great sway on matters of mate selection controlled by institutions of caste and religion'.*

In majority of the arranged marriages in India still to date, the potential bride and bridegroom nurtures an image of what their ideal husband or wife would be like (Boalt, 1965). The images based on which they largely determine their role expectations, usually modify their behavior when they start living together[3]. Many a times, the bride and the bridegroom have not even seen each other (especially in rural parts) even after the engagement ceremony, though things are changing fast, particularly in the urban areas and predominantly in the metropolitan cities that have been greatly influenced by modernization and to some extent westernization too.

## *Characteristics of Indian Marriage:*

Prakasa (1982) states that arranged marriages serve six functions in the Indian community: (1) It helps to maintain the social stratification system in the society; (2)

gives parents control, over family members; (3) enhances the chances to preserve and to continue with the ancestral lineage; (4) provides an opportunity to strengthen the kinship group; (5) allows the consolidation and extension of family property; (6) enables the elders to preserve the principle of endogamy. Ninety-five percent of all current Indian marriages are arranged, either through child marriages or family / friend arrangement.

The selection in marriage in Indian context can be viewed from three points as opined by Kapadia (1986) namely the field of selection, the party of selection and the criteria of selection. Hindus have both exogamous and endogamous ways of selection. This community is divided into a number of castes, which are generally endogamous in nature. Caste plays a crucial role in Indian culture and until recently, breaches in caste endogamy were punished. The Hindu Marriages Validity Act in 1949 said that 'no marriage between Hindus shall be deemed to be invalid or even to have been invalid by reason only of the fact that the parties thereto belonged to different religious, castes, sub-castes or sects'. However, Hindus are still heavily caste minded though situation is gradually changing. Patil's study (see Kapadia, 1986) in the City of Mumbai in 1980's showed that the trend of caste endogamy is not only changing in terms of generation but also sweeping over those in the Hindu community who are merely matriculated.  This is indeed an encouraging trend and our analysis in the latter section will further throw light on this transformation from 1980's to the first decade of the twenty first century. However experts still believe that weakening of some features of caste is not so great as it is generally believed, for it has not brought any overall change in the system and whatever change that has taken place is purely behavioural, not ideological.

While choosing a partner in early days, a bride's father used to see whether the selected bridegroom is healthy. The Hindu *shastras* pointed out a series of qualities at the time of selection of a bridegroom and one of the important qualities is the good family background of the spouse. It was also insisted that inquiries should be made to the extent of five generations on both sides. Family was and is still continuing to be an important factor in the selection of spouse. Now emphasis is generally given on standard of living, social reputation as well as culture.

An important aspect of Indian marriage is its low age at marriage for females though scrutinizing matrimonial data it is impossible to capture the age at marriage of the average Indians[4]. As the legal age at marriage for females in India is 18, none of the advertisers would dare to search groom for his daughter before she is 18 years old. International conventions do not clearly state when a girl is too young to marry. However, various international bodies such as the UNICEF and the United Nations Population Fund have suggested that 18 should be considered the minimum age of marriage. Under the Special Marriage Act of India, 1954 the age of marriage for boy is 21 years and above and for a girl is 18 years and above. Marriage below this age is void under this Act. The National Population Policy of India in 2000 re-emphasized the concern as over 50% Indian girls marry below age 18. Despite legislative efforts, early marriage is still prevalent in the nooks and corners of India. Higher income, urban stay, better education helps to pull up female age at marriage. Income of husband sometimes has positive effect on wife's age at marriage (see, Driver, 1963).

The singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM) of females however experienced steady increase over time. By applying Hajnal's method in Census data, Bhagat (2002) has calculated the SMAM for a century as shown in table 1. The age at marriage for female was only 12.5 in 1891 (till 1961, all person below 10 years were considered single in Census irrespective of their marital status). Till 1960, the rate of increase in age was gradual expect the trough of 1930 (when India experienced an economic slog along with political uncertainties besides the enactment of Child Marriage Restraint Act which was enforced in 1930.) and after 1960, the rate become faster. As recorded in 1931 Census of India, the proportion of very young married women was unusually high because of the rush by parents during the late 1920s to marry off their daughter before passing of the Child Marriage act which attempted to prevent girls marrying before the age of 14 and men before 18 years, as argued by Caldwell, Reddy and Caldwell (1983). The fastest rise in the age at marriage was observed during 1960s and in later decades. Using different indicators for the study of levels and trends of nuptiality at national level, Das and Dey (1998) found a shift in the age at first marriage of females and the reduction in the incidence of marrying at early ages (less than 18 years) although a significant proportion still gets married in their teenagers as a cultural practice especially in rural areas of less developed states.

The study also revealed that religion, education, status of women and employment are playing significant role in increasing the age at marriage.

It is generally believed that parental control leads to early marriage. Where parental influence is low and daughters have the freedom of choice regarding mate selection, are found to marry one year later than those strictly controlled by family, as revealed in a study based on four Asian countries (Cheung, 1985). On the contrary, Davis- Blake (1965) and Goode (1968) opined that these two variables are not at all associated negatively. For instance, in Japan and parts of Europe, parental control was associated with late marriage. Age at marriage is basically influenced by a series of interrelated social, economic and women's status related factors.

The effect of economic factors on marriage, especially on the age at marriage differs in the Western and Eastern world. It is misleading to believe that rise in the age at marriage in the west is an outcome of industrial revolution. In contrary, the late marriage trends are associated with industrialization and urbanization in the east as richer countries have higher age at marriage than the poorer countries, which is a paradox of the West (Dixon, 1971). With economic recovery after 1930, many of the European countries and the US experienced a fall in the age at marriage. In contrast, India has experienced a slow economic growth in twentieth century except the last decade when it opened the door of globalization. Generally the poor in India try to dump their daughters as early as possible for competition of food at household level, while the middle as well as higher class who educate their daughters as per the daughter's aspirations show preference for late marriage than the poorer class. Wife's age at marriage was found to be highest in the upper middle class followed by middle and lower class as found by Rele and Kanitkar (1980).

## *The Gradual Change in the Attitude of Indian Marriage:*

In early ages, marriage was believed to be necessary for the purpose of '*Moksha*' (salvation). Later, for complete economic dependence of women on men, marriage turned out to be essential for girls and it was not always for the desire of developing good companionship but for economic necessity. However, with the advent of women education and gradual improvement of women's status in the twentieth century, many women started feeling that marriage was not a necessity

especially if married women were treated as slaves, they should have the right to end the relationship. Hate's study in 1930 reveals that about 50 percent of unmarried girls declared their wish to remain unmarried while her study in 1946 showed that the figure has come down to 46 percent. This very change is for the fact that marriage is not always an economic necessity but an emotional need as well. The study undertaken by Kapur (1971) in sixties hence pointed out that 93 percent-unmarried women felt marriage as a necessity and they wished to get marry to a man of their choice. A definite change in attitude of women was observed as far as openness and frankness with regard to their expression of mate selection was observed (Kapur, 1971). In 1960s' as revealed by Kapur's study, educated women desire to combine marriage aspirations along with gainful employment.

Moreover, the attitude towards arranged marriage was gradually changing since sixties. In the early times, marriage was arranged entirely by parents and relatives either with or without any formal consent of the prospective mates. A host of studies (Shah, 1962; Mathew, 1966; Mehta, 1970) observed a favor of opinion regarding premarital acquaintance between prospective mates in arranged marriage. In urban places, now days, the first stepping-stone of arranged marriage is generally the flashing of advertisement in matrimonial columns at regional or national level newspapers. If the criteria or demand of both the side matches more or less, then the family members share views and the potential bride and the bridegroom are encouraged to converse with each other to develop an acquaintance. If after subsequent meetings, the prospective partners feel inclined to each other, the final decision of marriage is taken. After finalization of the decision, many times the potential matches get engaged and the marriage takes place on a later date or they directly go for legal and/or social marriage. Educated women want an arranged marriage with wholehearted consent of marriage partners or a love marriage with a wholehearted consent of the parents (Kapur, 1971). These types of marriage could be called as neo-arranged/love marriage as the final decision lies on the prospective mate's choice. This very trend signifies the fact that girls now play an active role in their marriage. Nevertheless, some women still prefers a typical, traditional arranged marriage either for the reason of their orthodox family background or if she is not so progressive in social terms or if she had a biter experience in love affairs.

Two important changes in the marriage system of Southern India during the latter half of twentieth century, as visualized by Caldwell, Reddy and Caldwell (1983) were the change of bride wealth to a dowry system and the other is the reduction in the proportion of all marriages between close relatives[5]. Two reasons are sited by them for the surge of dowry: 1) the affirmation that the marriage market has changed over the decades from being a surplus of potential husband to a surplus of potential wives. 2) For the emergence of hypergamous marriages where wives marry socio-economically upward, richer and more esteemed families who require compensation for what would otherwise be misalliance. Universal hypergamy is intricately related with the marriage squeeze. Hypergamy norms mean that competition in the marriage market is much favorable for males. There will be proportionately fewer unmarried men and those who are available can choose from a large pool of younger women and face fewer competitions in such marriages. Marked age difference between husband and wife was observed in India before 1950 because of male surplus over females and for presence of large number of unmarriageable widows. After 1950s, the deficit of potential brides has turned into a surplus in India. As a result, a seller's market became a buyer's market and the response was a change from bride wealth to dowry. Three reasons are put forth by Caldwell, Reddy and Caldwell (1983) for the decline in marriage between relatives: 1) rise of dowry and the dowry price is small if marriage takes place between relatives, 2) emergence of more heterogeneous society, hence to find out a suitable match from a large population is necessary, and 3) growing belief that such marriages produce sick children.

Along with the change in the meaning of arranged marriage, the preference pattern is also shifting. In pre independence era (i.e. before 1950s') some of the important considerations in arranged marriage were that the boy and the girl should be of same religion, caste and the boy's family should be economically capable enough to support the girl after marriage. The profession of the boy, his income and even his education was not of much consideration. But, in 1960's or later, the prospect of the boy in his job and the profession type, his educational qualification was given much consideration. In early days, girls were expected to be well versed with household chores while after the mid twentieth century; the preference shifted towards educated, well-versed girls with good family background and preferably endowed with physical beauty.

As opined by Kapur (1971): *'With the change in their attitude, mate selection has become more problematic because there is a lot of confusion with regard to the roles and status in a marriage. The demands which the prospective mates make upon each other may not be greater than what they were before, yet with the growing accent on individualism, expanding interests and newly emerged needs, these demands have become novel, more specific and preemptory. Naturally, in selecting a mate, more of these women now think whether a particular person would help her or at least not be a hindrance in developing her own life and individual interest after marriage. Marriage is found to be changing its meaning and might undergo still more changes in future, yet marriage as an institution is still standing firmly, rather more than before'.*

## *Recent Shifts in the Parameters of Arranged Marriage:*

Attitudinal change is a maze of dynamic and flexible components, which are modifiable and hence it is extremely difficult to isolate and evaluate the impact of any single factor. A set of socio-economic, political, legal and cultural forces influence the thinking and views of the young heart that consequentially affects their behavior. However, the effect of all these gamut of factors are so intertwined and intricate that it is next to impossible to separate out the effect of each of the factors and attempting to do so is rather unscientific in social science research.

The Indians experienced a pronounced change in socio-political and legal factors controlling the institution of marriage in the second half of twentieth century. The Hindu marriage Act of 1955 brought a revolution by fixing the minimum age at marriage for girls at 15 years, by providing the provision for divorce and separation and giving permit to inter-caste marriage. Women's education subsequently brought tremendous change in the attitude towards marriage. Later, the fixation of legal age at marriage at 18 years and provision of legal rights to property for women also added momentum in this shift. Again, the last decade of the twentieth century visualized a distinctive shift from a closed to an open economy that might have brought about social ramifications in terms of behavioral patterns and preference choice for the Indian arranged marriage market. The following section thus is an attempt to

understand such changes especially from the context of the urban educated section that has occurred over the past twenty years.

Before looking at the matrimonial data of 1980s, 1990s and 2003, it is worthwhile to briefly point out the findings of Reddy (1978) who analysed the matrimonial columns at one point of time in 1970s. His major findings, purely based on content analysis of 200 matrimonial advertisements are as follows:

1) The parents of the bride demanded employment, fair complexion, respectable family, independent living and low family liabilities of the boy while the parents of the groom demanded fair complexion, family status, aptitude for household activities and good moral character of the girl.

2) There is a clear-cut understanding about the desirability of boys with respect to matrimonial matches. For instance, an IAS boy is more readily solicited than from other services. Next in this category, is the preference for doctors and engineers.

3) The preferred age gap (actual and the desired) is more in the north Indian advertising than the south.

4) The particulars of 'horoscope' and 'zodiac signs' are more desired by the southern than the northern people and females desire these particulars much more than the males. Males are less prone to cast affiliation, thus men is a greater rebel than the female. Moreover, the northerners are more 'law breaking' in their attitude than their counterparts from the south.

The analysis of the present data set can be put under the following heads:

- ***Change in age of bride and Bridegrooms,***
- ***Change in 'declared' parameters and***
- ***Change in 'demand' parameters.***

### Change in the age of Bride and Bridegrooms:

Change in marital age is an important indicator of development. With social progress, usually age at marriage increases. India is well known for its low age at marriage, though with time, it is gradually increasing. Our sample, that represents the urban educated class, indicates a slight increase in the mean age of the bride. While,

mean age for the bridegroom is remaining more or less the same. For instance, the mean age for a bride advertising in the matrimonial column was 24.9 years in 1980s' that has increased to 25.2 in 1990s' to 26.6 in 2003. However, the average age of the bridegroom has remained nearly 28.5 years over the last few decades.

Fig:1
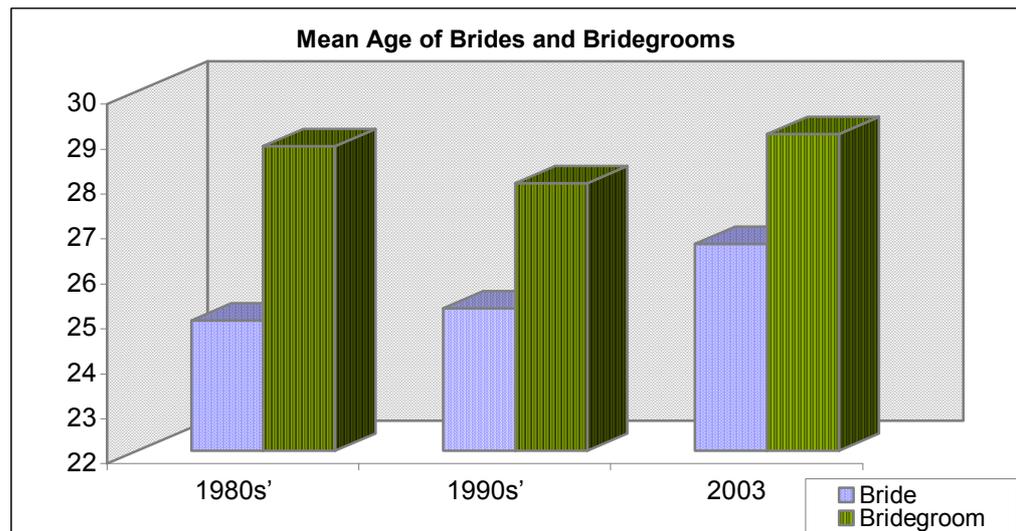


Median age is also remaining static for the boys while two-point increase is observed by 2003 with regard to the median age of girls.  So, over time, the age at which girls are getting married, are increasing gradually but steadily and at the same time the age difference between the bridegroom and the bride are reducing (see table 2)

***Change in 'declared' parameters:***

We have categorized the declared parameters into four groups: social, developmental, economic and appearance characteristics. Table 3 depicts little change in declared 'social parameters' over time. Specification of caste has increased among bridegrooms, though it does not indicate that the demand for own caste has also increased. A significant increase is observed in the specification of the 'place of stay' i.e. place where the boy or the girl is settled in or is working at. This very trend is not observed in 1980s but has increased to about 80 percent in 1990s and more than 90 percent in 2003. Looking into the developmental parameters, which embrace mainly educational and professional qualifications, table 4 shows that in terms of educational

degrees (graduate and post graduate) people also used to mention about it before. However, specifying professional qualification has started since the last decade. For instance, in 1980s, only 10 percent bride used to mention about professional degrees and this percentage has soared up to 48 for girls. While among boys, a 40 percent point increase is observed in this regard over the same time period. This definitely indicates the impact of globalization, which demands more professionally qualified workforce. Another notable point is the citing of convent education as a qualifying criterion among girls. The proportional increase in the mention of convent-educated girl in the matrimonial columns in the1990s is quite distinct over 1980s', which again indicates a growing market demand for smart, and convent educated women in the era of modernization. However, the recent drop in the parentage usage of highlighting convent-educated girls in 2003 might be due to the fact that the present day urban girls are well versed with English.

Turning to table 5, we can observe that except declaring of the working status among girls, all other major economic parameters observed a decline in importance. Such trend is mainly due to the fact that the present day youths generally do not look out for his/her partner's family prosperity or asset holding for considering a marriage proposal. It indeed is a reflection of individualism and egotistical growth that itself portrays the incipient step forward towards modern day thinking. For example, in 1980s' when only 32 percent girls mentioned that they were working, the same percentage has gone up to 60 percent in 2003. On the contrary, stating of high family status (like 'cultured' family, 'reputed' family) has considerably reduced among girls, followed by boys. Such trend is true for specification of family establishment (which indicates basically the family's economic prosperity) as well, where the degree of decline is sharper among the bridegroom rather than the bride. Holding of green-card seems to have emerged as an important social pointer for individual establishment.

Striking findings can be observed from table 6, which depicts the change in the appearance parameter as declared by the boys and the girls. Stating of 'slim' figure and 'good/beautiful' look among girls has declined significantly, indicating a denial of choosing a girl based solely on physical endowment. Such trend is particularly striking in the context of the evolving demand set of twenty-first century. The look factor is also relevant for boys who do not want to declare themselves as

handsome. Conversely, revealing of 'fair' skin has significantly increased among boys. As brides always prefer to have a taller partner, proportion declaring 'height' is also increasing over time.

Table 7 captures the changing pattern in the educational and professional qualifications of the would-be brides and bridegrooms over time. Proportion having only graduate degree has gone down for both boys and girls while those having graduated with professional degrees have increased significantly after 1980s'. Interestingly, in 1990's when the impact of globalization was at its pick, the proportion of postgraduate degree holders (without any professional degrees) had reduced sharply. Looking into the professional qualifications among the boys and girls, it could be said that the highest increase in professional training is observed for MBA degrees for either sex followed by engineering degrees among boys.

Fig:2



Significant Changes Observed in the Declared Quality Paremeters of Brides and Bridegrooms
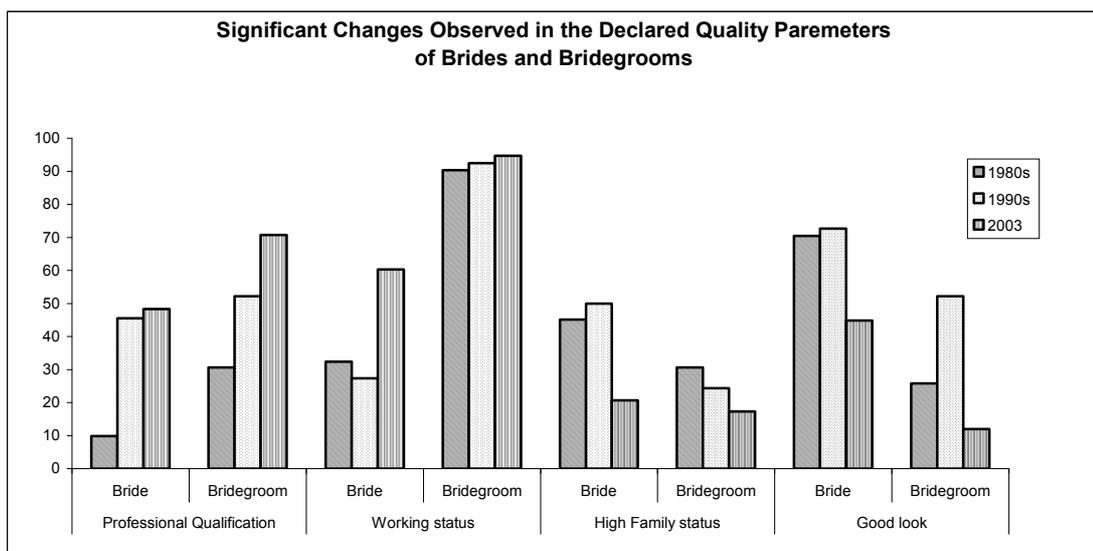
From the above figure in is evident that in terms of proportion declaring professional qualifications, it has increased significantly over the years for either sex. The same is true among brides in declaring their working status. However, the proportion declaring 'high family status' and 'look' has sharply gone down over the years and especially among would-be brides.

*Change in 'demand' parameters*:

Now, it would be interesting to look into the demanded parameters of boys and girls (tale:8). The change worth mentioning is the sharp decline in the demand for own caste both among the would-be bride and groom, which definitely indicate a progress towards development, which in turn can pave the way for a class less society. About 60 percent of the boys and the girls in 1980s demanded for a match of own caste, which has gone down to about 30 percent in 2003 (see fig: 3). No change is observed in the appearance factor over time but the demand for good-looking girls is remarkably higher than the corresponding demand form girls. Demanding a high standing family of boys has significantly reduced especially after 1990s', which again portrays the tendency of the girls, to choose a well settled boy rather than a well-settled family. Again, specific qualification for the bridegroom demanded by bride is diminishing. However, the demand for photograph and or horoscope is on the rise perhaps due to the reason that peoples now a day want to match the astrological intricacies rather than caste.

Fig: 3



Significant Changes Observed in the Demanded Quality Paremeters of Brides and Bridegrooms
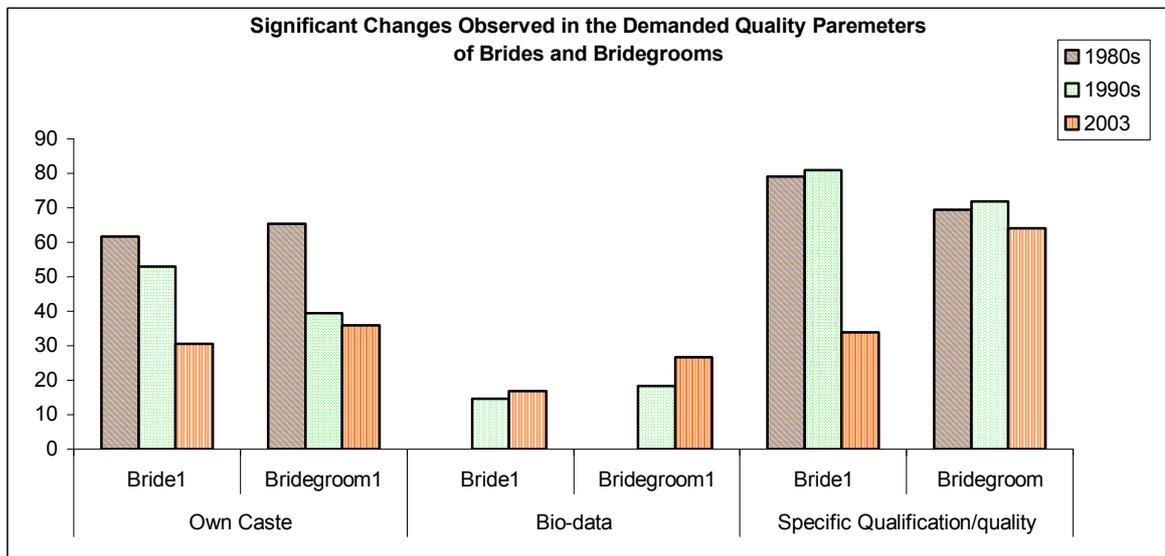
As to why specification of a good family background or mentioning of certain qualifications for bridegrooms is gradually diminishing is a matter of future research. It we look at table 9, some interesting points come to light. The demand for a homely

bride has remarkably gone down which itself indicates that modern boys are not in favour of making their bride an ideal housekeeper, rather they demand an educated girl who can be a true partner in this competitive society. Corresponding change in girl's demand is also observed. The market demand for a well-settled bridegroom was very high in 1980s and 1990s as about 40-50 percent bride demanded for this criterion. However, there is a drastic decline in demand for such guys in the twenty first century because of the very fact that under the present socio-economic condition people tend to marry only after attaining a thresh-hold degree of economic solvency; hence it could be assumed with relative certainty that the chosen bridegroom would be conveniently settled before he looks out for suitable match.

## *Summary and Conclusions*

The process of marriage is an excellent indicator of social trends. Marriage, variously defined as an institution, the bedrock of procreation of family life, a gamble, a life sentence or a heaven-programmed union is an ideal medium to gauge the value shifts in a society (Vasudev, 2004). In the pre independence era (i.e. before 1950s'), some of the important considerations in arranged marriage in India were that the boy and the girl should be of same religion, caste and the family of the bridegroom should be economically capable enough to support the bride. Nevertheless, in 1960's or later, the economic prospect of the boy was given much consideration. In early days, girls were expected to be well versed with household chores while of late, the preference was given more for educated, good looking, well-versed girls with satisfactory family background. Arrange marriages are becoming flexible, adaptable based on contemporary, practical and realistic factors (Vasudev, 2004).

The authors admit that generalizations based on pre-marriage advertisements alone has its own limitations and one ideally needs to look at the post marriage scenario as well to understand the gaps that exist between the demand and supply tension to prove any hypothesis surrounding this social transformation. Besides, in this age of information, communication and entertainment (ICE), the role and efficiency of other personalized interacting mediums in fostering human bonding are equally significant. The current paper definitely suffers from these obvious deficiencies in identifying all the existing influences that are playing their role in

shaping up social preferences of the day. But still, one cannot overlook some of the emerging preferential commonalities that are revealed in the analysis of the present study.  As this journey unfolds, we take a closer look at the highlights of the state of things as revealed from our present endeavor.

To sum up the major findings of our decadal analysis based on matrimonial data over the last twenty-five years, i.e. during 1980s', 1990s' and the first half of the present decade, we can definitely state that the mean age of the girls in the matrimonial columns has increased over the last two decades with a simultaneous decrease in the age gap between the bride and the bridegroom. The above suggests a welcome change from the stereotype thinking of proposing early marriage for girls in favour of education and cultured grooming. Another reason could be a change in the perception of having a minimum age difference between the partners, which was earlier practiced quite stringently. Another encouraging change observed in our analysis is that although people are specifying their own caste, there is a significant decrease in the preference for the same caste. This welcome change is also supported by sociologists Shiv Vishwanathan (see India Today; Oct 2004) who opines '*caste is more of a political condition, people are flexible about it as long as they can be insistent about influence'*. Basically people are now clamoring more for social status that translates into more contented weddings than caste. A clear trend is observed towards professional education and training between both sexes in the 'declared parameters'-a fall out of the globalization process. At the same time the options in demanded parameters are widening or remaining 'open ended' than ever before. Conscious declaration of physical beauty as a qualification in the marriage market has significantly reduced among girls- a positive rub off of the social development. However, there is a constant demand for 'physical beauty' among the prospective bridegrooms. Employed women are strongly highlighting their working status. This could be attributed to three possible causes: a) As a statement of their economic independence and financial self sufficiency, b) To assert the marketability of their qualification, c) An indirect hint of their desire to hold on to their job even after marriage.

Today's prospective bridegrooms prefer well-educated life partners than conventional 'homely' housewives of the yesteryears; a significant change indeed.

We can summarize that with the onset of globalization as more and more opportunities are unfolding for this new generation, the eminence of education and professional training has increased manifold. Subsequently, avenues of income have also developed which is reflecting in the partner seeking behavior.

To sum up, one can conclude that the Indian societies are changing, preferences are becoming more flexible, gender equations are becoming more equitable and perhaps there is an emergence of a general trend in the attitude among the youths to recognize opposite sexes as equal partners in life. Priorities are getting shared and people are looking for intellectual and emotional compatibilities rather than lifelong compromises.

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Footnotes:

1.      The only study in India, done three decades back on the basis of matrimonial column is by V.N.K Reddy (see.' Marriages in India' 1978). His study was based on the advertisements of 'The Times of India' and 'The Hindu' for the purpose of comparing the 'personal' and 'demanded' attributes of the bride and the groom in the northern vis-à-vis the southern states in India. The sample of his study was only 200 and the findings were based purely on content analysis.

2.      The traditional arranged marriage matchmaker is called a *nayan* (Prakasa, 1982). The matchmaker is normally a family friend or distant relative who serves as a neutral go-between when families are trying to arrange a marriage. Matchmakers can serve two functions: marriage scouts, who set out to find possible matches, and as negotiators, people who negotiate between families. As a scout and negotiator, a family sends the *nayan* into the community to seek possible matches. The matchmaker considers "family background, economic position, general character, family reputation, the value of the dowry, the effect of alliance on the property, and other family matters" (Prakasa, 1982).

3.      To better understand the trends and patterns of any behavioural trait, it is always worthwhile to know the logic behind such behaviors. Theories are built upon logic and

understandings. With regard to the choice of mates in marriage, some appealing theories are well known and thus it is worthwhile to debate the applicability of those theories in brief in spite of the fact that these theories are footed on the experiences of the Western world. The two long standing, popular, yet contradictory but simple theories are: *'like will to like'* and *'opposite attracts'*. The *'like will to like'* theory or ' *theory of homogeny*' patrons that husband and wife are like each other, that is, they have same ethnic /religious background, similar education and social status and have similar interests. The other theory, also called ' *the theory of heterogamy*' or *'opposite attracts'* is just opposite to the former one. The third theory, relatively new, called '*summation theory'* says that pairs who finally get married are generally those in which the one's superiority in certain attributes is counterbalanced by other partner's superiority in other attributes (Boalt, 1965). Summation theory can only be applied to groups that are more or less homogenous in religion, race etc. In general, a majority of data from the Western world supports the homogeny theory. Kerckhoff and Davis (1962) in their famous article titled 'Value consensus and need complementary in Mate selection' concluded that married couples for the most part, meet within socially fairly homogeneous groups, but that the selection within these groups is often determined by needs and valuations that give precedence to the need for complementarities of the person concerned (Boalt, 1965). They have inferred that the choosing process of husband and wife takes place in stages. The social factors play important role at the early stage and generally limit the choice to social equals. Valuations or judgment play its prominence in the next juncture and it also tends to select equals. On the contrary, the selected mates who enter the third or final stage of preference should be fascinated to each other for their mutual diversity to complement each other. It is true that while deciding on mate selection, people in general go for a maximum of charm and beauty, an optimum of education and status, an equality in religion and caste, a parallelism in culture and ingenuity, which in totality implies social parity. However, when emotional aspects are taken into account, which could only be revealed in close acquaintance- the optimum can prove to be the contradictory of what we otherwise possess. Thus, the *heterogamy theory* is converted into simply a unique case of *summation theory*. The summation theory presupposed that the parties on the marriage market were more or less agreed as to the importance of the advantages one party had and as to how much the other required in the form of other advantages to even out the differences, as opined by Boalt. The drawback of the *summation theory* is that it assumes that the selection happens at one point of time. But, in reality, it takes longer time to make the final decision of selection and in this course of time; new factors come in the calculation. In brief, social origins, education, profession and age influence the selection at the outset but the emotional factor like need complementarities appears considerably late (Kerckhoff and Davis, 1962).

4.      Local tradition, many a times, is adopted according to the circumstances or broken down by new laws. India was one of the countries having the lowest age at marriage a few decades ago, as child marriage was prevalent mainly to protect the girls from the invaders since the medieval period. In 1921, a staggering 2 million girls were estimated to be less than 10 years at the time of marriage. In 1930, the minimum age of marriage was fixed at 14 for girls, which has now reached to 18 years.

5       One important character, worth mentioning in this context is the practice of giving dowry in Hindu marriage among specific caste groups though practicing dowry is illegal and hence not always disclosed publicly. The amount of dowry is regulated by the socio-economic status of the bridegroom's father, the educational qualification of the bridegroom etc. The girl's physical beauty and education sometimes reduce the amount of dowry. In southern India, dowry system is a recent phenomenon (Caldwell, 1983). A report on status of women in 1974 quotes that 'dowry is on increase and has penetrated to communities and regions which did not practice it earlier'. Prakasa (1982) notes five purposes of the dowry: (1) It provides an occasion for people to boost their self esteem through feasts and displays of material objects; (2) makes alliances with the families of similar status; (3) helps prevent the breakup of family property; (4) gets a better match for daughters; (5) furnishes daughters with some kind of social and economic security.  The expensive nature of dowries has helped in raising the marriage age in the middle and lower caste because families have not been able to meet dowry demands, and has also forced some families to transcend their caste groups and find bridegrooms from other sub caste and different caste (Prakasa 1982). However, there are many disadvantages to dowries.  Families may suffer financial hardships due to the expensive nature of dowries.  They may not be able to afford dowries, therefore prohibiting their children from marriage, causing girls to occasionally commit suicide in order to rid their fathers of financial burdens.  Because of social instances like these, many consider the dowry system as a social evil and an intolerable burden to many brides' families.  As a result, the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 was passed.  It decrees, "To give, take, or demand a dowry is an offense punishable by imprisonment and fines".  Studies in Indian context (Zachariah, 1984; Nair et al, 1986) reveal that dowry has delayed the age at marriage as girl's parents take time to amass funds for satisfying bridegroom's family. Also, there exists a positive association with dowry and level of female education. However, all these assertions are difficult to reinvestigate in the published matrimonial data, which is used for the present study, as no body will mention about the demand for dowry in paper even if they intend to do so.

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Table:1 **Singulate Mean Age at Marriage of female, India,1891-1991**

| Year | SMAM | Year | SMAM |
|------|------|------|------|
| 1891 | 12.5 | 1951 | 15.6 |
| 1901 | 13.1 | 1961 | 15.9 |
| 1911 | 13.1 | 1971 | 17.1 |
| 1921 | 13.7 | 1981 | 18.3 |
| 1931 | 12.7 | 1991 | 18.9 |
| 1941 | 14.7 |      |      |

Source: *Bhagat R.B.'Early Marriages in India: A Socio-Geographical Study', Rajat Publications, New Delhi-02, 2002 pp-62*

**Table: 2 Mean and Median Age of the Bride and Bridegrooms in Matrimonial Advertisement[1]**

| Year | Mean Age | | Median Age | | Sample | |
|------|----------|------------|-------|------------|-------|------------|
|      | Bride | Bridegroom | Bride | Bridegroom | Bride | Bridegroom |
| 1980s' | 24.90 | 28.77 | 24.00 | 28.00 | 66 | 61 |
| 1990s' | 25.17 | 27.95 | 24.00 | 28.00 | 64 | 65 |
| 2003 | 26.61 | 29.04 | 26.50 | 28.00 | 56 | 75 |

*1: only first marriage is considered*

Table:3 **The Social Parameters Mentioned by Bride and Bridegrooms in Matrimonial Advertisement**

| Social Parameters | Declared By | 1980s' | 1990s' | 2003 |
|-------------------|-------------|--------|--------|------|
|                   |             | Percent | | |
| **Religion** | Bride | 100.0 | 100.0 | 98.3 |
|              | Bridegroom | 95.2 | 97.0 | 94.7 |
| **Ethnicity** | Bride | 71.8 | 71.2 | 62.1 |
|               | Bridegroom | 71.0 | 67.2 | 54.7 |
| **Caste** | Bride | 23.9 | 28.8 | 39.7 |
|           | Bridegroom[2] | 27.4 | 32.8 | 48.0 |
| **Settled in/ working at** | Bride[1] | 0.0 | 83.3 | 87.9 |
|                            | Bridegroom[1] | 0.0 | 76.1 | 100.0 |
| sample | Bride | 71 | 66 | 58 |
|        | Bridegroom | 62 | 65 | 71 |

*1: significant at 1% level in chi- square;  2: significant at 5% level in chi- square*

**Table:4**   **The Developmental Parameters Mentioned by Bride and Bridegrooms in Matrimonial Advertisement**

| Developmental Parameters | Declared By | 1980s' | 1990s' | 2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percent | | |
| **Educational qualification** | *Bride* | 81.7 | 83.3 | 82.8 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 64.5 | 71.6 | 78.7 |
| **Convent education** | *Bride[1]* | 21.1 | 37.9 | 12.1 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 4.8 | 3.0 | 1.3 |
| **Professional Qualification** | *Bride[1]* | 9.9 | 45.5 | 48.3 |
| | *Bridegroom[1]* | 30.6 | 52.2 | 70.7 |
| sample | *Bride* | 71 | 66 | 58 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 62 | 65 | 71 |

*1: significant at 1% level in chi- square;  2: significant at 5% level in chi- square*


**Table:5**   **The Economic Parameters Mentioned by Bride and Bridegrooms in Matrimonial Advertisement**

| Economic Parameters | Declared By | 1980s' | 1990s' | 2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percent | | |
| **Working status** | *Bride[1]* | 32.4 | 27.3 | 60.3 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 90.3 | 92.5 | 94.7 |
| **Salary** | *Bride* | 7.0 | 3.0 | 5.2 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 22.6 | 16.4 | 12.0 |
| **Own Home** | *Bride[2]* | 8.5 | 1.5 | 0.0 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 11.3 | 10.3 | 5.3 |
| **High Family status** | *Bride[1]* | 45.1 | 50.0 | 20.7 |
| | *Bridegroom[2]* | 30.6 | 24.3 | 17.3 |
| **Well Establishment** | *Bride[2]* | 32.4 | 37.9 | 17.2 |
| | *Bridegroom[1]* | 82.3 | 67.2 | 6.7 |
| **Green card holder** | *Bride* | 0.0 | 3.0 | 5.2 |
| | *Bridegroom[1]* | 0.0 | 1.5 | 10.7 |
| sample | *Bride* | 71 | 66 | 58 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 62 | 65 | 71 |

*1: significant at 1% level in chi- square;  2: significant at 5% level in chi- square*

**Table:6**　　　　**The Appearance Parameters Mentioned by Bride and Bridegrooms in Matrimonial Advertisement**

| Appearance Parameters | Declared By | 1980s' | 1990s' | 2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percent | | |
| **Good health/slim** | *Bride[1]* | 47.9 | 48.5 | 22.4 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 19.4 | 25.4 | 18.7 |
| **Good look** | *Bride[1]* | 70.4 | 72.7 | 44.8 |
| | *Bridegroom[1]* | 25.8 | 52.2 | 12.0 |
| **Skin color** | *Bride* | 47.9 | 45.5 | 37.9 |
| | *Bridegroom[2]* | 8.1 | 23.9 | 16.0 |
| **Height** | *Bride[2]* | 80.3 | 78.8 | 94.8 |
| | *Bridegroom[1]* | 83.9 | 95.5 | 100.0 |
| sample | *Bride* | 71 | 66 | 58 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 62 | 65 | 71 |

*1: significant at 1% level in chi- square;  2: significant at 5% level in chi- square*

**Table:7**　　　　**Educational and Professional Qualifications of the Bride and Bridegrooms by years**

| Qualifications | | Bride | | | Bridegrooms | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1980s' | 1990s' | 2003 | 1980s' | 1990s' | 2003 |
| | | Percentage distribution | | | Percentage distribution | | |
| **Own Education[1]** | *Graduate* | 46.6 | 32.7 | 16.7 | 30.0 | 18.8 | 10.2 |
| | *Graduate with professional degree* | 8.6 | 38.2 | 35.4 | 37.5 | 52.1 | 44.1 |
| | *Post graduate* | 44.8 | 29.1 | 47.9 | 32.5 | 29.2 | 45.8 |
| | Sample | 58 | 55 | 48 | 40 | 48 | 59 |
| **Own[2] Professional Qualification** | *CA/Cs* | 1.2 | 4.5 | 5.1 | 2.8 | 1.4 | 6.7 |
| | *Engineer* | 1.2 | 16.4 | 6.8 | 16.7 | 33.8 | 41.3 |
| | *Doctor* | 3.7 | 6.0 | 6.8 | 5.6 | 7.0 | 1.3 |
| | *MBA* | 0.0 | 4.5 | 22.0 | 4.2 | 7.0 | 20.0 |
| | *Computer diploma* | 2.5 | 10.4 | 3.4 | 1.4 | 0.0 | 1.3 |
| | *Designing/law* | 0.0 | 3.0 | 3.4 | 0.0 | 1.4 | 0.0 |
| | *None* | 90.1 | 55.4 | 51.7 | 69.4 | 43.3 | 29.3 |
| | Sample | 81 | 67 | 59 | 72 | 71 | 75 |

*1: significant at 1% level brides; and at 5% level for bridegrooms in chi- square;*

*2: significant at 1% level*

**Table:8**  **The Quality Parameters Demanded by Bride and Bridegrooms in Matrimonial Advertisement**

| Parameters demanded | Demanded by | 1980s' | 1990s' | 2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Percent | | |
| **Own Caste** | *Bride[1]* | 61.7 | 52.9 | 30.5 |
| | *Bridegroom[1]* | 65.3 | 39.4 | 36.0 |
| **Good look** | *Bride* | 17.3 | 17.6 | 8.5 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 58.3 | 67.6 | 53.3 |
| **High Family status** | *Bride[1]* | 23.5 | 55.9 | 6.8 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 29.2 | 40.8 | 18.7 |
| **Specific Qualification/quality** | *Bride[1]* | 79.0 | 80.9 | 33.9 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 69.4 | 71.8 | 64.0 |
| **Horoscope and/or photo** | *Bride[1]* | 4.9 | 32.4 | 16.9 |
| | *Bridegroom[1]* | 8.3 | 52.1 | 33.3 |
| **Bio-data** | *Bride[1]* | 0.0 | 14.7 | 16.9 |
| | *Bridegroom[1]* | 0.0 | 18.3 | 26.7 |
| **Contact through e-mail** | *Bride[1]* | 0.0 | 1.5 | 55.9 |
| | *Bridegroom[1]* | 0.0 | 1.4 | 37.3 |
| Sample | *Bride* | 81 | 68 | 59 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 72 | 71 | 75 |

*1: significant at 1% level in chi- square;  2: significant at 5% level in chi- square*

**Table: 9**        **Qualities Demanded by Bride and Bridegrooms in Matrimonial Advertisement**

| Demanded qualities | Demanded by | 1980s' | 1990s' | 2003 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Percent | |
| **Engineer** | *Bride* | 7.4 | 2.9 | 1.7 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 9.7 | 2.9 | 4.0 |
| **Homely** | *Bride* | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 33.3 | 26.5 | 6.7 |
| **IAS and allied** | *Bride* | 0.0 | 2.9 | 3.4 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| **Employed and educated** | *Bride* | 24.7 | 2.9 | 0.0 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 9.7 | 7.4 | 4.0 |
| **Well settled** | *Bride* | 40.7 | 52.9 | 16.9 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 2.8 | 7.4 | 9.3 |
| **Doctor** | *Bride* | 1.2 | 4.4 | 1.7 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 4.2 | 1.5 | 5.3 |
| **Well Educated** | *Bride* | 0.0 | 4.4 | 6.8 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 9.7 | 22.1 | 33.1 |
| **CA/MBA** | *Bride* | 0.0 | 7.4 | 3.4 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 0.0 | 2.9 | 1.3 |
| Sample | *Bride* | 81 | 68 | 59 |
| | *Bridegroom* | 72 | 68 | 75 |