



A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON INDIAN MARRIAGE AND WESTERN MARRIAGE AS REFLECTED IN ISLAM AND HINDU RELIGION

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Abstract

Marriage is a ubiquitous feature of human kinship and social organization and its development assumed a critical role in the history of social institutions. According to many anthropologists, the regulation of sexual relationship may in itself have formed the basis of all human social orders. Several widely occurring functions of marriage can be associated with notable behavioral universals. This article deals with the differences that could be traced amongst Indian marriage system that compared to the system of western marriages.

Key- words: Indian Marriage, Western Marriage, Kanyadan, Mangalsutra, Seven vows, Solah Srinagar

INTRODUCTION

“So god created man in his own image, in the image of god he created him, male and female he created them”

Genesis 1:27

Marriage between two persons is a sacred relationship that is not limited to this life alone. It extends across seven or more lives, during which the couple help each other progress spiritually. The adage that marriages are made in heaven is very much true in case of Hinduism. Two should come together and marry because their karmas are intertwined and they have to resolve many things together upon earth in order to ensure their mutual salvation. The relationship between couples is essentially a relationship of the souls. It is not necessary that their gender roles are fixed forever. Sometimes they may switch roles, and the husband may become wife and wife the husband. Sometimes they may also temporarily part their ways and come together again one or two lives in grand reunion. The following can be regarded as the features of Marriage and responsibilities:

- Parental responsibility for long term infant nurturing and education,
- Social regulation of sexual competition,
- Organization of gendered divisions of labour
- Assignment of individuals to social groups and statuses, and
- The formation of intergroup alliances and exchanges.

Yet in spite of these general features, different cultures have developed a fascinating diversity of regulations and customs concerning prohibitions and

preferences for marriage partners as well as expectations between spouses and in-laws. Prominent variations, such as arranged marriages, polygamy, and same-sexed unions provide a rich ethnographic record for speculating about why societies differ. They also challenge our tolerance of different moral conventions at the most basic level.

INTRODUCTION OF INDIAN MARRIAGES

Marriage and family, the social institutions with biological foundations are complementary to each other .both have a long standing history of their own. In the Indian context also both the institutions have been in existence since time immemorial. Both have withstood the ravages of time and the shocks of centuries they are permanent elements in our social system. In the Hindu social heritage marriage have never been looked at from the materialistic point of view. Marriage among the Hindus is a sacrament and not a contract. The Rig-Veda itself speaks of the sanctity of the institution of marriages, the tie of marriage was regarded even at that stage also as a binding force all through life. Marriage was a ritual which enjoined the husband to regard his wife as a god given gift. Centuries have rolled and since then. The Hindu marriage though it has undergone vast changes has not totally lost its sanctity Broadly, in the Indo-Aryan –speaking north a family seeks marriage alliances with people to whom it is not already linked by ties of blood. Marriage arrangements often involved looking for a field. In the Dravidian speaking south, a family seeks to strengthen existing kin ties through marriages, preferably with blood relatives or an affine relation all blood relatives are forbidden as marriages mate to a person or children. In the south there is no clear distinction regarding the family of birth and family of marriage. Because marriage in the south commonly involve a continuing exchange of daughter among a few families for the married couples all relatives are ultimately the blood kin. On the indo- genetic plan, marriages are contracted outside the village , sometimes even outside of large groups of villages , with members of the same caste beyond any traceable consanguine ties .In much area daughters should not give into villages where daughter of the family or of the natal villages have previously been given . In most of the region brother sister exchanged marriages are shunned.

TRADITIONS OF INDIAN MARRIAGE:-

An Indian hindu marriage is strictly observed according to the ancient Indian culture norms laid down in vedas . In the Indian society a wedding is not just the coming together of trwo peoples rather two souls. In fact a wedding also bring two families closer which thereafter, share a bond of respect and affection. As a result there are number of traditions and customs associated with the Indian hindu wedding ceremony. These traditions are the essence of the martial institution , thereby strengthening the significance , chastity, and faith in the same .

KANYADAAN

The complexity of an Indian Hindu marriage owns to the fact that there are many rituals performed according to the Vedic practices and hymns. Kanyadaan is

also such as a ritual which apart from being vital to the ceremony , tugs at the emotional cord of the bride's parents .

MANGALSUTRA

In Hindu weddings, one of the most sacred customs is of tying Mangalsutra . it is basically a black and gold or diamond pendant, Mangalsutra carries immense importance in Hindu wedding make it an elaborate ceremony.

SEVEN VOWS

An Indian marriage is one of the most serious and sacred affair in the society. This is visible from the austerity with which it is performed. a hindu marriage in particular is all about rituals and customs. There are a number of them which are followed before and after wedding, making it an elaborate ceremony.

SOLAH SRINGAR

Solah Sringar are the sixteen adornments of an Indian Hindu bride, which contribute to her complete beautification . wedding has always been a fantasy for every girl it is a dream, she is born with and wishes to realize with utmost care and precision, and there are some other tradition which are followed too.

MARRIAGES IN WESTERN COUNTRIES

"I do." To Americans those two words carry great meaning. They can even change your life. Especially if you say them at your own wedding. Making wedding vows is like signing a contract. Now Americans don't really think marriage is a business deal. But marriage is serious business. Marriage is usually initiated by a proposal of marriage, simply called "a proposal". In a heterosexual relationship, the man traditionally proposes to the woman and the actual proposal often has a ritual quality, involving the presentation of a ring (an engagement ring) and the formalized asking of a question such as "Will you marry me?" The man may even go down on one knee before proposing. If the proposal is accepted, the couple become engaged. Sometimes the couple just decides together that the time is right to get married. The man usually gives his fiancée a diamond ring as a symbol of their engagement. They may be engaged for weeks, months or even years. As the big day approaches, bridal showers and bachelor's parties provide many useful gifts. Today many couples also receive counseling during engagement. This Western Culture prepares them for the challenges of married life. In the United Kingdom, the engagement ring is worn, by the woman, on the third finger of the left hand (the ring finger). In the UK the 29th of February (in a leap year) is said to be the one day (coming round only once every four years) when a woman can propose to her partner. A man who is engaged to be married is called his partner's fiancé; a woman similarly engaged is called her partner's fiancée. Once a wedding date has been set the banns of marriage, commonly known simply as "the banns" (from an Old English word meaning "to summon") are announced. This is a notice, usually placed in the local parish church or registry office, which tells everyone that a marriage is going to take place between two people. The purpose of banns is to enable anyone to raise any legal problems as to why the

two people shouldn't get married, basically it is to prevent marriages that are legally invalid. Impediments vary between legal jurisdictions, but would normally include a pre-existing marriage (having been neither dissolved nor annulled), a vow of celibacy, lack of consent, or the couple's being related within the prohibited degrees of kinship. In England, a marriage is only legally valid if the reading of the banns has taken place or a marriage licence has been obtained. In addition to the bride and groom, traditional weddings involve a lot more people. Typically, these positions are filled by close friends of the bride and groom; being asked to serve in these capacities is seen as a great honour. For the couple:- Ringbearer - an attendant, often a young boy, who carries the wedding rings. Ushers - helpers, usually men, who assist with the organization. For the groom:- Best man - a close male friend or relative of the groom, given a place of honour. Groomsmen - one or more male attendants who support the groom. For the bride.

COMPARISON OF INDIAN MARRIAGE SYSTEM TO WESTERN MARRIAGE SYSTEM:-

1. Colors followed during Rituals

In Indian scenario the bride usually wears a vibrant wedding dress that has majorly colors like Red or similar color schemes. However, white and black are the dress color code followed in western countries. This thing contrasts to Indian Culture because the white and black either considered as a symbol of Widow or evil energies.

2. Food catering

Western marriages the food is served at predefined time and not beforehand. While in India the food is available all the time at the venue of wedding.

3. Same sex Marriages

In India the concept of same sex marriage is not supported by society, even law provides no safeguard or any approval to it. The IPC 377 declares homosexual acts as a punishable offence. The High Court judgment in a leading case Naz Foundation v. Govt. of NCT of Delhi filed a curative petition. On the other hand, in western notion there are 50 states or more which legalized the same sex marriage concept so far. In 2015, 4 countries legalized the same. Belgium was the first to legalize it in 2003. However there around 21 western states which ruled same sex marriage as unconstitutional.

4. Arranged or Love marriages

It is seen that most of the times arranged marriages are warmly accepted in Indian cultural settings. This mindset is changing substantively and people now accepting love marriages too. In Christianity they are fully devoted to the idea of romantic marriages. In modern marriages, "for love" is the institution.

5. Age differences

In Indian scenario age matters a lot. If the bridegroom is younger to the bride then the family either gets finicky or show disapproving attitude towards the

girl. In western scenario mostly jump to a rational pitch where age is not a matter to choose a partner. They prefer the level of experience and maturity over age.

6. Independence of Dating in Society

Indian people do not take their own decisions, their parents do. The dating stuff is mostly prohibited by families of true traditional values. The people from west the freedom of dating and having sex out of marriage is not a cliché. They can even get married to their partners.

7. Caste system

The caste system of ancient India is followed vastly if we see classifieds in daily newspapers they have each caste based category for matrimony. It is still prevailing in many families and has very rigid views to it.

LAWS FOR INDIAN MARRIAGES

1. Hindu Marriage Act of 1955

- The Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 is applicable to Hindus, Jains, Sikhs and Buddhists. A religious marriage which has already been solemnized can be registered under the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955. The Hindu Marriage Act is applicable in cases where both husband and wife are Hindus, Buddhists, Jains or Sikhs or where they have converted into any of these religions. The Hindu Marriage Act provides for the conditions of a marriage where under the bridegroom should be the age of 21 years and bride of 18 years, they both should not be within the degree of prohibited relationship.
- The Special Marriage Act, 1954 is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted to provide a special form of marriage for the people of India and all Indian nationals in foreign countries, irrespective of the religion or faith followed by either party.

3. The Christian marriage Act 15 of 1872

- The Christian marriages are solemnized under The Christian marriage Act 15 of 1872. A Christian is one who professes the religion of Jesus Christ and Indian Christians include native converts to Christianity and their Christian descendants.

4. Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act 1936

- Marriage Law For Indian Zoroastrians, Parsis, Iranis. This is the act that governs marriage and divorce among members of the Parsi and Irani community in India. It is applicable throughout India, except in Jammu & Kashmir.

CONCLUSION

It's very difficult to come to conclusion that what system of marriage is perfect. In any situation it all depends on many things that make marriage a success. There will

always be positive and negative. It all comes to many relevant questions. But one thing is very clear marriage as Indian culture and values things is something which is a lifelong relationship. It's the relationship that has to be kept bonded even in very unfavorable situation. Indian tradition which makes this bonding as forever is very important. Thinking marriage as mutual arrangement, as western things bringing the relationship to the materialistic level. Marriage is a sacred relationship and its unbreakable at any situation. And that's the great Indian tradition that makes our society a great one. The family is the most fundamental social unit, the prototype of all other human associations. It is out of marriages that families and communities arise. Marriage is the place to experience sexual love between man and woman, give birth to new life, and establish one's lineage for the future. As energy is invested in the maintenance of marriages, families, and the communities they both require and build, society is propelled forward in civil, nurturing, and benevolent ways.

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