HOW WESTERN CULTURE HAS INFLUENCED THE ATTITUDE OF INDIAN STUDENTS TOWARDS ARRANGED MARRIAGES

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As the Western world in general, and the United States in particular, are becoming more and more influential on the world scene, it is becoming common, and day-to-day's language, to discuss the Western world and its various influences on other (non-Western) cultures and societies. In the country known to the writer (India) there has frequently been heard the expression that the most responsible persons for this influence are and have been individuals who have visited the Western world (commonly defined as the European Continent and the United States), and have been exposed to its various moves and customs. This is considered true particularly where it affects native customs concerning the family behavior.

Then the writer got an opportunity to visit the Western world and live in it for over two years. During these two years the writer personally observed some of the effects of United States customs on the Indian students living here; especially the gradual changes in the attitudes of the students from the acceptance of the traditional Indian custom of arranged marriage to the questioning of this custom. Therefore she decided to avail herself of this opportunity to try to find out to what extent the students from India have really been influenced by this country as is commonly assumed and as the writer observed.

Being a student of social work who works directly with people and society more than most other professions, the writer decided to choose this particular aspect (marriage and courtship

for investigation, because in her opinion nothing influences family and society more than marriage customs and laws, especially when Western culture differs considerably from Eastern culture, of which India is a part. To clarify what the writer means by it, perhaps a simple example of choosing a mate can be cited. In Western culture a man or a woman is free to choose his or her own mate, whereas, in India, it is the right of the parents to choose a mate for their children with the latter having little or no right to say anything concerning the matter. To cite another example it is common in the United States that the children leave their parents' home and establish their own home, whereas it is common in India that the children keep on living with their parents even after they have been married and have borne children.

All these points of departure prompted the writer to choose this topic. It is hoped that this could help her work with the Indian people coming from all walks of life whether influenced by other cultures to the point where they have adopted other customs as a departure from the traditional customs of his forefathers and of his society as a whole.

It can be shown that people all over the world, since the beginning of history have been able to adopt the culture of people of another race. There is nothing in the biological structure of man that makes it difficult. Man is not committed

by his biological constitution to any particular variety of behavior. The great diversity of social solutions that man has worked out in different cultures in regard to mating, for example, or trade, are all equally possible on the basis of his original endowments. Culture is not a biologically transmitted complex.

The human animal does not, like the bear, grow himself a polar coat in order to adapt himself, after many generations, to the Arctic. He learns to sew himself a coat, and construct an igloo. From all we can learn of the history of intelligence in primitives, as well as more sophisticated societies, this plasticity has been the soil in which human progress began and in which it has maintained itself.

The University of Hawaii, through several of its departments, conducted studies relating the character of the people of Hawaii to their social relations. "It was proved in the beginning that the acculturation was almost wholly at the technological level and does not involve things greatly affected with sentiment. There was little tendency toward amalgamation. But gradually, and without observation, social relations of an increasingly intimate character came into existence -- acculturation took the place of loyalties".[1]

Under these circumstances cultural assimilation and racial amalgamation, in a relatively short time, erased such racial and cultural differences as might otherwise have provided a basis for caste distinctions.

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1. Romanzo Adams, Inter-Racial Marriage in Hawaii (New York; Macmillan Company, New York 1937) p. 7

If the diverse races of mankind are, as far as we can observe, the products of isolation and inbreeding, it is just as certain that human society and civilization is a consequence of the coming together of diverse races and peoples in intimate association and cooperation that we call society. Every society, every nation, and every civilization has been a kind of melting pot and has thus contributed to the intermingling of races by which new races and new cultures emerge.

"Social relations have a way of undergoing unobserved transformation".[2] According to old custom the parents used to select the wives for their sons, and husbands for their daughters. "When young men in Hawaii, educated in American schools, and indoctrinated with the ideals of chivalry and romance want to choose their brides, new problems seem to arise".[3]

In India, the study of contemporary European history and culture has inspired the enlightened Indians to evaluate critically Indian conditions and institutions. They come in contact with novel conceptions as freedom of speech and pen, criticism of authority, questioning of accepted dogma, insistence on inherited rights, and natural freedom of man as opposed to his family duties. The growing familiarity

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2. Ibid p. 148

3. Ibid p. 162

with these new ideas has brought a new spirit into Indian life; the stirrings of scepticism instead of a stagnant authoritarianism, a glimmering, if not the forerunner of what we call democracy.

With the increasing infiltration of Western ideas, those who have struggled to suppress romantic love have steadily lost ground. Hollywood movies have a profound effect on young people in the East. "In progressive student groups, Western ways begin to be copied clumsily but with increasing boldness".[4] How would the East, with its rigid conservatism, handle such an avalanche of change? How would it react to free dating between boys and girls?

The East has known the inevitable consequences of rampant romance. The East has known this in its heart for more than two thousand years. To avoid these things it has tolerated many shams, harsh discipline, and denial of personal freedom, because they seemed to be the inevitable price of social stability. Can the East hold the line? Or must it capitulate and start again on a different and dangerous way?

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4. Ibid. p. 127

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF MARRIAGE ARRANGEMENTS IN INDIA

India is as complex as the architecture of any of its temples. A great deal has been written about India's superstitions, her caste system, and the family life. A great deal has also been written about the serenity of India, her message to mankind, and her contribution to peace, and spiritual equilibrium. But because the problem is vast, complex, and covers a span of history of approximately 5,000 years, no generalization about the subcontinent can be anything but a half truth. The complex nature of India is due to the impact of history and the synthesis of many religions, races and ways of life functioning independently of one another, and to the clear-cut divisions of Hinduism itself of caste (and later the joint family system) which arose eons ago in the first shattering impact of the Aryan way of life upon the indigenous Dravidians". [1]

Aryan society was apparently patriarchal, a society of nomads under the leadership of a constantly moving paternal focus around which power was centered. This power was vested in the tribal chief king, priest, or father.

The extra ordinary fusion of these opposite cultures (Aryan and Dravidian) took perhaps a thousand years to accomplish

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1. Tara Ali Baig <u>Women of India</u>
(Delhi, Ministry of Information) p. 105

and out of it grew a complex system of thought and life that is known as "hinduism". An understanding of the historical background would be of great help in understanding the subject of our discussion more clearly.

"Hindu thought centered in the idea that 'Dharma' is the natural force of principle that binds mankind together in a common unity which, like a wheel, is never static, and has no end or beginning. Our national symbol of Asoka-chakra, which is not merely a religious idea, but a recognition of the physical laws which govern the Universe and all it contains, and of which man, by his conduct of law and worship forms part".[2]

On the worldly plane, because the importance of the individual in India has always been secondary to the family, the social structure, no matter what wars, invasions, or conquests took place, has never been destroyed. Whatever their defects, both the caste and the joint family system have undoubtedly contributed to this stability. The personal happiness, the development of the individual, and even the actions of the individual were all made subordinate to the family, and to society. It is understandable therefore why sacrifice has been considered one of the highest values in Indian society; making admiration for renunciation and asceticism so widespread, and creating such a virtue of non-

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2. Ibid P. 106

possession.

"A society based on the demands of a rigid form of a community life implies considerable sacrifice on the part of its members, both male and female. In the structure of a joint family, where three or four generations may live under one roof, the elders invariably dominate. A man must renounce a life of his own, and in every orthodox family even the money he earns automatically reverts to the joint family treasury. There is little privacy for anyone, and it is therefore inevitable that rules of conduct, and duties are strictly enjoined, for otherwise a community of people living close together could not function at all".[3]

This is the reason why women accepted their restricted role in life with such docility. While such a system has frequently been hard on the individual, stifling personality, and even leading to grave injustice, and illtreatment, the credit side has been considerable for it has provided the greatest insurance and solidarity for the clan. Illness, loneliness, loss of parents, widow-hood, handicaps, and old age were no longer problems of the same magnitude in a group as it was in the single family unit. The joint family, however imperfectly, gave shelter and protection. Relatives always had a home to go to in times of distress, the old never

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3. Ibid

felt useless, or abandoned, and living expenses were greatly reduced by the economic factors of common roof with kitchen. This is the background from which emerged the arranged marriage system.

WHAT IS ARRANGED MARRIAGE

In ancient civilizations it was common for the parents, with the help of go-betweens, to select the marriage partners of their children. The parents decided when, who, and under what circumstances the young should marry, although presumably the most interested parties had no voice in the affair. Furthermore, once married, the wife particularly had little chance for withdrawal if the marriage proved unhappy.

Arranged marriage was (on purpose) not definitely placed in time or country, but very broadly ranged over the centuries and nations of the patriarchal past.

In India, due to economic reasons, most of the villages try to fix marriage within village limits. "In arranging marriages the eldest male member of the family who may be the grandfather or uncle of the boy or girl has an important part to play. In the absence of these, the eldest brother takes on the important role. A middle-man who may be a friend or a relative to both the families start the marriage negotiations. If the negotiations prove favorably, elderly male members

of the girl's family visit the boy's house for final settlement".[4]

The question of selection of marriage may be considered from three points of view, namely: the field of selection, the party of selection, the criteria of selection. The field of selection is restricted in two ways. Among some tribes and communities there is a preferential code enjoining marriage with a particular relative as more desirable or at times even obligatory. There are likewise certain restrictions prohibiting marriage with certain relatives or between certain groups as they are considered incestuous or undesirable. There are further restrictions of an endogamous character enjoining marital union within the bounds of a certain group.

The Hindus have both endogamous and exogamous rules limiting the selection of a mate. The Hindu community is divided into a number of castes which are again divided into a number of sections. A caste is thus divided into a number of groups each of which is more often endogamous. The Christian communities also follow the same practice within their communities. The multiplicity of groups thus restrict the choice of a mate within the bounds of a few families, varying in number from 50 to 300. The residents in the villages find that their girls are taken in marriage by persons living in

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4. D.N.Majumdar Caste and Communication in An Indian Village (Bombay, Asia Publishing House; 1958) p. 208

towns and cities, but very often girls from cities are not preferred as wives for their sons. They are thus forced to form a marriage circle of their own.

Until recently breaches of caste endogamy were punished by excommunication from the caste. Caste exercises a tremendous influence over the members as it touches a man's life in all his social relationships, for example, refusal to cooperate on occasions like marriages and funerals by members of the same caste. It is only recently that public opinion in favor of broadening the endogamous group gained ground, and legislation has legalized inter-caste marriage. "The Hindu marriage validity Act 1949, enacted that no marriage between Hindus shall be deemed to be invalid or even to have been invalid of the fact that the parties thereto belonged to different religious castes, sub-castes or sects".[5] However, the moral force of caste is still so great, and Hindus are still so caste minded that it is questionable whether legislation will break the ice.

Inter-caste marriage is nowadays a much discussed subject. The modern industrial organization has by now weakened much of the rigidity of the social code, so much so, that there is today a general feeling that caste has died out or is dying out very rapidly.

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5. K.M.Kapadia <u>Marriage and Family in India</u> (Oxford University Press 1958) p. 11

In India the family assumes the duty of finding wives for sons, and husbands for daughters. Marriage is a family concern, because it was the means by which the family's future was assured. Individual wishes were not ignored but they could not be allowed to clash with the interests of the family. Care is exercised in matching brides and bridegrooms. The couples themselves, however, have little choice in the arrangement of their marriage.

One factor in fitness for marriage was emphasised above all others -- the chastity of the bride. So the bride must be chaste as a guarantee that as a wife she would be faithful.

DOWRY SYSTEM

Dowry marriage consists in the bride's father endowing her with a trousseau, which becomes the principle thing in money marriage. Dowry marriage among many peoples of the family epoch developed into the offer of money or goods when the bride leaves her home. In these cases the choice of spouse was, as has already been shown, a family matter of the parents. The individualities of the future pair was secondary consideration in many cases. Individualism was as yet but weakly developed, and not enough for marriage to resist the old ideas except in occasional isolated cases.

Marriage for money was, and is, the usual thing, the understood thing, and as we have already seen (it had to be so) as long as marriage was a family affair. The broadminded outlook and education have influenced a tremendous change in this respect.

Among the rich, the money (dowry) given by the parents is laid out in jewels which become the bride's property, and can on no account be disposed of by the husband.

Rabindranath Tagore, India's great poet and playwright, wrote "The way to a marriage which is known by the torchlight of passion, has not for its goal the welfare of society, but the satisfaction of desire. The Brahma marriage is considered to be the best type. According to this the bride should be given to a man who has not solicited her. Marriage needs must be rescued from the control of the heart and brought under providence of intellect; otherwise insoluble problems will keep on arising, for passion seeks not of consequences, nor brooks interference by outside judges".[6]

AGE OF MARRIAGE

The lawgivers in the past emphasised that pre-puberty marriages are the ideal marriages. After establishing that, they fixed the age when the girl is supposed to reach puberty. Thus the age of marriage for the girl varied much, dependent

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6. David and Vera Mace <u>Marriage East and West</u> (New York, Doubleday and Company, Inc. 1959) p. 118

upon what they considered the age of puberty. As observed by P.M. Kane "---about the beginning of the Christian era it did not matter at all if a girl was married a few months or few years after puberty".[7] Usually all girls marry in India so in the course of a generation all of the women leave the family, and all of the women who become established members of the family are those who entered it first as strangers.

HOROSCOPE

"It is found that every second Indian believes in astrology".[8] Horoscope agreement must precede match making in most Hindu marriages. Choice of marriage partners are made by matching of their horoscopes. This has been the traditional practice. Professor Khadka says: "The most determining factor in match making is not the fitness or unfitness of the parties, but the fitness of their horoscopes".[9]

No matter how ideally fit and worthy they are, very often the marriage will not take place without the matching of horoscopes; that is, if there is no harmony in their horoscopes.

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7. Tara Ali Baig Opt. Cit. p. 14
8. The Illustrated Weekly of India February 2, 1958
9. David and Vera Mace Opt. Cit. P. 130

HOW THE MATCHING PROCESS IS CARRIED OUT

Care is always taken to record the precise hour of birth when the marriage is considered, the animals which in Zodiac symbolism represent their dates of birth are considered together to determine whether they are compatible. The tiger or serpent for instance would be likely to devour the sheep or dog so that a combination of this kind should be avoided.

The relation of birth dates to the so-called five elements like metal, wood, water, fire, and earth may also be determined. Certain combinations of these elements are propitious, others unpropitious. This system has another advantage. If the marriage does not turn out satisfactorily the family need not loose face. Obviously the astrologer must have been careless or inefficient in his matching of the horoscopes.

"Assets like wealth, standing in the community, cultural and educational attainments, rank, business and professional prestige are also given much importance".[10] For the purpose of marriage, spontaneous love is unreliable.

David and Vera Mace who wrote on 'Marriage East and West' tell their research proved that "---young people especially ladies, have nothing to do with the business of being married. Their parents will see to it. They have

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10. Times of India and The Hindu

(Indian Horoscope Paper 1957)

merely to wait for their orders. If they do not do so, but rush to marriage on the impulse of their own desire or preferences, they transgress the rules of Heaven and violate the laws of their lot".[11]

Eastern marriage is hedged about with many regulations concerning what is right and proper, and what is not in the relative status of the partners. How can inexperienced young people understand all these matters is the attitude of the parents. "The Eastern view is that romance is such an untrustworthy factor in choosing a marriage partner that it is best to eliminate it completely. This lies behind the wide-spread custom of not permitting the young people to meet until they come together on their wedding day", say David and Vera Mace. The first part of this comment is misleading, but the latter part is the general practice in India. In the West you fall in love, then marry. In the East we marry then fall in love. An Asian remarked that when marriage begins in the West, the fire is roaring and the kettle is boiling. From that time on the water gradually gets colder and colder. When the Eastern marriages begin the fire is low and the kettle is cold. But as time goes on the fire burns brighter, and water gets hotter, and the couple feel their marriage is getting better every day. Both these comments take the extreme view and it does not

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11. David and Vera Mace Opt. Cit. P. 118

necessarily be that one is better than the other or one custom should be despised at the cost of the other.

One important advantage of arranged marriage is that the Indian girl or boy need not experience uncertainty (other things being equal) because she does not have to choose. She has only to give the love of her full heart unhesitantly and completely to the one chosen for her. She is brought up to believe that she will inevitably develop love for any man who is kind to her and that the way to make him kind is to give him unstinted devotion and adoration.

In the West today they allow them to project the idealized image upon a number of persons, one after another, searching for the one who comes nearest to identification with the ideal. But these experiences can be disturbing and confusing and there is always the question: - how many possible candidates should be passed under review before a choice is finally made? Moreover, when the chosen partner is settled upon there may be painful awareness that he lacks qualities that have been encountered and enjoyed in others who were rejected.

Which of these two approaches to marriage is most likely to lead to a successful union? That is a question not easily answered.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

A sample group of 48 male Indian students was chosen from the 93 Indian students currently attending Michigan State University. The writer was personally acquainted with most of these students, and knew their cultural, social, economic and geographic background. The school, or department of study was also known, and the sample group was selected so that it would be representative for these factors. Only six of the 93 students were women and were purposely not selected.

The 48 students were divided into three equal groups. Sixteen students who had been in this country less than a year composed one group. Their stay ranged from one month to eleven months. The second group had been here over a year, that is between one and two years. The third group had been here over two years.

Out of the total of 48 interviews, 12 were married. The ages of the entire number range from 20 to 33 years.

The interview time spent varied from person to person, due to the language difficulties, and cultural influence against free expression on topics like sex and marriage. Interviews lasted at least an hour and some took almost two hours.

The interrogations were left open because of the possibility of receiving more accurate information. These thirty questions are listed in Appendix-A. For analysis they were categorized into four areas:

1/ The student's opinion about the Western courtship system.

2/ Their frank opinion and criticism of the arranged marriage custom practiced in India.

3/ Suggestions, if any, toward modification of this traditional practice.

4/ Personal opinion as to whether the Western culture has had any influence at all on the Indian marriage system.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The first group (1-month to 11-months stay) answered in the following fashion:

Question 1 - Do you think courtship is essential?
Nine out of sixteen answered 'no', three answered 'yes', and the remaining four did not commit themselves to either group.

Question 2 - Would you like the parents to arrange marriage for you?
Twelve answered 'yes', three responded 'no', and the last one had no opinion.

Question 3 - Would you suggest the need of a courtship in India?
Nine out of sixteen again answered 'no', four answered 'yes' with the additional remark that courtship should not be carried to extremes, as it is practiced in the United States.

Question 4 - Has Western culture influenced the Indian marriage custom?
Out of sixteen questioned, nine answered 'negatively', two answered 'affirmatively'. Six of them were of the opinion that only very limited influence has taken place so far.

Tables I, II, III show the responses and the percentage to the four questions described above.

TABLE I

ATTITUDE OF THE FIRST GROUP

(Period of stay less than a year)

	Question Number	Yes	Non-Committed	No
Do you think courtship is essential?	1	3 18.7%	4 25%	9 56.4%
Would you like the parents to arrange marriage for you?	2	12 75%	1 6.25%	3 18.7%
Would you suggest the need of a courtship in India?	3	4 25%	3 18.7%	9 75%
Has Western culture influenced Indian marriage custom?	4	2 12.5%	6 37.5	9 75%

TABLE I

ATTITUDE OF THE FIRST GROUP

(Period of stay less than a year)

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TABLE II

ATTITUDE OF SECOND GROUP

(Period of stay one to two years)

	Question Number	Yes	Non-committed	No
Do you think courtship is essential?	1	10 62.5%	3 19%	3 19%
Would you like the parents to arrange marriage for you?	2	4 25%	2 12.5%	10 62.5%
Would you suggest the need of a courtship in India?	3	11 69%	2 12.5%	3 19%
Has Western culture influenced Indian marriage custom?	4	10 62.5%	4 25%	2 12.5%

TABLE III

ATTITUDE OF THE THIRD GROUP

(Period of stay two years and above)

	Question Number	Yes	Non-Committed	No
Do you think courtship is essential?	1	11 69%	3 19%	2 12.5%
Would you like the parents to arrange marriage for you?	2	4 25%	2 12.5%	10 62.5%
Would you suggest the need of a courtship in India?	3	13 81%	2 12.5%	1 .06%
Has Western culture influenced Indian marriage custom?	4	13 81%	2 12.5%	1 .06%

The response of the first group to the first question is only 19% 'yes'; while it is 69% 'yes' from those who had been here over two years. Hence it was apparent that this difference was statistically significant. The standard error of two proportions is .134, and the standard score 3.7 which, when compared to the normal distribution has a .005 probability of occurring by chance. Therefore, it is concluded that this difference could not be the result of chance or factors in sampling variability.

The response of the same two groups to the second question falls respectively as 75% 'yes' (by those who had been here under one year); and 25% 'yes' (by those who had been here two years and above). The standard error of the difference between the proportions is .0666, and the standard score is 3.6; which is more statisically significant than the differences in question number-1.

It can be seen by inspection that the difference between proportions answering 'yes' by the two groups, for questions 3 and 4 would necessarily be significant because the difference is greater than in question-2, and the numbers are the same.

Therefore it can be stated that significantly more students who have been in this country over two years answer 'yes' to questions 3 and 4 than do students just arriving. That is, they see a need for courtship for better marital

adjustment, and final Western culture influenced the Indian marriage custom.

Examining the negative answers of tables 1 and 3 one can conclude that these differences are also statistically significant.

Study of table 2, containing responses of students living in America between one and two years, reveals that it is not much different than table 3, although the difference between table 1 and table 2 is not quite as great as between table 1 and 3. This suggests that the predominant change in attitude occurs after being in this country one year, but continues to increase slighly during the next year of stay.

It will be noted from the above data that the Indian students studying in the United States are influenced by Western customs in regard to marriage. The extent to which they are influenced is directly related to the extent of time they have spent in this country. Those students who have lived here two years or more look at the American marriage customs more favorably than those who have lived here for a year or less. Their responses also are greatly influenced by their family background, the extent to which they have "socialized" themselves in the United States, their future plans in regard to marriage, their returning home, and when.

Significantly, it was also noted that their responses greatly depended upon the extent of time they were aware of the American marriage system, and how much they knew about it. For example: one married student interviewed had, at the time of this study, been in the States for less than a year. When asked if he knew what the American courtship was he answered negatively. However, when asked if in his opinion this courtship was necessary, again he said 'no'. In his opinion the Indian system of arranged marriage is good because the parents "who have lived their lives" are the better judges than their children who have none or little experience. However, at the same time he suggested that it was better for a person to know a mate before marriage which, in his opinion, "would make life better and more understanding".

In contrast to the above student, a single student who had been in the United States for two years did not approve of the parents taking the entire responsibility of selecting a mate. This student plans to return to India and get married there. He is fully aware of, and has considerable knowledge of, the American courtship system. He approved of the courtship before marriage to the extent of getting to know each other and finding out each others likes and dislikes. He did not approve of the "unlimited" courtship as he understood existed in the United States.

It was also significant to note that even those who favored courtship and free selection of mate insisted on final

approval of parents. Few of them advocated "chaperoned dating system". Aside from the above findings, it was interesting to note that these responses of the students varied according to their educational background prior to coming to the United States, their age and place of living, whether he came from a large Indian city or a small village. It was found that those who had lived in a large city most of their life and were young in age (under 25 years) were more in favor of revised marriage system somewhat similar to the American system, at least to the extent of consulting the boy or the girl prior to arranging their marriage, than those who came from smaller towns or villages. This was noted in the case of those who favored a revised marriage system even though they had been in the United States for less than a year. This would then suggest that the extent of Western influence is not only dependent on the duration of their stay in the United States but also on the extent to which they have been exposed to Western culture, thought, and study, prior to their coming to the United States. In other words, those who have already been influenced by Western culture are more susceptible to change than those who have had no impact of Western culture.

For clarity and better understanding a typical interview is presented here. The interviewee had been in this country over one year and has had a fair knowledge of court-

ship system in Western culture. His answers were unbiased, clear, and suggestive. Having come from an educated upper class family, this individual was exposed to Western culture even while in India. His background led him to see the healthy side of a courtship system and also a critical examination of Eastern as well as Western practice.

A TYPICAL INTERVIEW

1. Mr. J.; 24, Administration
2. One year and eleven months.
3. I am not married.
4. My plan is to get married upon my return to India.
5. This question does not apply to unmarried people.
6. I do not approve of the parents taking the entire responsibility of selecting the bride.
7. Courtship is to find out the prospective husband or wife.
8. In India, usually the parents select the boy or the girl.
9. It (courtship) is essential.
10. Those who are in favor need not answer this question.
11. I would suggest that the courtship should be only to the extent to get to know each other, their likes and dislikes, their temperament and amenability.
12. Yes, it is necessary for the boy and the girl to know each other before marriage.

13. For a successful marriage it is healthy (good) that the boy and the girl know each other before marriage. Traditional system is that the boy and the girl are taught to adjust to each other after the marriage. This adjustment is a part of the marriage.

14. Majority of all parents do consult their children at least theoretically while some do not; depending upon the amount of education, Westernization, etc.

15. Children would surely like to give their opinion. How far their opinion is worth depends upon his score in the family, such as education, job, etc.etc.

16. The boys have more voice while arranging the marriage compared with girls.

17. Both should have equal rights as far as marriage is concerned.

18. Courtship is necessary in India but not the way it is practised in United States.

19. A modified or a limited courtship would be commendable.

20. In some schools and colleges there is co-education.

21. Co-education is essential for better understanding of the sexes and later adjustment.

22. Co-education has influenced a good deal in the sense that the boy and the girl realize the necessity of knowing each other before the marriage.

23. As for socializing most of the young folks are shy, especially the girls. But they do like the idea of socializing.

24. Socializing has definitely influenced our youth.

25. Parents look for family background, caste, education, dowry, virginity, etc.

26. Dowry did play a major role in the past.

27. Dowry system is dying out gradually. The reasons are: social, reform, education, broader outlook, etc.

28. Western courtship system or custom with some modification should be introduced in India.

29. Western culture has definitely influenced Indian marriage custom.

The above interview gives us a glimpse of modern trend of thought, ideas and dreams of the educated, westernized youths of India in respect to arranged marriages, which is their traditional custom practised even today.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Formal and informal contact with Indian students would lead one to suspect that their attitude toward Western system of marriage is gradually being internalized by the students living in this country.

It was, therefore, assumed that American education created negative attitude on the part of the Indian youth toward the system of arranged marriages.

Forty-eight male students were interviewed from India with an open ended question schedule containing thirty items. Some questions were repetition of the same idea, in order to draw more clearcut answers. These questions were condensed for analysis into four broader questions. The subjects were chosen so that 16 had been in the United States under one year, 16 between 1 and 2 years, and the last group of 16, longer than 2 years.

A statistically significant difference was found in the attitudes of courtship and marriage between male Indian students having been here less than a year and those being here more than 2 years.

Therefore, from the above evidence it would seem that the longer an Indian student is subjected to Western culture, and influence, the more likely is he to adopt Western attitudes toward courtship.

Seemingly, it becomes apparent from the interviews that those Indian students who had had most contact with Western culture and influence even before coming to the United States, such as students from Bombay and Calcutta, were more likely to be influenced, and to be influenced earlier, to adopt Western attitudes toward courtship than other Indian students.

It seems that these students being away from their own culture and parental influence, which would hinder their adoption of Western cultural attitudes, accelerates their adoption of Western attitudes.

It is of interest to note that there was a unanimously affirmative response to the idea that both men and women should have equal voice as far as the marriage question is concerned. At present, in India, the boys have the upper hand compared with girls.

One area for further study which would be needed to determine the extent to which the cultural ideas have changed would be to study the Indian students returning to India and their subsequent behavior concerning courtship and marriage.

Another interesting finding was the reasons given for courtship by those students now favoring it. The majority of students felt that courtship was necessary in order to

develop a common ground of understanding between the boy and girl which would have a positive affect on the later marriage.

The introduction of Western culture of marriage into a society still tied to the traditional customs has every possibility of creating maladjustment and chaos in the family and society. This would be an ever increasing problem area where social workers of India, in the near future, will have to spend much of their time and energy.

It is worthwhile mentioning that this new information will be of great help while practicing social work in India.

APPENDIX

QUESTIONS USED AS BASIS FOR INTERVIEW TO DISCOVER THE ATTITUDE OF INDIAN STUDENTS TOWARD ARRANGED MARRIAGE

1. Name, age, major?
2. How long have you been in this country?
3. Are you married?
4. If married, did you get married in India or in the states?
5. Was your marriage arranged by parents?
6. If single, would you like your parents to arrange marriage for you?
7. What is the function of courtship in the Western culture?
8. Who finds the prospective husband or wife in India?
9. Do you think courtship is essential? (Personal opinion)
10. If not in favor, what is the substitute you suggest?
11. If yes, would you suggest any modification or would you accept the system as it is?
12. Is it necessary for the boy or girl to know each other before marriage?
13. If 'yes', why? If 'no', why?

PART-B

14. Do the parents consult their children before arranging marriage?
15. Do the children like to give their opinion? If 'yes' how much is their opinion worth?

16. Who has more voice, boy or girl?

17. What is your opinion? Should the boy or the girl have more voice while the marriage is being arranged?

18. Considering this aspect of the problem, would you suggest the need of a courtship before marriage in India?

19. Can you suggest any other means by which the opinion of the boy and the girl can be counted?

20. Do you have co-education in your school and college?

21. What is your opinion? Whether you should have co-education in our schools and colleges or not?

22. How has co-education influenced the youths in their thinking about marriage and their role in marriage?

23. Do the younger people get a chance to socialise in Universities and Colleges?

24. How do the young people react to socialising?

25. Do you think socialising has influenced the thinking of our youth and future parents to be?

26. What do the parents look for while arranging the marriage?

27. Did 'dowry' play a major role in the past?

28. Is 'dowry system' dying out in your opinion? If 'yes' what factors are responsible?

29. What can you suggest as an alternative for courtship?

30. Has Western culture influenced the Indian marriage system?

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