Research Article

Sacred Bonds Beyond Beliefs: Interfaith and Traditional Marriage Rituals and Rites in Hinduism Religion

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Abstract. This study explores Hindu marriage history, system, ritual, rite, type, and interfaith marriage in Hinduism and various castes, and the Bollywood movie industry in India, focusing on the sacred bonds formed beyond religious beliefs. It tries to clarify how Hindu marriage rituals are components of various religions and traditional customs among castes, encouraging inclusivity and peace. This paper uses descriptive qualitative methodology through the analysis of past scholars' papers, chanting mantras, and the last 120 years of the Indian census for the women and male ratio per thousand. Hinduism embraces diversity and adapts to accommodate various religious and cultural backgrounds, allowing couples to celebrate their love while honoring their respective traditions. Especially in Bollywood, where interfaith marriage is common. The last 10 decades have seen a decrease in the number of women, but according to the 2021 Indian Census, the women's ratio has increased over the last 12 decades. The situation will increase the number of interfaith couples, and interfaith marriage rituals in Hinduism will serve as a bridge between different faiths, promoting unity and understanding among diverse communities.

Keywords: Interfaith, Rituals, Hinduism marriage, population, Bollywood.

INTRODUCTION

Hinduism is the spiritual doctrine of the Indian subcontinent (Lepineux and Rose 2010; Upadhyaya 2017; Rigopoulos 2018). What is called Hinduism in the conventional sense is basically *Sanatan* Dharma (Lopresti 2007; Paranjape 2009). Hinduism has no specific beginning or single originator. Hinduism is the integrated form of the thoughts of sages over the ages about life, the world, and the creator of the world. Their thoughts were first expressed in the form of the Vedas, and later Hinduism developed on the basis of these Vedas. So another name for this religion is Vedic religion (Marbaniang 2015; Knott 2016). Hindus believe that the essence of *Sanatan Dharma* began at the beginning of human creation and will last until the end of it. This religion is based on the belief in a sovereign God and the three truths of creation, stability, and order in this world. Hindus generally believe in reincarnation (Bryce 2007; Gupta et al. 2015). According to them, every living being is in the process of birth, death, and rebirth (Aramesh 2019). Man is able to attain moksha by shedding his sins through rebirth (Gandhi 2017). This belief is the basic foundation of Hinduism. Originally, the journey of Hindus to India began in the 1500s BC (Thapar 1996). Aryans from Central South Asia first settled on the banks of the river 'Indus' (Akbar 2015; Avari 2016). As they pronounced 'S' as 'H', 'Sindhu' is pronounced Hindu

(Pandey 1993). The Aryans who settled on both sides of this river or in the province of *Saptasindhu* (*Haptahindu*) are called Hindus (Savarkar 2016). Hindus do not have any specific scriptures; however, the *Vedas, Puranas*, and *Gita* contain extensive religious discussions, so these are called their religious texts (Holdrege 2012; Pathak 2019). Besides, the *Upanishads* are also valued as religious texts (Wilke 2020; Rehman et al. 2023). But the *Upanishads* are not independent texts; it is the title of a Veda. *Vishnu*'s last incarnation is *Rama* (Krishna 2010). *Rama*'s wife, *Sita*, is an incarnation of *Lakshmi* (Khan 2016; Jacob 2018). The *Ramayana*, which contains the story of *Rama-Sita*, is considered a sacred book by Hindus. But it is generally said that their scriptures are three: the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Puranas* (Mishra and Shrivastava 2021, Islam 2023). Besides these, they have several other scriptures: the *Srimadbhagavadgita*, the *Ramayana*, and the *Mahabharata* (Jha 2019; Lolla 2021; Palai and Mishra 2022). Hindus offer worship to numerous deities and temples. *Brahma, Vishnu*, and *Mahadeva* rank very highly among Hindu gods (Gupta and Kumar 2007). Among them, *Brahma* is usually celebrated as the creator, *Vishnu* as the preserver, and *Mahadeva* as the destroyer (Nair and Chandran 2017). These three are the main deities of Hinduism. But *Shiva, Krishna, Durga, Ganesha, Kartika, Vishwakarma, Saraswati, Kali,* and *Lakshmi* are the names of each of their deities. Hinduism, the oldest of the religions, has many characteristics. Among other national or tribal religions such as Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism, which originated in India, the uniqueness of Hinduism is due to its own characteristics and distinctive methodology. For example, monotheism, monism, polytheism, incarnationism, karmaism, reincarnationism, casteism, Salvationism, optimists, and special forms of God. In fact, Hinduism is one of the oldest and most traditional religions in the world and has many unique features. Absolute tolerance is the main characteristic of this religion. In this religion, there are various worship systems according to the person's condition, quality, nature, and spiritual power. According to *Ramakrishna*, There are many ways. Man can attain moksha in various ways through his own efforts. In Hinduism, everyone is advised to give up self-indulgence and petty interests and do their duty as civil servants of society. In this way, Hinduism has completed the overall arrangement of making its followers embody their own characteristics. Several studies have been done on this issue (Table 1).

Table. 1. Available studies on Hinduism interfaith and traditional marriage rituals and rites.

Aspect	References
The complex dynamics surrounding interfaith marriage in Lombok. The clash between religious and legal perspectives, shedding light on how various authorities influence.	Nasir (2020)
Mitigating interfaith marriage conflicts among Hindu families in Ngis Hamlet, Indonesia. They propose using a *Swadharma Grahasta* Dormitory to provide assistance.	Sauardana et al. (2021)

The experiences of adult children born to interfaith parents in Chennai, their sense of self-awareness and identity formation, and the challenges they encounter due to their mixed religious backgrounds.	Mines and Priyanka (1998)
The intersection of marriage and family counseling with Hinduism and Hindu beliefs, values, and practices influences the approach to counseling within the context of marital and familial issues.	Madathik and Sandhu (2007)
The incorporation of local wisdom within the context of Hindu Tamil ethnic wedding traditions in Medan, cultural values, practices, and beliefs specific to the local community shape and influence the wedding ceremonies.	Manugeren et al. (2017)
The intersection of same-sex marriage and Hindu traditions the complexities of reconciling contemporary concerns with traditional Hindu beliefs and practices related to marriage	Vanita (2004)
Marriage *pada gelahang* within the Balinese Hindu community. The debates and disagreements surrounding this specific marriage practice in the context of Karangasem Regency.	Artha et al. (2018)
The impact of the Hindu Succession Act on marriage, family dynamics, and property rights in India. This landmark legislation redefined inheritance and property distribution among Hindu families, particularly addressing gender-based inequalities.	Majumdar (2010)
the discriminatory practices and challenges faced by Hindu individuals in relation to marriage laws	Zahur (2014)
The traditional marriage customs of the Hindu community in British Guiana. The rituals, practices, and cultural traditions that shape Hindu weddings within this diasporic context.	Smith and Jayawardena (1958)
A comparative analysis of weddings in Indian and North American cultures.	Buckley (2006)

It deals with Hindu marriage history, system, ritual, rite, type, and interfaith marriage in Hinduism and various castes, as well as the Bollywood movie industry in India. Traditional Hindu marriage and interfaith marriage in Hinduism, which any author has never written about before with this much information. This paper has identified problems, causes, and women's ratios through the past 120 years of Indian censure, and it provides concept results about the future situation in interfaith marriage.

METHODOLOGY

This study makes use of a qualitative research design in order to investigate the traditional and interfaith marriage rites and rituals that are practiced within the

Hindu religion. It is planned to carry out observations of Hindu wedding ceremonies, both traditional and interfaith, in order to record the rituals, symbolism, and interactions that take place throughout these weddings. A comprehensive set of field notes will be taken in order to record the order in which events occurred and the significance of particular rituals. For the purpose of gaining an understanding of the doctrinal foundation of Hindu marriage rites and their adaptations in interfaith contexts, a number of Hindu religious scriptures, including the *Vedas*, *Smritis*, and *Dharmashastras*, as well as contemporary legal and sociological writings, will be taken into consideration and evaluated. A graph chart has been done for Indian males and females' status for knowing the exact demographical conditions.

History of Marriage in Hinduism

In Hindu society, there is a custom of judging the *Koshti* (fortune) of the bride and groom. Even if the bride and groom do not have objections in any other matter, the marriage does not proceed further if the parties do not agree in the court proceedings. Due to environmental influences, there was a custom of marrying off children by judging *koshti* (fortune) in Muslim society. In Hindu society, the pre-marriage ceremony of finalize is called blessing. If the bride and groom like each other, gold rings or money are arranged (Khatun et al. 2022). With a new party, a new ledger, and a new pen in the presence of the priest, the officials of both parties finalize the marriage. It is called *Patipatra* or *Mangalacharan*. It would mention the date and time of marriage and the debt. The day before the wedding is called *Adhivas* (Kanrar 2018).

On that day, the bride and groom have to perform puja, and at midnight, they have to wear new clothes and jewelry and eat food with five curries. The same arrangements are made on the day of residence in both the homes of the bride and groom. The date of marriage is usually fixed by looking at the auspicious calendar and judging the birth horoscopes of the bride and groom (Kanni 2016; Achri 2020). On the wedding day, the bride and groom are bathed with *Gila*, Sandalwood, raw milk, *Ghee*, honey, and pond water. Both the bride and groom have to fast until the marriage ceremony is completed. In most cases, *kanyadan* (Handover bride to groom) is done after midnight (Myrvold 2004). On the day after the wedding, there are many ceremonies. On the day of the marriage, the priest recites the mantra to both of them, and on that day various ceremonies continue as per the custom. Notable among them is the ring hide-and-seek game played by cutting a small pond and floating rose petals in it with water or milk. The next day is followed by the consumption of food cooked by the wife, commonly known as *baubhat* (launch at the groom's house). As child marriage was prevalent, another ritual called remarriage was prevalent in Hindu society (Gupta 2014; Rawat and Kumar 2015). If the bride did not menstruate before marriage, then remarriage takes place after the first menstruation after marriage (Sharma 2014). In marriage, the wife is accepted as an *Ardhangini* (half of the groom's full body), but it is rare for a wife to get the status of an *Ardhangini* (Rights) in married life.

Hindu Marriage System

Marriage is one of the rites of life in Hinduism. Marriage is given the greatest importance in defiling the period between birth and death. Marriage in Hinduism is considered a religious obligation, and there is a system of religious ancestors helping in procreation (Manugeren et al. 2017; McDaniel 2017). Hindu religious marriage customs have been going on since ancient times. A Hindu wedding is concluded with a series of rituals. With the consent of the bride and groom, the guardians determine the auspicious day on the calendar based on each other's preferences. In the case of marriage, the auspicious day refers to the day on which the marriage is mentioned in the calendar. Getting engaged to the bride by the groom entails fixing the wedding day. And getting engaged means starting the marriage ceremony. Party papers are signed at the engagement ceremony. This paper is written by priests in the presence of both parties. The signatures of the bride and groom must be down on paper. There is then no opportunity for either party to object. Usually the party is done in *Ashirbad Asar* (Best wishing). Its main ingredients are paddy, *durva* (Grass), lamp, sandalwood, betel nut, and big fish. According to the calendar, the auspicious day is blessed. The bridegroom blesses the bride, and the bridegroom blesses the groom. Many people also give gifts as blessings. For the married lives of the bride and groom to be happy, that is the prayer that is said in the blessing ceremony. After the blessing comes the ceremony of wearing turmeric. There is also a date for the ceremony in yellow. Here too, seeing the auspicious day, there is a yellow quota for yellow on the face. 5 or 7 Samba women are together in yellow coats, and this turmeric is then applied to the body on the day of turmeric. After the yellow color, this is the wedding ceremony. In a two-part ceremony, one is a *Saaz* (fixed time at night) wedding and the other is a *Basi* (Next morning) wedding. Both ceremonies are held at the bride's house. But sometimes stale marriages are also held at the groom's house. Grooming is the main phase of marriage. The bride and groom are welcomed by circumambulating seven times (Alavijeh 2013; Choudhury 2020).

At the end of the ceremony, the bride and groom give auspicious glances to each other, and at the same time, garlands are exchanged. After chanting the mantra, the priest joins the right hands of the bride and groom together with *Kush*. Then the stale wedding episode after worshipping various gods and goddesses, the bridegroom puts vermilion on the bride's forehead (Ota et al. 2020). Then both of them circumambulated the fire god seven times. This is how the formalities of the marriage ceremony ended. Though there are regional variations in the Hindu wedding ceremony, the basic thing is that the bridegroom and the daughter have to recite four or seven verses from the specific seventy-two marriage verses of the *Vedas* and *Puranas* in a special *vibahamandapa* (Wedding hall) priest organized at the house of the bridegroom and the daughter. Then the Brahmin priest officiating the marriage sits in front of the burning fire and chants. Seven time spins are the main ceremony of Hindu wedding ceremonies, with fire as a witness. All the *slokas* recited at the wedding require the groom to take a vow to accept the newlywed with the true dignity of his wife. On the other hand, the daughter as a wife is united with her husband's feelings and prays for God's mercy, expressing her determination to enter into a new

life with due respect to all of her husband's family. With a fire as a witness and a conch sounding, vermilion marks are painted on the foreheads of the husband and wife. Everyone present wished the newlywed couple a long and happy married life by showering flowers on them. Finally, there is food. Following are the rules of marriage in Hinduism:

- Patipatra: It is the first rite of Bengali Hindu marriage. This ritual is also known as time paper or *Mangalacharana*. Partition is the ceremony that takes place to finalize the dowry and other debts in cash or jewelry in the case of the dissolution of marriage through consanguinity. It is through this ritual that the other rituals of marriage begin.
- Pankhil: It is the second rite of Bengali Hindu marriage. It is celebrated right after *Pati Patra*. *Panakhil* means the formal skilling of betel leaves or tying with straw. This ritual is first performed at the groom's house and later at the bride's house. In the *Pankhil* rite, the girls of the house and the neighbors sing wedding songs. The theme of this song is the marriage of *Ram* and *Sita*.
- Dadhi Mangal: Fasting of the bridegroom and daughter on the wedding day But fasting is not waterless. There is provision for drinking sweet water. So the bridegroom and daughter are fed *chira* (Poha) and yoghurt before sunrise for the whole day.
- Gaye Halud: In Sanskrit, this ritual is called *Gatraharida*. Few things are considered auspicious in Hinduism. Like conch sound, yellow, etc. First, the bride and groom are smeared with turmeric. Later, that yellow girl was sent home. The daughter is smeared with that turmeric.
- Shankha Kankan: A conch is worn by the girl. Then in the afternoon, the main ceremony of the wedding begins.
- Welcoming the Bridegroom: When the bridegroom comes to marry, he is welcomed by the bridegroom. Generally, the daughter's mother welcomes her son-in-law on a plate with a lamp, rice, grass, and some other wedding items. The groom is then taken inside the house and given milk and sweets.
- Sat Pak: The groom is first brought to the wedding hall. Then the daughter was brought in, sitting on the straw. Generally, the daughter's married friends hold the straw. *Kanya* (the bride) covers her face with betel leaves. *Satpak* (Seven time spins) is rotated around the bridegroom with the daughter in the straw.
- Shubhadristi: Groom and daughter look at each other in public at the wedding hall.
- Garland Exchange: The bride and groom exchange garlands. This custom means that the two accept each other as spouses. According to Muslims, in the same way, the daughter has to say "*Qabul*". Again, this is exactly how the bridegroom and the bride consent to the marriage in front of the Father of the Church, according to Christianity.
- Gifting: The daughter's father gives the daughter to the son-in-law in the *Veda* mantra. The groom also said that he took on the responsibility of maintaining the daughter. The marriage mantra is :
  Ẏēdētāt ridōẏaṁ tābō tadastu ridōẏaṁ māma
  Iẏādidaṁ ridōẏaṁ mamō, tadāstu ridōẏaṁ tābō

- Anjali: Daughter and groom give fried rice *Agnahuti*. In conventional Bengali, it is called *Khai Pora* (Fried rice). In the Vedic period, people worshipped various forms of energy. Agni is one of them.
- Donation of vermilion: The last ritual of marriage is that the groom applies vermilion to the forehead of the daughter.

Bengali Hindu women wear vermilion to wish for the well-being of their husbands. Bengali marriage refers to the unique marriage customs and traditions of Bengali Hindus living in the Indian states of West Bengal and *Tripura* and the state of *Bangladesh*. Marriage in the upper caste Hindu society mainly observes two ritual categories: *Vedic* and *Laukik*. The mundane rituals are known as wife rites." Among Vedic rites, however, the rituals to be observed are *Kushandika, Lajhom, Saptapadi Gaman, Panikkham, Dhrithihom,* and *Chaturthi Homa*. In the past, child marriage was widespread in Bengali Hindu society. Currently, child marriage is legally prohibited. At present, marriage is customary at a mature age. However, gambling is still very common in marriage. Divorce became legal in Bengali society in 1855 AD. In 1856, the Widow Marriage Act was passed (Malik 2013).

In civil society, unmarried marriages are also common today. A daughter is given in marriage. That means the husband takes on all his responsibilities. So there is no divorce according to religion. However, divorce became legal in 1855 AD, which required recourse to the courts to enforce it. Because separation is possible only where the contract is executed. So in Hindu law, the wife can enjoy all the rights of her husband throughout her life. A husband's everything belongs to his wife (Khatun and Islam 2024). All family decisions are made jointly by husband and wife. A wife is called a true *Ardhangini* because she is as important as a husband in every aspect of his life, according to Hindu law. A husband cannot perform a yajna or any religious function without the presence of his wife. Apart from this, it is seen in Hindu history alone that many great kings took decisions from their wives to manage the kingdom. There are five branches in Bengali society: *Rhari, Varendra, Vedic, Saptashati,* and Middle Class. The Bengali *Kayastha* society has four branches: Northern *Rhari, Dakshin Rhari, Barendra,* and *Bangaj*. Hindus have caste instead of tribe. These, again, have many branches and sub-branches. Call it Hindu caste or call it Adivasi, their characteristic is intermarriage. That means no one can marry outside their own nation. If you want to get married, you have to get married within your caste or tribe. But he cannot freely marry any girl within the caste or tribe. A feature of clans or groups is illegitimacy. Caste is the form of intermarriage in Hindu society.

Yet no man can freely marry any woman within his own race. Castes are often divided into branches and sub-branches, and these branches again determine the boundaries of marriage. The Brahmins of North India are divided into eight branches: *Panchagauda, Panchadrabira, Sarshata, Pushkaron, Srimali, Chanyati, Shakadvipi,* and *Udichya*. A man and woman of one branch do not marry a man and woman of another branch. In many cases, the marriage groups have been narrowed further by dividing the branches into sub-branches. Among the Brahmins of North India, the *Chanyati* branch is divided into six sub-branches: *Saraswat, Gurjargarh, Khandelbal, Dadhich, Shikwal,* and *Parikh*. Similarly, the Brahmins of Bangladesh are mainly divided into three classes: *Rahri, Barendra,* and *Vedic* (Biswas 1947). The Vedic's are

again divided into two categories: Western and Deccan (Gommans 1998). There are also *Shakldwipi* Brahmins in Bangladesh (Ghosh et al. 2011). Among the Kayasthas of Bangladesh, there are three classes: *Rhari, Barendra*, and *Bangaj* (Bhaumik 2022). The Rharis are divided into two classes: the northern Rharis and the southern Rharis. Various branches and sub-branches are seen among the lower castes of Bangladesh. Bagdis are divided into nine branches: *Tentulia, Kasaikupia, Dulia, Ojha, Mechua, Gulimari, Dandamazhi, Kusmetia, Mantrametia*, and *Matia*. All these branches function as intermarriage groups. Within each branch, there are many sub-branches. They are external groups. Among the *Bauris*, there are also nine branches: *Mallabhumiya, Shikaria, Gobriya, Panchkoti, Moola, Dhulia, Maya, Jhatiya, Kathuria*, and *Pathuria*. Brahmins of Tamil Nadu Divided on the basis of religious communalism (Caplan 2008, Khatun et al. 2024). Ayaras belong to Shaivism, and Iyengars belong to Vishnu. Each of these serves as an intermarriage group.

Hindu Marriage Auspicious and Auspicious Daughter Selection

In the case of marriage, there is much discussion and criticism regarding Hindus fixing the auspicious time of marriage and selecting the auspicious daughter. Again, there are some rules mentioned in this religion. As-

A. Marriage is fixed: Marriage can take place at any time according to the *Ashvarayana Grihya Sutra*. Again, the *Baudhayana Dharmasutra* says that it is preferable for marriage to take place during the periods of *Rohini, Mrigasrisha, Uttarfalguni,* and *Sbhathi Nakshatra* (Stellar).

B. Madhyag Preran: The *Sankhayana Sutra* says that the marriage must be done with the help of *Madhyaga* (*didhi*). The *Madhyaga* will go to the girl's house with fruits, flowers, and a pot of water and greet the girl's father. They will touch a pot full of fruits, flowers, chaff, barley, gold, etc., and chant a special mantra of the Rigveda. Then the *Kulguru* of the girl's family chants the Veda mantra and stops the pot on the girl's forehead. Then the proposed marriage is fixed.

C. Determination of Kanya's qualities: Most of the *Grahasutras* have provided for the examination of *Kanya's* qualities. Eight lumps of clay of different qualities will be placed in front of the daughter, and she will be asked to pick up any lump. In a land that produces crops twice a year, the soil collected from the land is indicative of an adequate food supply. Coins collected from Goshalas are indicative of purification. The soil collected from the altar is an indication of religious devotion. The soil collected from the water of the pond, which never dries up, is indicative of fertility and prosperity. Soil collected from gambling dens is representative. The soil collected from *Chaumatha Mor* (Zero Point) is indicative of instability. Soil collected from barren land is indicative of poverty, and soil collected from cremation grounds is indicative of widowhood. An additional soil is mentioned in the *Govil Dharmasutra*. Again, only four soil parts are mentioned in the *Aposa* pillars. They are soil taken from *Bedi, Goshala*, fertile land, and crematoriums, respectively.

Marriage Ceremonies and Hindu Marriage Norms

After the auspicious day of marriage and the selection of the daughter's auspicious time, the marriage ceremony begins according to the rules of Hinduism. Bride and groom both circumambulate the Yajnagni three times and say, 'You are me; I am you; you are heaven; I am earth; I am Sam; you are Rik; let us marry and produce children. After each circumambulation, the bride will stand on the stone, and the groom will say, 'Step on this stone; be firm as a rock. In *Lajhome*, the bride's brother or any other concubine is now attending the wedding of the bridegroom and will provide ghee and later fried rice. The mantra will be recited three times, and the hair on the bride's head, which had been tied up until now by two bullocks' wool, will now be parted, and the *Rigveda* mantra will be chanted at once, saying, 'I have henceforth freed it from the hands of the god *Varuna*. This means the separation of the daughter from the paternal family. The groom leads the bride seven steps to the northeast and chants at each step. In *Madhuparka*, The bridegroom will adorn the bride's body with honey flowers and chant mantras from the Rigveda. This event is omitted in the *Ashvalayana Grihyasutra*, but both *Parasara* and *Govil* have it arranged to be done. After the *Madhu* Park ceremony, *Boudhayan* arranged the water intake ceremony. In this ceremony, the groom will place his right hand on the bride's chest and say, 'May your heart be my heart; May your mind be my mind; May you follow my command with one heart; may you follow me and my companions. Before the journey to the husband's home, the bride will bathe herself and sit in front of the Yajnagni, and the priest will offer prayers to the gods. On reaching *Swamigriha* (the groom's house), both the husband and wife will sit on the bull skin placed to the west of the Yajnagni and offer sacrifices in Yajnami. For three consecutive nights, both husband and wife will take refuge in Sake and abstain from sexual intercourse.

After three days have passed, they will have sex. The *Baudhayanasutra* says that on the first day they will remain silent until the evening, then break the silence and bring the husband and wife out of the house and show *Anuradha Nakshatra* in the sky. Because *Anuradha* is a symbol of chastity and determination, he will ask the wife to be as determined and personable as *Anuradha* throughout her life. Other *Sutrakars* arrange this ceremony before intercourse on the fourth day. This is where the *Vedic* wedding ceremony ends. The ideals in Hinduism's marriage norms are that marriage will be consummated only by the recitation of mantras, the performance of Yajna, and the *Saptapadi-Gamandwara* (On way). All, irrespective of caste, must marry to produce sons. The daughter should be given in marriage if she is menstruating before being married; the marriage will take place within the standard caste marriage, and the prostitute must follow all the rules of chastity. In marriage, a woman must follow all the rules of chastity and remain fertile. After the death of the husband, the widow has to practice celibacy by abstaining from all the blessings, and adultery is considered adultery, and the adulterer has to get punished for it.

Types of Marriage in Hinduism

Regarding the types of marriage in Hinduism, eight types of marriage are mentioned in the *Yajnabalkya* and *Manusmriti*: *Brahma, Daiva, Arya, Prajapatya, Asura, Gandharva, Rakshasa*, and *Paischash*, respectively (Nayak 2013; Khatun and

Islam 2023). *Brahmo* marriage is the virgins themselves invite a man with knowledge of scripture and character, give a proper reception, cover the girl with fine clothes, and adorn him with ornaments. In *Prajapatya* marriage, when a daughter is presented to a man through various ornaments with the blessing, May you two live a happy domestic life (Kuper 1957). In Aryan marriage, a daughter is given to a man with a cow, a bull, or two cows or two bulls from the man. If the person who performs the yajna is given a daughter by the organizer of the yajna during the divine marriage party ceremony, it is a divine marriage. In this marriage, the priest of the Yajna is given a daughter during the performance of the Yajna. If the daughter could not be found for a long time, she was given to the *ritvik* of the father's sacrifice. The practice of this method is not only seen in Bangladesh but also in India. In *Asurik* marriage, a daughter marries her father and other elders by giving her father and other elders the satisfaction of receiving a pot. It can be seen in the case of this marriage that many times, if a man is attracted to a young woman, with the help of money, he forgets the young woman's family and aspires to get that young woman. This type of marriage is not socially acceptable. When spouses are bound to each other out of affection for each other, it is a *Gandharva* marriage. This marriage takes place on the wish of *Maithoon* (the couple) without waiting for the permission of the parents and guardians. Such marriages are compared to love marriages. In this marriage, they secretly press and take each other's water.

Here, the parents perform the marriage of their own free will without the parents' permission. Sometimes a Brahmin voluntarily calls Agni to witness the marriage. Because this marriage is done against the parents' wishes, the family or relatives do not have any responsibility for this marriage. The marriage of *Ganga* and *Shantanu* in the *Mahabharata* was a *Gandharva* marriage (Sriniwass 2014; Kapoor 2016). If a man takes the woman to seclusion and has forced sexual intercourse, it is a *Paishach* marriage. This marriage is a replica of rape. The man has sex with the woman by drugging her into unconsciousness. Later, when the woman finds out that she has no other option, she is forced to marry the man. One of the reasons for allowing this marriage in ancient times was the agreement between the ruling class and the priestly class.

However, there is no such type of marriage in current Hindu society. Forcible abduction of a daughter in marriage is called *Rakshasa* marriage. In this type of marriage, the girl is not like her parents, but she is forcibly kidnapped and taken away. Later, forced marriages were performed by Brahmins. Ancient princes were powerful enough to marry demons. Priests who maintained good relations with the princes also supported this marriage. In ancient times, *Kshatriya* kings used to marry many women in this way. However, this marriage does not work in today's society. Of the eight types of marriages mentioned, the first four, *Brahma*, *Prajapatya*, *Arya*, and *Deiva* mantras, are performed by chanting. However, currently, Bengali marriage is referred to as butterfly marriage. The Bengalis living in *Bangladesh*, West *Bengal*, and *Tripura* perform marriage rituals in this manner and on the basis of various secular rituals. However, since marriage is a match of mind, the couple is bound by the chanting of *mantracharana* (Recite).

Polygamy in Hinduism

Polygamy was also quite widespread in the *Mahabharata* period. Many heroes of the *Mahabharata* had multiple wives. Like *Yatiti* married *Sharmishta* and *Devyani*, *Dushmanta* married *Shakuntala* and *Lakshmana*, *Shantanu* married *Ambika* and *Ambalika*, *Dhritarashtra* married *Gandhari* and *Vaishya*, *Pandu* married *Kunti* and *Madri*, and *Bhima* married *Hidimba* despite the existence of *Draupadi* as consorts, and *Arjun* married *Ulupi*, *Chitrangada*, and *Subhadra* (Anandaradya 2020; Bhardwaj and Chauhan 2020; Jupriono 2021; Vemsani 2021). King *Brihadratha* of *Magadha* also married *Kashiraja*'s twin daughters. In the *Mahabharata*, it is mentioned in one place that *Krishna* had 1,016 wives, and in another place mentioned *Krishna* had 16,000 wives and King *Soma* had a hundred wives (Austin 2010). There is only one instance of polygamy in the *Mahabharata*. *Draupadi's* marriage to the *Pandava* brothers is not the only instance of polygamy. In the past, *Gautama Bangshya* had seven marriages. Again, in the name of Barley, we have seen that all the brothers had joint sexual rights over the thing married by the eldest brother. The marriage of 16 daughters of *Daksharaja*, according to the *Srimad Bhagavat Gita*, Happened in different traditions. Thirteen girls were married to Dharma, one to Agni, one to the combined patriarchs, and the girl named Sati was married to Shiva.

Producing Children

In the solitude of the *Shatasringa* Mountain, Pandu ordered *Kunti*, "Try to procreate by intercourse with others, for it is said in the scriptures that a woman can procreate with her husband if necessary." *Dharma* was invoked to produce children in *Kunti's* womb (Homburg et al. 2018). *Kunti's* intercourse with *Dharma* gave birth to *Yudhisthira* (Dharma 2020). Later, as per *Pandu's* wish, *Kunti* called *Vayu* and *Indra* and gave birth to *Bhima* and *Arjuna*. *Pandu's* wife, *Madri*, also was intercourse with *Ashwinikumar* and gave birth to two sons, *Nakula* and *Sahadeva*.

Hindu Tribal Marriages

At present, *Asur* marriage is widely practiced among the lower castes and tribal in Hindu society. The customs observed by *Megasthenes*, the Greek ambassador in the court of *Maurya* emperor *Chandragupta*, in *Taxila*. He said, "Bara can't give away daughters for poverty. They will take the young daughters on foot, play drums, and gather the crowd." When someone from the crowd comes forward to be married, the girl is completely uncovered and allowed to observe him. First, he examines the back of the daughter, then her front. If he likes the girl, he takes her with suitable goods and lives with her as husband and wife. When an upper-caste man married a lower-caste girl, such a marriage was called *annuloma* (Morganatic) marriage. And where an upper caste girl was married to a lower-caste man, it was called a *Pratiloma* (Morganatic) marriage. Morganatic marriage was legal, but reverse marriage was condemned. Despite such exceptions, the golden marriage was the legal marriage for the nation.

Inter-Faith Marriage in Hinduism

Consanguineous marriages were considered illegal until the "Prevention of Disqualification in Hindu Marriage" Act was enacted in 1946. Such marriages are called adultery in the Scriptures. But in 1955, consanguineous marriages were declared illegal under the Hindu Marriage Act.

Matriarchal and Patriarchal Marriage

South India has many castes and tribes in which matriarchal or matriarchal families are predominant. Among such castes are the *Nair* and *Tiyan* castes of the *Malabar* Coast and the *Banat* and many *Tulu*-speaking castes of *Karnataka*. The family in *Tamil Nadu* is predominantly matriarchal and patriarchal (Mukund 1999). In the southern region of *Tamil Nadu*, there are a few cases in which both classes of families are found. Matriarchal families are extremely rare in North India. The *Khasia* and *Garo* families of Assam are the only exceptions in this regard. Among the tribal, a clan consists of a few families. Again, a tribe is made up of several groups. Hindus have caste instead of tribe. These, again, have many branches and sub-branches. Whether they are caste Hindus or not, their characteristic is intermarriage. That is, no one can marry outside his caste or tribe. If you want to get married, you have to get married within your tribe. But he cannot freely marry any girl within the caste or tribe. A feature of clans or groups is polygamy. That means if a boy from a clan wants to marry, he has to marry a girl from another clan and not his own clan. So the point is that if one wants to marry, he has to marry within his own nation, but not within his own clan, but into another clan.

Clan Marriage

Among some branches of the Gold castes of *Madhya Pradesh*, illegitimate groups are called '*Vangsa*'. A clan is characterized by the number of gods and goddesses it worships. If the number of gods and goddesses of two clans is equal, then there is no marriage between them. A 'clan' that worships seven gods and goddesses, their children must marry into clans worshipping seven different numbers of gods and goddesses. In many cases, polygamous groups are also identified on a village or regional basis. There is a rule among the *Munda* race of *Chhota Nagpur* that no one can marry in his own village. A similar rule exists among the *Khanda* of *Orissa*. Among the *Khanda*, illegitimate groups are called '*Gochis*'. Village name, which serves as a group identifier. They believe that all men and women of the same clan are descended from the same ancestor. Because of this, the same blood flows between them. Many ethnic groups in *Nagaland* also have such village-based exogamous groups. They are called 'games' there. One cannot marry within one's own game. Marriage in one's own village is prohibited, even among the *Kolijatis* of *Baroda*. Even among the Hindus of *Baroda*, the practice of extra-marital marriage is practiced in some villages. *Rajputs* and *Lewa Kunbis* never marry in their own villages. The opposite practice is seen among the *Tamil* Brahmins of South India.

There, until some time ago, no one could marry in any other village except his own village. Hindus have caste instead of tribe. These, again, have many branches and sub-branches. Call it Hindu caste their characteristic is intermarriage. That means

one cannot marry outside one's tribe. If you want to get married, you have to get married within your caste or tribe. But he cannot freely marry any girl within the caste. A characteristic of groups is polygamy. That means if a boy of a clan wants to marry, he has to marry a girl of another clan, not his own clan. So the point is that if someone wants to marry, he has to marry within his own nation, but not in his own clan, but in some other clan.

Kaulinya Rite Marriage

High-caste Hindus everywhere abstain from *sapinda*. *Sapinda* refers to seven men in the paternal family and five men in the maternal family. Mathematical analysis shows that in order to follow this rule, one has to avoid marriage with countless potential acquaintances. For this reason, the current suspension rule has been shortened to three men. Until recently, there was another barrier to free marriage in Hindu society aside from caste rules. *Kaulinya* practices were particularly prevalent in *Bangladesh* and *Mithila*. *Kaulinya* practice is seen in some places in tribal society. In this practice, illegitimate groups are established based on differences in status. According to this custom, the upper-caste girls are to be married into the *Kulni* (highly regarded) clan. It becomes very difficult to get a husband for a girl's marriage in a society where the *Kaulinya* system is prevalent. Many times, noble daughters were not married until old age. For this reason, in some places in caste-corrupted society, it was common to have a baby girl. Elite Brahmins in some countries, like *Bangladesh*, avoided strict caste laws by practicing widespread polygamy. In some cases, *Kaulinya* status was preserved by marrying a noble daughter to a noble elder. *Dakshinashtrhri* Among the elite *Kayasthas*, the bride for the son's marriage has to be selected from the other two elite branches of the same stage.

Desirable Marriage

In Hindu society, the age of the bride is usually younger than that of the groom. But in West and South India, this rule is not always observed. It is because of the practice of 'preferred' marriage that it is often seen that the 'preferred bride' is much older than the groom. In such cases, in order to remove the outstanding fault due to the difference in age, the number of coconuts is tied around the waists of the boy and the girl at the time of marriage according to the age difference. The practice of avoiding marriage is not strictly observed in South India. Because in South India, many castes have to marry cousins, in many places, uncle-niece marriages also take place. This is the 'preferred' marriage there, though not compulsory. The practice of marrying cousins was, however, also prevalent in the *Mahabharata* period. The marriages of *Subhadra* with *Arjuna, Bhadra* with *Shishupal*, and *Parikshit* with *Iravati* are mentionable. There are at least 31 castes in the southern Marathas who marry maternal cousins (Kuiper 2010). Among the tribal too, such consensual marriages are practiced here. Among the *Goves, Baigas*, and *Asharias* of *Madhya Pradesh*, there is a practice of marrying paternal (Cousin) sisters, where such marriages are called "*duh lotana*". The *Bhutias* of *Sikkim* marry into matrilineal families, but they never marry paternal cousins (Bhasin 2007). Among the *Ho* and the *Santals*, there is a characteristic rule of marriage between paternal and maternal siblings. Among them,

the uncle's daughter cannot be married as long as the maternal uncle is alive. Similarly, a paternal sister cannot be married as long as the aunt is alive.

In South India, however, there are many tribes where matrilineal marriage is preferred. Among the *Chenchus* of *Mahbubnagar*, *Andhra Pradesh*, it is customary to marry a cousin, or paternal cousins. The *Baigara* of *Mandala* and *Balaghat* regions only marry second cousins, not maternal cousins. Among the *Murias*, it is customary to marry both paternal and maternal cousins. Among the *Palians* of *Madura*, marriage is with a maternal sister, never with a paternal sister. But among the *Kadars* of *Cochin*, there is also a practice of intermarriage with the paternal sister. Such marriage is the only custom in the *Mudbons* of *Tribanker*. Among the *Malpulayans* and *Malvedans* of *Tribankar*, there is such a marriage custom. The *Ulurans* of *Trivankshara* only marry paternal sisters, but the *Malkurubans* do not marry paternal sisters. The practice of polygamy among the *Todas* is fraternal. That means more than one brother marries one woman. Many times, the brothers become gang brothers instead of comrades. Among the *Todas*, the paternity of a child is determined by a ceremony called '*Pitritto Purusut Pumi'*. During the 7th month of the wife's pregnancy, one of the husbands performs this ceremony with *Dhanurbana*, and he is known as the father of the child. Unless another husband is performing a similar ceremony, the performing husband is regarded as the father of the child in society. In cases where the husbands do not all live together or live in different villages, the wife takes turns living with each husband for one month.

Brotherhood and Not, Brother-In-Law and Sister-In-Law Welcome Marriage

Among the Toads in South India and among the *Khash* race in North India Polygamy can be of two types: Such marriages where the husbands are all brothers are called fraternal polygamous marriages. Where the husbands are not all brothers, it is called non-fraternal polygamy. The type of polygamous marriage prevalent among the tribes of North Bharat and among the *Todas* in South India is fraternal. Again, among the *Nairs* of *Malabar* and among the *Tibetans* in the north, the classes of polygamous marriages prevalent are fraternal and non-fraternal. In all these cases, the paternity of the child is determined by a social ceremony. Also, in many schools, there is a custom of marrying the bride by the bridegroom. Such a marriage is called *Devaran*. Similarly, where a wife's sisters are married, it is called *Shalivaran* (welcoming sister-in-law).

Arrival of the Dravidian Race, Manu's Decree and Marriage to *Bhabi*

Among the alien races, the Dravidians were the first to settle in India, followed much later by the Aryans. The Aryans came and settled in the *Panchanada* valley and later spread to the *Ganges*, *Yamuna*, and *Samswati* valleys. It was they who introduced *Vedic* culture in India and created color ashram religion and casteism (Jayapalan 2001, Khatun et al. 2024). The Dravidian race is now concentrated in South India, and the Mongolic race lives on the northeastern frontier (Ali 2019; Malhotra and Vasulu 2019). In the last one hundred and twenty years, the number of women has started to decrease gradually compared (Table 2), (Fig 1) to men.

Table.2. Female number decreased and increased status through Indian census

No	Source	Year	Fixed Male	Female	Decreased	Increased	Status
1	Census	1901	1000	972	-	-	Starting
2	Census	1911	1000	964	8	-	Down
3	Census	1921	1000	955	9	-	Down
4	Census	1931	1000	950	5	-	Down
5	Census	1941	1000	945	5	-	Down
6	Census	1951	1000	946	-	1	Up
7	Census	1961	1000	941	5	-	Down
8	Census	1971	1000	930	11	-	Down
9	Census	1981	1000	934	-	4	Up
10	Census	1991	1000	927	7	-	Down
11	Census	2001	1000	933	-	6	Up
12	Census	2011	1000	943	-	11	Up
13	Census	2021	1000	1020	-	77	Record up

Fig.1. women decreased increased ratio opposite per thousand male in India.
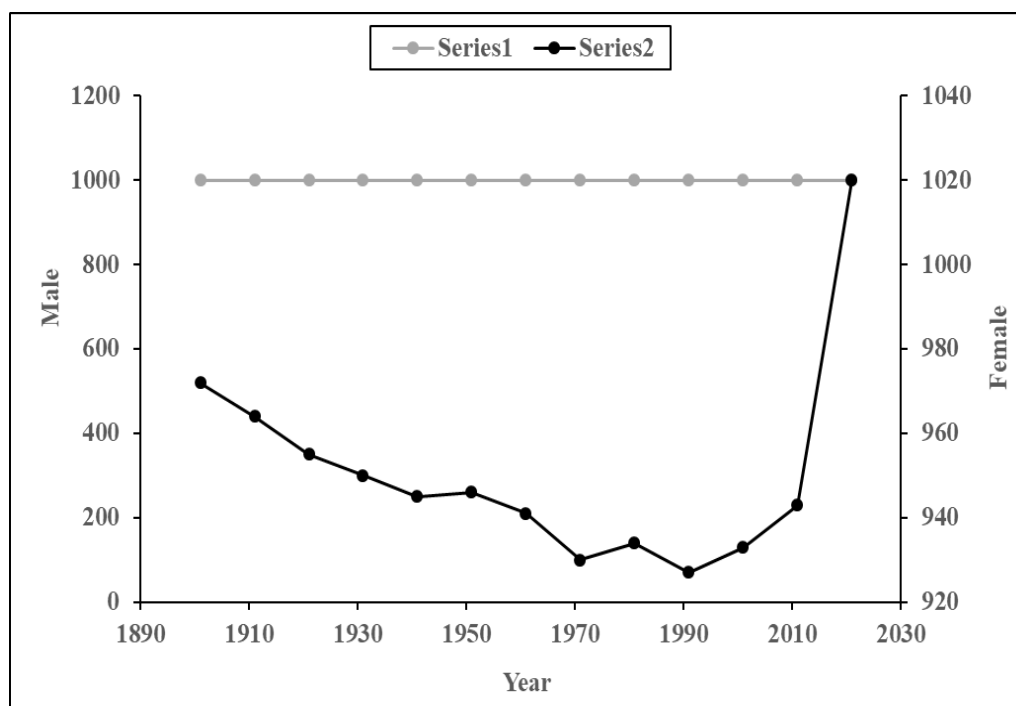
However, in some states like *Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan,* and *Tripura,* the number of women is gradually increasing. Aboriginal people have more females than males. *Manu*'s rule was that a girl should be eight and a boy should be twenty-four for marriage (Sharma 2014). According to the age of marriage, girls are also divided into five categories. First *Nagnika,* when she is naked; second *Gauri,* when the girl is

eight years old; third *Rohini*, a girl of nine years; fourth *Kanya*, a girl of ten years; and fifth *Rajaswala*, a girl above ten years of age. In 1981 AD, The number of fertile properties per 1000 was 169, compared to 170 in 1971. Such couples numbered 161 in villages and 171 in towns. A hymn in the *Dasammandal* of the *Rigveda* suggests that after the death of the elder brother, his widow lived with *Devar* (her brother-in-law) as his wife. There the widow was told, 'Arise, live with the god who holds your hand as his wife'. Similar words are echoed in a hymn of the *Atharvaveda*. When the Aryans came to this country, they brought with them very few girls. There was also a shortage of girls among them. After coming to this country, they used to hate the people of this country. In order to preserve the purity of the blood, in the beginning they did not establish any marriage relations with the inhabitants of this country. Later, however, they were forced to marry local girls. But in later times, due to the lack of marriageable girls among them, only the eldest brother used to marry, and the other brothers used to marry the bride.

Uncle-Niece Marriage

Uncle-niece marriage is also common among Tamil Brahmins in South India (Wilson 2013). So consanguineous laws regarding marriage are not strictly observed in South India. However, marriage with brothers or father's daughters does not take place in any place in Hindu society. At present, *Debron* sister-in-law marriage is not common among the upper castes in the Hindu society of *Bangladesh*, but it is common in the *Bauri, Bagdi,* and *Santal* societies. The lower castes of *Orissa* also follow this practice.

Marriage to Flowers and *Mahua* Trees

There is a deep-rooted belief among the *Kontajati* that if an unmarried man marries a widow, he must become a ghost after death. Therefore, before marrying a widow, the unmarried *Konta* youth first alternately marries a flower. Among the *Halangai* castes, such alternative marriages are with a vermilion-stained sword or part of iron. In *Bangladesh*, even among the *Bagdi* caste, an unmarried youth first performs an alternative marriage with a *mahua* tree before marrying. Among the *Kharwar* castes, such alternative marriages are not only performed by men but also by widows. In this case, such a marriage is consummated with a mango tree. But among the *Kurmis* of *Chotanagpur*, men and widows have to marry different trees. Among them, usually the widow is married to the *mahua* tree, and the man is married to the tree. Among the *Kurmids*, such marriages are marked by an excess of formal pomp. In this case, the widow wears a garland made of *mahua* leaves in her right hand and circumambulates the *mahua* tree seven times. His right hand or ear is tied to the *mahua* tree, and he is made to chew the leaves of the *mahua* tree. In the case of men, the mango tree has to be circumambulated nine times. Similar customs and ceremonies are prevalent among the *Mahili* castes.

Marriage Chosen by the Husband

Polygamy is also practiced to a limited extent among the *Lepchas* in India's Northeast Frontier region. There are some variations in custom among them; usually,

when a man is unable to do the farming work alone or he has to be busy with other work, he invites an unmarried young man from his neighbors to work in his field and be his partner in marriage. No ceremony is required in this case. This second husband is never his own. Individuals cannot marry because of In this case, the prevailing custom is that the wife will share the bed with each husband on alternate nights. However, whichever husband the child is born to, the child will be known as the offspring of the first husband. Only if the first husband goes abroad for a long period of time or if it is impossible for him to produce children, is the second husband considered the father of the child. And existence have *santal*, mixed, and *oraw* marriages.

Interfaith Marriages in Bollywood Film Industry in India

Although inter-faith marriages do not exist in Hinduism, they are observed in the Indian film industry today. Those who think that marriage is a social norm of two men and women going to the office and signing a paper, Religion is not a problem. Followers of two different religions can practice their respective religions and marry each other (Khatun et al. 2024). The most interesting thing is that they think it is not right to make this simple thing difficult. So boys and girls of any religion can marry without leaving their religion. Their children will have no religious identity. Children can choose religion when they grow up, and if there are no male children, girls will get full rights to wealth. As seen in the Indian film industry. Following are the names of some movie stars who have interfaith marriages:

A. Aamir Khan: He is called Mr. Perfectionist of Bollywood. He is the son of a Muslim family of religious faith. The 51-year-old popular actor first dated a Hindu professional artist named *Reena Dutt* in 1986. After divorcing his first wife, he married his recent ex-wife, *Kiran Rao*, in 2005. They practiced their respective religions after their marriage.

B. Shahrukh Khan: In the Bollywood world, he is known as 'King Khan' or 'King of Romance'. He also became a Muslim and married a Punjabi girl named *Gauri Shibar* on October 25, 1991. From that year in 1991 until today, they have spent their married and family lives following their respective religions.

C. Irfan Khan: Irfan Khan is known as a versatile actor. Despite being the son of a Muslim family, he married his classmate *Sutpa* in 1995 out of love. They are also managing their families based on the customs of their respective religions.

But socially, as Hinduism does not allow marriage, many actors have converted to Islam. After that, he leads his life by performing marriage. Here are the names and identities of some of them:

A. Dharmendra-Hema Malini: *Dharmendra-Hema Malini* is the most successful Bollywood star duo of the 1970s. *Hema* was born into a *Hindu Tamil* family. The lover, *Dharmendra*, was also a Hindu. But their relationship could not take the form of marriage. Because *Dharmendra* was married. His first wife was *Prakash Kar*. According to Hindu scriptures, a husband cannot marry a second wife while the first wife is alive. And there was only one way open to them for marriage, and that was conversion. Both of them converted to Islam and got married. On August 21, 1979, *Hema Malini* and *Dharmendra* got married according to Islam. After

marriage, *Hema*'s name was changed to *Ayesha*, and *Dharmendra*'s name was changed to *Delwar Khan*.

B. Mamata Kulkarni: *Mamata Kulkarni* was the heroine of several *Hindi* super hit films in the 1990s. In addition to acting, her beauty also shines. *Mamata Kulkarni* is suddenly gone from the screen. Later, it was found that in 2013, *Mamata* married a Muslim lover and converted to Islam. She is currently living in *Nairobi, Kenya*, with her husband.

C. Sharmila Tagore: Actress *Sharmila Tagore* is on the list of famous *Bollywood* actresses. The actress was awarded the *Padma Bhushan* in 2013 for her outstanding contribution to acting. This actress chose the path of changing religion to end her love relationship. He converted to Islam and married *Mansoor Ali Pataudi*. *Sharmila* has three children: *Saif Ali Khan, Soha Ali Khan*, and *Saba Ali Khan*. All of them are followers of Islam. After conversion, she was named *Ayesha*.

D. Ayesha Takia: Popular Bollywood actress *Ayesha Takia*. The actress was brought up in a different religion in her family. Her father was Hindu, and her mother was British Indian. Despite being a Hindu, *Ayesha Takia* has been in love with Muslim *Prefarhan Azmi* for a long time. Then the couple got married in 2009. *Ayesha* converted to Islam before marriage. Although he never revealed the matter of conversion. However, there is evidence of his conversion. They also have a son named *Mikail Azmi*.

It should be noted that no religion in the world approves of marrying a follower of another religion. This is an unusual situation. The only exception is Judaism. Jews marry their daughters into other religions but never allow their sons to do so. Because of their beliefs, children are influenced by their mothers' religion. Because of this, the Jewish Council strongly criticized the marriage of Bill Clinton's daughter to a Jewish boy. That is, their strategy is to encourage illegal association between all other religions while keeping their own caste.

CONCLUSION

The interfaith and traditional marriage rituals and rites in Hinduism beautifully exemplify the inclusive essence of this ancient religion, showcasing its remarkable capacity to nurture sacred connections that transcend religious boundaries. Hinduism deeply acknowledges the significance of love, commitment, and unity within the institution of marriage, regardless of the diverse religious affiliations of the individuals involved. These ceremonies blend elements from both religious traditions, symbolizing a profound sense of unity, respect, and acceptance between the individuals and their families. Through these inclusive practices, Hinduism showcases its remarkable ability to adapt and embrace diverse beliefs within the sacred bond of marriage. Furthermore, the study provides insights into the traditional marriage rituals observed in Hinduism, which are deeply steeped in symbolism, spirituality, and cultural traditions. These rituals carry profound significance as they symbolize the coming together of two individuals and their families while also seeking blessings from deities and ancestors. From the elaborate pre-wedding ceremonies to the sacred exchange of vows during the marriage

ceremony, each ritual beautifully exemplifies the cherished values and principles upheld in Hinduism.

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