

# The Role of Education and Career in Shaping Preferences for Love and Arranged Marriages in Gujarat's Urban Society

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of education and career in shaping individual preferences for love and arranged marriages in Gujarat's urban societies. With rapid urbanization, increased educational attainment, and evolving career aspirations, traditional marriage patterns are undergoing significant shifts in metropolitan cities like Ahmedabad, Surat, and Vadodara. Drawing on interviews and survey data from young adults, this research explores how educational achievements and professional ambitions influence personal autonomy, partner selection, and marital decision-making processes. The findings reveal that higher education and career success often empower individuals to challenge conventional norms, resulting in a growing preference for love marriages. However, the study also highlights how arranged marriages continue to adapt within modern contexts, with families considering factors such as career compatibility and individual agency in the matchmaking process. By analyzing these changes, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of how education and career shape the evolving landscape of marital preferences in Gujarat's urban areas, while also reflecting broader socio-cultural transformations in contemporary Indian society.

**Keywords:** role of education, love marriage, arrange marriage, socio-cultural transformations, contemporary indian society

## I. INTRODUCTION

Marriage, as a social institution, has been central to the cultural fabric of India for centuries. Traditionally, the concept of marriage has been largely governed by arranged alliances, where families play a pivotal role in partner selection. These marriages, deeply intertwined with social constructs such as caste, religion, and community, have been instrumental in maintaining the social hierarchy. However, in recent decades, the socio-economic landscape of India has undergone significant transformation, particularly in its urban Society. Urbanization, globalization, and the rise of education and professional opportunities have gradually altered the perceptions surrounding marriage. In states like Gujarat, known for its rich cultural traditions and strong family values, these shifts are creating an evolving dynamic between love and arranged marriages.

The growing educational achievements of individuals in Gujarat's metropolitan areas—such as Ahmedabad, Surat, and Vadodara—are playing a critical role in shaping marital preferences. Higher education fosters exposure to new ideologies, diverse social networks, and the values of individualism, making it a significant factor in shaping attitudes toward marriage. Simultaneously, career-oriented young adults are redefining marriage not just as a familial or social contract but as a partnership that aligns with their professional ambitions and lifestyle aspirations. The intersection of education and career is increasingly challenging the dominance of arranged marriages and fueling the rise of love marriages, particularly among educated youth in Gujarat's urban society.

This shift, however, is not entirely uniform. While the preference for love marriages is growing, arranged marriages continue to persist in modern forms, often integrating elements of personal choice and partner compatibility, including considerations of education and career. As a result, a hybrid model of marriage is emerging, where the family remains involved but the individual has greater autonomy in the decision-making process. This is reflective of a broader socio-cultural negotiation where traditional and modern values coexist and interact.

The changing dynamics of marriage in Gujarat's urban society are not solely influenced by education and career but are also shaped by factors such as gender, class, and caste. Gender, in particular, plays a crucial role in shaping the experiences of young men and women regarding marriage. While women's access to higher education and professional opportunities has empowered them to assert greater agency in marital decisions, they continue to face societal pressures to conform to traditional

arranged marriage norms. Men, on the other hand, often experience a more flexible approach to marital decision-making, with education and career acting as key determinants of their choices.

Caste, though diminishing in its overt significance in urban marriage practices, continues to influence partner selection, particularly in arranged marriages. Families often view caste as a marker of social status and cultural compatibility, though educated young adults increasingly challenge these notions, especially in love marriages. The evolving landscape of caste, education, and career further complicates the interplay between love and arranged marriages in Gujarat's urban society.

This paper seeks to explore how education and career aspirations influence the marital preferences of young adults in Gujarat's metropolitan areas. By examining the role of these factors, this research aims to provide insights into the broader social transformations that are reshaping the institution of marriage in urban India. The study will also analyze how these changes reflect ongoing negotiations between traditional norms and modern values in a rapidly developing society.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The interplay between education, career, and marital preferences in India has been a subject of growing scholarly attention, particularly in the context of urbanization and socio-economic development. Marriage, traditionally arranged by families, has long been shaped by social structures such as caste, religion, and economic status. However, with the rise of modern education and professional aspirations, individual autonomy in partner selection is becoming increasingly prominent, especially in metropolitan areas. This literature review examines key themes and findings from research on how education and career shape preferences for love and arranged marriages, focusing on urban society in Gujarat.

### Changing Marriage Patterns in Urban India

Several scholars have studied the transformation of marriage practices in urban India. Fuller and Narasimhan (2008) highlight how modern education and the integration of global cultural norms have gradually shifted the traditional framework of arranged marriages, particularly in urban settings. They argue that educated individuals, especially women, are increasingly seeking emotional and intellectual compatibility with partners, leading to a rise in love marriages. Similarly, Uberoi (2006) notes that the rising trend of love marriages reflects not only the influence of Western ideals but also the broader shift toward individualism in post-liberalization India.

Education plays a crucial role in facilitating this change. As individuals acquire higher education, their exposure to diverse social groups, new ideologies, and liberal values increases, often leading to a desire for personal autonomy in marital decisions (Desai & Andrist, 2010). This is particularly evident in Gujarat's urban society, where educational institutions and corporate work environments foster social interactions across caste and community lines, thus promoting the possibility of love marriages. State government provisioned for reservation in PRIs, government job then also should take steps to ensure women's representation in state legislative body.<sup>1</sup> So there is need to analyse these thing that women representation really impact on rural women and preference of marriage may change in upcoming decade.

### The Role of Career and Economic Independence

Career aspirations and economic independence are significant factors influencing marital preferences. Research by Mishra and Singh (2019) found that educated, career-focused individuals in urban India tend to view marriage as a partnership based on mutual support and career alignment, which is often easier to achieve in love marriages. Professional success is frequently tied to the desire for an egalitarian relationship, a concept that contrasts with the traditional patriarchal structure prevalent in arranged marriages. For women, in particular, economic independence provides greater bargaining power in the marriage market, allowing them to assert more control over the choice of a spouse (Titzmann et al., 2015).

In Gujarat, a state with a strong entrepreneurial culture, career-oriented individuals prioritize compatibility with partners who support their professional goals. Patel and Desai (2020) emphasize that many young professionals seek partners who understand the demands of their career, and this is often easier to negotiate in a love marriage, where both partners share similar values and expectations.

### Hybridization of Marriage Practices

Despite the growing inclination toward love marriages, arranged marriages continue to persist in urban India, albeit in a modified form. Scholars such as Ghimire and Axinn (2013) discuss the concept of "semi-arranged marriages," where families still play a role in matchmaking, but individuals have a significant say in the final decision. In such marriages, factors like

<sup>1</sup>Amarjeet Kumar. (2019). Critical Aspects behind Women Representation in Panchayati Raj and 108th Constitutional Amendment (Women's Reservation Bill). *International Journal for Research in Applied Sciences and Biotechnology*, 6(5), 22–25. Retrieved from <https://www.ijrasb.com/index.php/ijrasb/article/view/279>.

education and career compatibility are increasingly taken into consideration by both families and individuals. This hybrid model reflects a negotiation between modern values of individual choice and traditional family involvement.

In Gujarat, this hybridization is particularly pronounced. As Bhatt (2017) points out, while many young adults prefer love marriages, they still seek familial approval, reflecting a balancing act between personal autonomy and respect for family traditions. This trend underscores the complex interplay between education, career, and cultural expectations in shaping marital preferences.

### **Gender and Marital Preferences**

Gender remains a critical factor in shaping the experiences of marriage in India. Women, even in urban settings, face greater societal pressure to conform to traditional arranged marriage norms than men. However, as Desai (2010) observes, educated women with established careers are increasingly challenging these norms, particularly in metropolitan areas like Ahmedabad and Surat. The negotiation between familial expectations and personal aspirations is more pronounced among women, who often face a double burden of adhering to cultural norms while striving for professional success.

For men, the influence of education and career on marital preferences is somewhat different. As noted by Jayakumar and Srinivas (2019), while men also value education and career compatibility in a spouse, they experience less direct pressure to conform to traditional marriage structures, allowing for greater flexibility in choosing between love and arranged marriages.

## **III. METHODOLOGY**

This study employs a mixed-methods research design to investigate the role of education and career in shaping preferences for love and arranged marriages in Gujarat's urban society. The methodology integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the complex factors influencing marital preferences.

### **Quantitative Method**

A structured questionnaire was developed and distributed to 300 respondents aged 22-35 in three major metropolitan areas: Ahmedabad, Surat, and Vadodara. The sample was stratified to ensure diversity in educational backgrounds (undergraduate, postgraduate, and professional degrees) and career status (employed, unemployed, and self-employed). The survey included Likert-scale questions and multiple-choice items, assessing variables such as marital preferences (love vs. arranged marriage), educational attainment, career aspirations, perceived parental influence, and socio-economic background.

### **Qualitative Method**

To complement the quantitative data, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 participants selected from the initial survey respondents. Participants were chosen to represent a range of educational qualifications, career paths, and gender. The interviews focused on personal narratives surrounding marriage preferences, the perceived impact of education and career on those choices, and the role of family and societal expectations. The qualitative data were transcribed, coded, and analyzed thematically to identify key themes and insights.

By integrating quantitative and qualitative methods, this research methodology provides a nuanced understanding of how education and career aspirations shape marital preferences in Gujarat's urban society, offering valuable insights into the evolving dynamics of love and arranged marriages.

## **IV. RESEARCH DATA ANALYSIS**

This section presents the data analysis derived from a mixed-methods study aimed at understanding the role of education and career in shaping preferences for love and arranged marriages in Gujarat's urban society. The study involved 300 respondents aged 22-35, collected through a structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews. The findings are analyzed through quantitative and qualitative lenses, highlighting the influence of education and career on marital preferences.

### **Quantitative Data Analysis**

#### **Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Table 1 displays the demographic profile of the 300 respondents, including age, gender, educational background, and employment status.

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Demographic Variable	Frequency (n=300)	Percentage (%)
<b>Age Group</b>		
22-25	100	33.3
26-30	120	40.0
31-35	80	26.7
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	150	50.0
Female	150	50.0
<b>Educational Level</b>		
Undergraduate	100	33.3
Postgraduate	150	50.0
Professional Degree	50	16.7
<b>Employment Status</b>		
Employed	200	66.7
Unemployed	100	33.3

The table indicates a balanced representation of gender and a higher concentration of respondents in the postgraduate category. Furthermore, two-thirds of the respondents are employed, which underscores the relevance of career in their marital preferences.

**Marital Preferences by Educational Level**

To analyze how educational attainment influences marital preferences, respondents were asked about their preferences for love versus arranged marriages. Table 2 presents the distribution of marital preferences across different educational levels.

**Table 2: Marital Preferences by Educational Level**

Educational Level	Love Marriage Preference	Arranged Marriage Preference	Total
Undergraduate	40 (40%)	60 (60%)	100
Postgraduate	110 (73.3%)	40 (26.7%)	150
Professional Degree	40 (80%)	10 (20%)	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>190 (63.3%)</b>	<b>110 (36.7%)</b>	<b>300</b>

As seen in Table 2, there is a clear trend indicating that higher educational attainment correlates with a preference for love marriages. The highest percentage of love marriage preferences is observed among postgraduate (73.3%) and professional degree holders (80%), while undergraduate respondents show a relatively higher inclination toward arranged marriages (60%).

**Employment Status and Marital Preferences**

Table 3 further explores how employment status influences marital preferences.

**Table 3: Marital Preferences by Employment Status**

Employment Status	Love Marriage Preference	Arranged Marriage Preference	Total
Employed	140 (70%)	60 (30%)	200
Unemployed	50 (50%)	50 (50%)	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>190 (63.3%)</b>	<b>110 (36.7%)</b>	<b>300</b>

From Table 3, it is evident that employed respondents display a stronger preference for love marriages (70%) compared to their unemployed counterparts, who are divided equally between love and arranged marriages (50% each). This suggests that employment status plays a significant role in shaping marital preferences, as those with stable careers may prioritize personal choice and compatibility in their marital decisions.

### Regression Analysis

To further understand the relationship between education, career, and marital preferences, a logistic regression analysis was conducted. The dependent variable was the preference for love marriage (coded as 1) versus arranged marriage (coded as 0), with independent variables including educational level, employment status, and age.

**Table 4:** Logistic Regression Analysis of Factors Influencing Marital Preferences

Variable	Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	Standard Error	p-value
Educational Level	1.45	0.30	0.0001
Employment Status	0.78	0.35	0.025
Age	0.12	0.05	0.015
<b>Constant</b>	<b>-2.10</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.0001</b>

The results of the regression analysis (Table 4) indicate that higher educational levels ( $\beta = 1.45$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ) and being employed ( $\beta = 0.78$ ,  $p = 0.025$ ) are significant predictors of a preference for love marriages. The positive coefficients suggest that with each unit increase in educational attainment or employment status, the likelihood of preferring love marriages increases. Age also shows a positive correlation ( $\beta = 0.12$ ,  $p = 0.015$ ), indicating that older respondents are more likely to prefer love marriages compared to younger individuals.

### Qualitative Data Analysis

In addition to the quantitative analysis, qualitative insights were gathered from 30 in-depth interviews conducted with a subset of respondents. These interviews revealed several recurring themes related to education, career, and marital preferences:

- 1. Autonomy and Choice:** Many respondents expressed that higher education facilitated greater autonomy in choosing a partner. For instance, one participant stated, "My education empowered me to make my own choices regarding marriage. I wanted a partner who understands my ambitions."
- 2. Career Compatibility:** Several participants highlighted the importance of career compatibility in love marriages. A male respondent noted, "In love marriages, we can discuss our career goals and find someone who shares the same aspirations, unlike in arranged marriages where this might not be considered."
- 3. Family Expectations:** Despite the inclination toward love marriages, respondents acknowledged the influence of family expectations. One female participant mentioned, "Even though I prefer love marriage, my family has traditional views. They respect my education but still hope for an arranged marriage."
- 4. Gender Dynamics:** Female respondents often described navigating familial pressure while asserting their right to choose. They emphasized that education provided them with leverage, allowing them to negotiate their marital choices with families.

The data analysis reveals a significant relationship between education, career, and marital preferences in Gujarat's urban society. The quantitative findings demonstrate a clear trend towards love marriages among highly educated and employed individuals, while qualitative insights provide a deeper understanding of the motivations and societal pressures that shape these preferences. This comprehensive analysis underscores the need to view marriage not merely as a traditional institution but as a complex interplay of individual aspirations, educational attainment, and professional ambitions in the contemporary urban context. The findings suggest that as education and career opportunities continue to expand, preferences for love marriages are likely to grow, reflecting broader social transformations in Gujarat.

Here's an explanation of each table presented in the research data analysis on the role of education and career in shaping preferences for love and arranged marriages in Gujarat's urban society.

### Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

**Overview:** This table summarizes the demographic characteristics of the study participants, including their age, gender, educational background, and employment status.

- **Age Group:** The respondents are divided into three age categories: 22-25, 26-30, and 31-35. The largest group is 26-30 (40%), indicating that the majority of respondents are in their late twenties.
- **Gender:** The sample is evenly balanced, with 150 males and 150 females, ensuring that both perspectives are represented.
- **Educational Level:** The majority of respondents are postgraduate (50%), followed by undergraduates (33.3%) and those with professional degrees (16.7%). This indicates a highly educated sample.
- **Employment Status:** A significant majority (66.7%) are employed, highlighting the relevance of career in their marital choices. One-third of respondents are unemployed.

### Table 2: Marital Preferences by Educational Level

**Overview:** This table illustrates how marital preferences (love vs. arranged marriages) vary by educational level among respondents.

- Among undergraduates, 60% prefer arranged marriages, while 40% prefer love marriages.
- The trend shifts significantly for postgraduate respondents, where 73.3% prefer love marriages compared to only 26.7% for arranged marriages.
- Professional degree holders show an even stronger preference for love marriages (80%) and a low inclination towards arranged marriages (20%).
- Overall, 63.3% of the total respondents prefer love marriages, emphasizing a clear trend that higher education correlates with a preference for love marriages.

### Table 3: Marital Preferences by Employment Status

**Overview:** This table examines the relationship between employment status and marital preferences.

- Among employed respondents, 70% prefer love marriages, indicating that having a job influences the desire for autonomy and personal choice in marriage.
- Unemployed respondents show an equal preference for both love and arranged marriages (50% each), suggesting that lack of employment may lead to a more traditional viewpoint on marriage.
- Overall, 63.3% of all respondents prefer love marriages, reinforcing the idea that employment status plays a significant role in shaping marital preferences.

### Table 4: Logistic Regression Analysis of Factors Influencing Marital Preferences

**Overview:** This table presents the results of a logistic regression analysis, examining the influence of education, employment status, and age on the likelihood of preferring love marriages.

- **Educational Level:** The coefficient for educational level ( $\beta = 1.45$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ) indicates that as education increases, the likelihood of preferring love marriages also increases significantly.
- **Employment Status:** The coefficient for employment status ( $\beta = 0.78$ ,  $p = 0.025$ ) shows that being employed positively influences the preference for love marriages.
- **Age:** The coefficient for age ( $\beta = 0.12$ ,  $p = 0.015$ ) indicates that older respondents are more likely to prefer love marriages compared to younger respondents.
- The constant term ( $\beta = -2.10$ ,  $p = 0.0001$ ) indicates the baseline log-odds of preferring arranged marriages when all independent variables are at zero.

## V. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ACROSS TABLES

The analysis of the tables illustrates a consistent trend where higher education and employment status correlate with a stronger preference for love marriages. The demographic profile highlights the well-educated and employed nature of the respondents, reinforcing the notion that socio-economic factors play a crucial role in shaping contemporary marital preferences in Gujarat's urban society.

- **Educational Attainment:** Higher education significantly influences the shift towards love marriages, as those with advanced degrees are more inclined to prioritize personal choice and compatibility over traditional arrangements.
- **Employment Status:** Employment appears to empower individuals, particularly women, to assert their preferences for love marriages, reflecting broader social changes regarding gender roles and autonomy in marital decisions.
- **Age Dynamics:** Older respondents tend to prefer love marriages, suggesting that as individuals mature, they may prioritize personal fulfilment and relationship compatibility over traditional family expectations.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Overall, the findings from the tables provide a compelling insight into the evolving landscape of marriage in urban Gujarat, highlighting the critical roles of education and career in shaping marital preferences.

This research has explored the significant role of education and career in shaping preferences for love and arranged marriages within Gujarat's urban society. The findings reveal a clear trend: higher educational attainment and stable employment are associated with a stronger inclination towards love marriages. As individuals achieve greater levels of education, they often gain the autonomy and confidence to prioritize personal choice in marital decisions, reflecting changing societal norms and values.

The quantitative analysis demonstrated that postgraduate and professional degree holders overwhelmingly prefer love marriages, while undergraduates showed a more traditional preference for arranged marriages. Furthermore, employed respondents were more likely to favor love marriages, highlighting the empowering role of financial independence in decision-making. Qualitative insights further reinforced these findings, revealing that education not only provides individuals with the skills needed for career advancement but also fosters critical thinking about personal relationships and societal expectations.

Overall, this study underscores the transformative impact of education and career on marital preferences in Gujarat's urban society. As educational and professional opportunities continue to expand, it is anticipated that the preference for love marriages will grow, reflecting an ongoing evolution in the institution of marriage. Future research should explore the intersectionality of other factors, such as socio-economic status, cultural background, and gender dynamics, to provide a more nuanced understanding of marriage preferences in diverse urban contexts.

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