

Attitude Towards Marriage and Perceived Parenting Style among College-Going Students

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Objective. *The present study examined the prevalence, gender differences in attitudes towards marriage and their relationship with perceived parenting styles among college-going students.*

Background. *Today's culture has a wide range of marriage attitudes, depending on the person and their upbringing. The trend of opting to avoid partnerships altogether or to explore other kinds of relationships is growing. A parent's parenting style may greatly influence instilling these views in children and actively passing along values, ideas, and attitudes to them.*

Study design. *The present study is cross-sectional descriptive research and employed a survey method to collect data using a convenient sampling method from a metropolitan city, Bangalore, Karnataka, South India.*

Participants. *Indian sample: people (46,8% of male, 53,2% of female) from 17 to 28 years old, Mage = 20 years, a total of 267 college-going students participated in the study.*

Measurements. *English version of Perceived Parenting Style and Marriage Attitude Scale along with socio-demographic sheet was administered.*

Results. *A total of 14,2% of the students had a negative attitude towards marriage. The percentage of female students was higher than that of male students. Furthermore, gender differences were noticed in perceived parenting styles and attitudes towards marriage. A positive and significant relationship between parenting style and attitude towards marriage was observed ($p < 0,001$). For different parenting styles, only authoritarian parenting styles had a positive and significant relationship. Authoritative and permissive parenting styles did not show a significant relationship.*

Conclusions. *Since the prevalence rate of negative attitudes towards marriage was quite high among college-going students, universities can help develop communication and relationship-building skills through various activities. The solution also lies in assimilating the information to the parent community regarding the negative impact of authoritarian parenting style on children and their perspectives of the family system and society.*

Keywords: *attitudes toward marriage; perceived parenting style; students.*

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Отношение к браку и воспринимаемый стиль родительского воспитания у студентов колледжа

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Цель. Изучение отношения к браку и его взаимосвязи с воспринимаемым стилем воспитания и гендерными различиями студентов колледжа.

Контекст и актуальность. В современной культуре существует широкий спектр взглядов на брак, зависящих от человека и его воспитания. Усиливается тенденция избегания людьми партнерства или выбора других видов отношений. Стиль воспитания родителей может в значительной степени повлиять на формирование таких взглядов у детей путем передачи им ценностей, идей и установок.

Дизайн исследования. В работе изучались три различных аспекта: отношение студентов колледжа к браку, отношение к браку в зависимости от пола и взаимосвязь между отношением к браку и воспринимаемым стилем воспитания; использовался метод опроса. Исследование проводилось в мегаполисе Бангалор, штат Карнатака, Южная Индия.

Участники. 267 студентов колледжей (46,8% мужчин, 53,2% женщин) в возрасте от 17 до 28 лет, средний возраст — 20 лет.

Методы (инструменты). Опросники на английском языке «Воспринимаемый стиль воспитания» и «Шкала отношения к браку»; социально-демографическая анкета.

Результаты. В общей сложности 14,2% опрошенных студентов негативно относятся к браку. Среди студенток этот показатель был выше, чем среди студентов-юношей, что свидетельствует о гендерных различиях в восприятии стилей родительского воспитания и отношении к браку. Положительная и значимая связь между стилем воспитания родителей и отношением студентов к браку ($p < 0,001$) выявлена только для авторитарного стиля воспитания; авторитетный и попустительский стили воспитания не показали значимой взаимосвязи.

Выводы. Поскольку уровень распространенности негативного отношения к браку среди студентов колледжа довольно высок, университеты могут помочь развить навыки общения и построения отношений с помощью различных мероприятий. Решение проблемы также заключается в том, чтобы донести до родительского сообщества информацию о негативном влиянии авторитарного стиля воспитания на детей и их взгляды на общество.

Ключевые слова: отношение к браку; воспринимаемый стиль родительского воспитания; студенты.

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Introduction

Marriage is a deeply ingrained sociological tradition that unites two young adults, forging a family unit. In Indian culture, this union carries profound significance, earning them cultural, societal, and religious acceptance. When examining the phase of young adulthood, it becomes evident that it is a pivotal period for understanding their thoughts and emotions regarding marriage. This stage marks the beginning of individuals defining their concepts of relationships, matrimony, and family planning. It is a time characterised by substantial transformations in both their social and vocational lives, profoundly influencing their perspectives on love relationships and the institution of marriage [21].

As young adults, we experience both physical and emotional changes that shape our attitudes towards different aspects of life, including parental authority. During this time, we start to evaluate how suitable it is for our parents to assert their authority [4]. This evaluation is based on our perception of our parents' behaviour and attitudes towards us, which is referred to as perceived parenting style [5]. A person's parenting style is how they interact with their children, and it can have a significant impact on their children's social, emotional, and cognitive development [25]. A parent's parenting style is a crucial factor that influences their children's outlook on various areas of life, such as marriage. Understanding the impact of parenting styles can help parents and young adults build stronger and healthier relationships that foster personal growth and development [1; 8; 24]. The available evidence suggests that challenges faced by children often originate within the family unit. Given that children interact with their parents from birth, the influence of parents on their thoughts and emotions is pervasive [1]. Previous research has dem-

onstrated a correlation between adverse parenting methods and the manifestation of internalising and externalising difficulties in children [11].

According to a recent survey conducted in India, there is a noteworthy shift among young people towards a reduced interest in getting married. Specifically, in Jammu and Kashmir, a higher percentage of young men and women remained unmarried in 2019 compared to previous years, with the male population increasing by 25,1% [4]. While there may be various reasons for this shift, one critical factor that society cannot overlook is the influence of family dynamics and parental role models in shaping young people's perceptions of marriage [7; 18; 27]. Some survey findings assert that college students possess a predominantly negative attitude towards marriage, with the negative attitude significantly outweighing the positive attitude [7; 9; 18; 29]. Additionally, according to previous research conducted in Flanders, Belgium college-going students state that students hold a negative attitude towards marriage [9]. Previous research findings report that students from an authoritarian parenting style have a negative attitude towards marriage, which supports the theory explaining that students whose guardians mistreated them and who experienced greater parental persuasion express having less trust in their ability to sustain a long-term marriage and having a less favourable mindset towards marriage [10; 11].

Parenting has been significantly influenced by the typological method, which groups it into four types based on attentiveness and exigency [3]. Authoritative parents offer love, support, and clearly defined rules with consistent punishment. Authoritarian parenting lacks responsiveness but has strong exigency and often results in the use of aggressive control or harsh punishment to achieve conformity. Indulgent

parenting has a low level of exigency but an elevated amount of attentiveness, resulting in receptive parents who neglect to implement suitable sanctions. Neglectful parenting is characterised by a lack of attentiveness and exigency, resulting in self-centred parents who seldom engage in parenting activities [3; 12]. Darling and Baumrind define the four parenting styles as reflecting distinct patterns of parental practices, behaviours, and beliefs, with varying degrees of rigidity and receptivity. According to this viewpoint, various parenting styles can be classified into two parenting parameters: exigency and receptivity [3; 13].

In sociocultural theory, children learn and develop through social interactions with those who have more knowledge and experience. Parents' perceived style of parenting is critical in shaping a child's social interactions, which in turn significantly affects their attitude towards marriage. For instance, children growing up with authoritative parents who provide guidance and set appropriate boundaries while being responsive to their needs learn healthy communication, problem-solving, and conflict-resolution skills, leading them to develop positive attitudes towards marriage. Conversely, children who grow up with authoritarian, neglectful, or permissive parenting styles may not develop these skills, resulting in negative attitudes towards marriage [14; 18].

Family system theory underscores the critical role of attachment levels within families in shaping their members' thoughts, emotions, and actions. It argues that individuals who are denied the opportunity to voice their opinions, emotions, and beliefs or acquire the skills to foster close relationships beyond the family may develop negative attitudes towards significant life events such as marriage. This, in turn, can lead to adverse attitudes and emotions towards future relationships [14; 22; 26].

Hence, as parents, the couple should envision themselves as exemplary role models, a couple that emulates the best character traits inside the family relationship and uses the best parenting style, between them and the children's relationship environment, which is essential for them as a family that is the smallest unit of society. This contribution will go a long way toward improving the community and our nation. With the above background, the primary objective of this research is to explore and analyse the status of attitudes towards marriage among college-going students in Bangalore, Karnataka, South India, and its correlation with their perceived parenting style. The study will consider potential gender-related differences in the analysis. By conducting this investigation, we hope to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that influence attitudes towards marriage and parenting styles among college students in this region. The results of this study can provide valuable insights to educators, counsellors, and parents and help them to better support and guide young adults in their personal and family life decisions.

Methods

Objectives. The present study examined the status of attitude towards marriage and its relationship with perceived parenting style among college-going students.

Study Design and Study Population. The present study is cross-sectional descriptive research and employed a survey method to collect data using a convenient sampling method from a metropolitan city, Bangalore, Karnataka, South India. A total of 267 college-going students enrolled in regular graduate and postgraduate studies in different colleges within Bangalore city were invited to take part in the study. The ages of the participants ranged from 17 to 28 years old, with a mean age of 20 years.

Only those who agreed to give consent after learning the objective of the study were ultimately taken into consideration.

Measures and Procedures. All the participants who agreed to take part in the study responded to the Personal Information Sheet, Perceived Parenting Style Scale [10] and Attitude Towards Marriage Scale [15].

Participants' age, sex, and information about their living arrangements, education, and families were gathered using the Personal Information Sheet (PIS).

Perceived Parenting Style Scale (PPST): The PPSS was used to assess the degree to which an individual perceives their parents as having either an authoritarian or an authoritative or permissive parenting style. It consists of 30 items in which responses were elicited on a five-point Likert scale such as Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). The overall score on this scale ranges from 30 to 150. All three perceived parenting styles are scored separately, and scores range from 10 to 50 on each subscale. The reliability of the scale has been reported to be 0,79 for the authoritative style, 0,81 for the authoritarian style and 0,86 for the permissive style.

Marriage Attitude Scale (MAS): The MAS was used to measure an individual's attitudes and beliefs about marriage. The MAS consists of 38 highly sensitive items with Yes, Doubtful (?) and No type of responses. Each response is given an arbitrary weight of 3, 2, and 1. Split half and test-retest reliability were reported to be 0,79 and 0,84, respectively.

The study's objectives, participants' roles, consent declarations and directions along with every item from PIS, PPS and MAS were placed into the Google form. The form link was generated and shared with college students, who were further requested to share it with their friends who had enrolled

in either graduate or postgraduate courses. Only those who agreed to take part in the study could move to respond to all the items. A total of 286 college-going students responded to the questionnaires, out of which 19 participants' data were removed since they were incomplete. Furthermore, only 267 participants' data were taken into consideration for the final analysis.

Data Analysis. Data collected were analysed using IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21. First, the level of attitude towards marriage was calculated using frequencies and proportions and means and standard deviations for continuous variables. Second, gender differences in perceived parenting style and attitude towards marriage were analysed using an independent sample t-test. Finally, the relationship between attitude towards marriage and perceived parenting style types was examined using product moment correlation.

Results

This study analysed the prevalence of attitudes towards marriage, gender differences and their relationship with perceived parenting style (Authoritarian, Permissive and Authoritative). Data from 267 college-going students from Bangalore City, Karnataka, South India, were gathered to examine the attitude towards marriage and its relationship with perceived parenting style.

Table 1 shows the distribution of the participants according to their socio-demographic characteristics. A total of 53,2% ($N = 142$) of the participants in the study were female, while 46,8% ($N = 125$) were male. The majority of them had enrolled in graduation courses (95,1%), and 73% were day scholars. The majority of them (95,1%) had enrolled in degree courses, and 73% were day scholar students. According to family demographics, 69,7% lived in a mo-

Table 1

Demographic characteristics of the study participants (N = 267)

Demographic Characteristics	F	P (%)
Gender		
Male	125	46,8
Female	142	53,1
Education		
Graduation	254	95,1
Post-Graduation	13	4,9
Type of Scholar		
Day Scholar	195	73
Hostelite	72	27
Domicile		
Rural	69	25,8
Urban	198	74,2
Type of Family		
Joint Family	54	20,2
Nuclear Family	213	79,8
Parenting		
Singular	33	12,4
Plural	234	87,6
Parenting		
Single Parent Working	191	71,5
Both Parent Working	76	28,5
Multicultural Family		
No	186	69,7
Yes	81	30,3

no-cultural family, 71,5% of single parents were employed, and 79,8% of them were raised in nuclear families with plural parenting (87,6%).

Table 2
College-going student's attitude towards marriage (N = 267)

Interpretation	Frequency	%
Negative	38	14,2
Average/Moderate positive	210	78,7
Positive	19	7,1

In regard to the prevalence of attitudes towards marriage, we found that 14,2% (N = 38) had a negative attitude towards marriage, 78,7% had an average attitude and 7,1% (N = 19) had a positive attitude (see Table 2).

With respect to gender, 10,11% (N = 27) of the female students were found to have a negative attitude towards marriage compared to 4,11% (N = 11) of male students. This indicated that female students have a negative attitude towards marriage compared to male students (see Table 3).

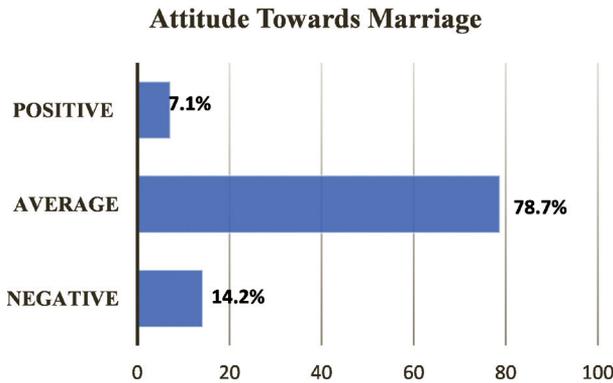


Fig. College-going students' attitude towards marriage ($N = 267$)

Table 3
Gender Attitude towards marriage among college-going students ($N = 267$)

Interpretation	Male (N)	%	Female (N)	%
Negative	11	4,11	27	10,11
Average/Moderate Positive	98	36,7	111	41,57
Positive	17	6,36	3	1,12

Table 4
Gender differences in perceived parenting style and attitude towards marriage among college-going students ($N = 267$)

Measures	Gender	N	M	SD	df	t	sig
Attitude Towards Marriage	male	125	81,33	14,85	265	5,73	0,00*
	female	141	71,44	13,27			
Perceived Parenting Style	male	125	93,59	15,41	265	3,37	0,00*
	female	141	87,89	12,14			
Authoritarian	male	125	28,39	8,03	265	1,49	0,14
	female	141	26,91	8,61			
Permissive	male	125	26,07	8,81	265	3,05	0,00*
	female	141	22,86	8,35			
Authoritative	male	125	39,13	5,73	265	1,28	0,20
	female	141	38,12	6,95			

Note. * $p < 0,01$.

Furthermore, gender differences for both perceived parenting style and attitude towards marriage were examined (see Table 4). The results revealed significant differences in college-going students' overall perceived parenting style

scores between males ($M = 93,59, SD = 15,41$) and females ($M = 87,89, SD = 12,14$); $t(264) = 3,37, p = 0,001$. Regarding parenting styles, a significant difference between male and female students was seen only in authoritarian

and permissive parenting styles ($p < 0,05$). Male ($M = 81,32$, $SD = 14,85$) and female ($M = 71,43$, $SD = 13,26$); $t(264) = 5,73$, $p = 0,001$ college students also differed significantly in attitude towards marriage.

The relationship between perceived parenting style and attitude towards marriage was analysed using product moment correlation (see Table 5). There was a positive and significant relationship between overall parenting styles and marriage attitude ($r = 195$; $p < 0,001$). When examining parenting styles, authoritarian parenting style had a positive and significant relationship with college-going students' marriage towards attitude ($r = 18$; $p < 0,005$). Authoritative and permissive parenting styles did not show any significant relationship ($p > 0,005$).

Discussion

This study's primary goal was to investigate college-bound students' attitudes towards marriage and its relationship with perceived parenting style. This explanation of the analysis's results is in conjunction with the questions that set out to investigate whether our findings correspond/contradict the previous studies. Our research is concentrated on three distinct facets: college-going students' attitudes towards marriage, attitudes towards marriage on gender, and the relationship between attitude towards marriage and perceived parenting style.

College-going students' attitude towards marriage

While exploring the attitude towards marriage in college-going students, the findings of our survey indicated that 78,7% of college-going students had an average attitude/moderate optimism towards marriage, 7,1% had a positive attitude, and 14,2% had a negative attitude towards marriage. These findings indicate that approximately 210 college-going students, representing one-half and a quarter of our sample, have a very moderate positive attitude towards marriage, so according to these findings, students' attitudes towards marriage inclinations were low. These findings correspond with some empirical studies that state that students have a moderately positive attitude towards marriage [4; 21]. For example, previous research by Bhavana & Roopa (2019) states that many students had a moderate and favourable attitude towards marriage. In another study by Nijatian et al., 2022, they also state that their results were found to have a moderate attitude towards marriage. According to the findings of our survey, 14,2% of college-going students have a negative attitude towards marriage, with the negative attitude being significantly higher than the positive attitude of 7,1%. Our findings correspond with numerous studies [9; 29]. Additionally, according to previous

Table 5

Product Moment Correlation matrix between predictive variables (Parenting style and Attitude Towards Marriage (N = 267))

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
Total Parenting Style	—	-0,113*	0,863**	0,854**	0,195**
Authoritative		—	-0,459**	-0,492**	0,086
Authoritarian			—	0,765**	0,180*
Permissive				—	0,073
Attitude Towards Marriage					—

Note. ** – Correlation is significant at the 0,05 level (2-tailed). * – Correlation is significant at the 0,01 level (2-tailed).

research conducted in Flanders, Belgium college-going students hold a negative attitude towards marriage; these findings correspond with our study [9]. Some previous findings also prove that students have a highly positive attitude towards marriage, and these findings contradict our study [4]. Triggers for a moderate or negative attitude toward marriage might stem from an individual's private and societal circumstances. They had an equal perspective of marriage's benefits and drawbacks, such as companionship, stability, commitment, responsibility, compromise, and sacrifice. They had realistic expectations of marriage rather than romanticising it as a narrative or source of ultimate bliss and being impacted by societal changes in marital patterns and conventions, such as cohabitation, divorce, remarriage, and alternative family kinds. Being open to all types of relationships and not viewing marriage as the only option or aim. The impact of parental relationships on one's perspective of marriage, and finally, the most crucial cause, might be the impact of perceived parenting style on a student's life, which can eventually change their attitudes towards marriage.

Attitude towards marriage and gender among college-going students

Gender is discovered to be the most influential element in developing views about marriage. In our survey, comparing males and females, 10,11% of female students had a negative attitude towards marriage, whereas males had only a 4,11% negative attitude towards marriage. These findings in our study correspond with a Taiwanese study that states that males have a more positive attitude towards marriage than females [33]. However, there are only a few previous studies that have proven that females have a more negative attitude towards marriage than males. However, there are many previous studies stating that females

have more positive attitudes towards marriage than males; these research results contradict our study [2]. Some previous studies have also stated that there is no significant difference between genders, and this result also contradicts our study [19; 26; 29]. The possible reason for the negative attitude among female students might be, on the one hand, this implies that the recognised subjugation of women in our culture may be a cause, as it may undoubtedly have an effect. On the other hand, the "Enjoy Free Life" concept results from young adults viewing marriage as diabolic due to their parents' constant mismanagement of circumstances and strict parenting style. As a result, women are increasingly leaving traditional marital arrangements where marriage is compulsory. Additionally, females may have a negative attitude towards marriage for a variety of reasons, depending on their personal and societal situations. One cause might be that they have experienced or witnessed abusive or unpleasant marriages, which may have reduced their trust and confidence in their attitude towards marriage [16; 23]. They may be unwilling to compromise or surrender their objectives and aspirations for a spouse if they value their work and independence more than marriage [3; 10]. Having greater marital expectations and standards may lead to dissatisfaction or disappointment with possible spouses [3]. They may feel oppressed by marital expectations and obligations if they face gender disparity and conventional gender roles [3; 11]. These may be some of the reasons why females have negative attitudes towards marriage.

Relationship between attitude towards marriage and perceived parenting style

The results show a significant relationship between a positive attitude towards marriage and an authoritarian parenting style. Few research papers have proven that an authoritarian parenting style can bring about a positive

attitude regarding marriage in students. However, some previous research findings report that students from an authoritarian parenting style have a negative attitude towards marriage, which supports the theory explaining that students whose guardians mistreated them and who experienced greater parental persuasion express having less trust in their ability to sustain a long-term marriage and having a less favourable mindset towards marriage. These results contradict our study [6]. It is feasible that some students who grew up with authoritarian parents may acquire a good attitude towards marriage, even if authoritarian parenting is typically not related to beneficial results in multiple domains, including attitudes towards marriage. Some people may see marriage as a method to build order and stability in their lives, which could coincide with authoritarian parenting's controlling tendency. Others may have had influential figures outside of their immediate entourage who modelled healthy marital behaviours and affected their views on marriage. This may be the reason for students' positive attitude towards marriage despite the strict authoritarian parenting style. Another reason might be because of the strict traditions and religious rules that need to be followed. In this case, students will eventually build up a strong attitude towards marriage despite the authoritarian parenting style. Much previous research is in favour of an authoritative parenting style showing a positive impact on the student's attitude towards marriage; these findings are inconsistent with our study [12; 22].

Conclusions

The results revealed that 14,2% of the college-going students in the present study had negative attitudes towards marriage. Among these, the majority of the female students had a negative attitude towards marriage compared to male students. Additionally, the overall parenting style score and, in particu-

lar, the authoritarian parenting style showed a positive and significant relationship with attitude towards marriage. This indicates that parenting style may have an impact on their children's attitude towards marriage. Hence, it is critical to offer students who may have grown up with an authoritarian parental style a secure and encouraging atmosphere. Universities may also assist students in learning how to form relationships and communicate through a variety of activities. The issue may be resolved by educating the parent community about the detrimental effects of authoritarian parenting on children's perceptions of society and the family.

Future Research

Conducting longitudinal studies to trace the evolution of college students' attitudes towards marriage over time is crucial for gaining insights into how these perspectives change with academic progression and life experiences. Assessing the effectiveness of relationship education programs in universities is essential, determining whether interventions influence healthy relationships and communication skills, thereby impacting attitudes towards marriage. Complementing quantitative data with in-depth qualitative research, such as interviews or focus groups, can provide a richer understanding of the personal narratives influencing marriage attitudes. Investigating the role of parental involvement and education, along with delving deeper into gender dynamics and societal expectations, can contribute to understanding variations in attitudes between male and female students. Extending research across educational levels, examining media and social influences, considering global perspectives, and analysing the impact of socioeconomic factors will collectively provide a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted influences on college students' attitudes towards marriage.

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