

WRAP Exams · wrapexams.com

Prelims PYQ, Mains model answers, and copy evaluation. Write to the desk for this paper, a doubt, or the AI waitlist.

ask@wrapexams.com · +91 85951 84903 · wrapexams.com

Q5(e)

Does the institution of marriage continue to be sacred in Indian society? Comments.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2020 · Sociology GS 1 · 10 marks · Sociology

Sociology - The Discipline: Modernity and social changes in Europe and emergence of sociology; Scope of the subject and comparison with other social sciences; Sociology and common sense.

Core demand of the question

- Does the institution of marriage continue to be sacred in Indian society? Comment
- Keep the comment within a 10-mark length

Revision summary

Marriage remains sacred for most as ritual, honour, and endogamy.

NFHS and Census show near-universal marriage.

Live-in law and companionate ideals thin the halo for some.

Karve's kinship still gates the sacred circle.

- **Comment:** continued sacred core; contractual margin; gendered policing.

Introduction

Sacred here means set apart, ritually charged, and morally obligatory. In India, marriage remains widely sacred as honour and sacrament for many communities. Law, live-in judgments, and delayed urban weddings have desacralised it for a minority. The institution continues, with a thinner halo in some classes.

Body

Continuity of the sacred

- Census and NFHS still show near-universal marriage, especially for women, and strong stigma of never-marrying.
- Caste endogamy and wedding ritual keep Durkheim's sacred-profane split around the knot.
- Irawati Karve's kinship systems still organise who may marry.

Cracks

- Courts on live-in unions treat some households as legal without a full rite.
- Divorce, delayed marriage, and the new middle class's companionate talk, after Anthony Giddens, thin the sacrament into a contract.
- Inter-caste and across-region marriages profane older sacred boundaries even when a wedding occurs.

Comment

- Sacred for the majority as honour; legally more contractual than before.

- Not dead. Not untouched.
- Gendered sacredness still polices women more than men.

Flow diagram

Marriage -> Ritual honour endogamy
Marriage -> Contract live-in delay
Ritual honour endogamy -> Majority sacred
Contract live-in delay -> Urban legal margin

Conclusion

Marriage continues to be sacred in Indian society as a mass honour rite and a kinship rule. Comment: the sacred persists, while law and urban class practice add a contractual edge. **NFHS** universality and live-in case law can both be true.

Facts & figures

NFHS

High proportions ever married among adult women; marriage as the default family form.

Durkheim

The sacred as set apart; the wedding still marks that split for many.

PWDVA / live-in cases

Legal recognition of some non-ritual unions, a desacralising edge.

Giddens

Confluent love as a late-modern script, thin as Indian majority practice.