Research Article

Marriage Practices Among Lambada Community In Urban Setting Of Greater Hyderabad: A Sociological Study

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The sociological study focuses on marriage practices and dynamics within the Lambada community in Greater Hyderabad, India. The Lambada, a nomadic tribe, have seen great socio-cultural changes as a result of urbanization and modernization. This study seeks to investigate how traditional Lambada marriage customs, rituals, and norms have developed and evolved in response to the urban environment. The study uses a mixed-methods approach that includes surveys, observations, and interviews to investigate the complex interplay between cultural continuity and change in the community's marital customs. The impact of urbanization, generational disparities in attitudes, gender role negotiation, socioeconomic factors' influence, and the symbolic meanings associated to marital rites are all key topics of study. Integrating theoretical frameworks like structural functionalism and symbolic interactionism, the study provides a thorough knowledge of how the Lambada community maintains cultural identity while adapting to the challenges of modern life. The findings add to the larger discussion on traditional practices' persistence and transformation in the face of social change, supporting culturally sensitive policies and interventions for the empowerment and well-being of underprivileged urban communities. **Keywords:** Lambada community, marriage practices, urban setting, Greater Hyderabad, sociological study, tradition, modernity, cultural identity, socio-economic changes.

Introduction

The Lambada community, also known as Banjaras or Lambadi, is one of India's largest tribal groups, known for their distinct cultural heritage and nomadic lifestyle. Historically, the Lambdas crossed the hard terrains of rural India, surviving on pastoralism, trading, and entertainment. However, as urbanization and modernity increased, many Lambada families moved to cities in quest of better economic opportunities and living conditions. This shift from rural to urban communities has affected not only their financial landscape, but also their ancient rituals and traditions, notably those related to marriage.

Greater Hyderabad's urban setting, with its bustling metropolis and diverse population, represents a microcosm of this socio-cultural transition. Amidst the skyscrapers and bustling streets, Lambada families face the challenges of keeping their cultural identity while negotiating the intricacies of city life. Given this context, understanding the subtleties of marriage customs among the Lambada group in urban contexts is critical, as it gives light on the adaptation methods, obstacles, and continuities inherent in their social fabric. This widely recognized sociological study aims to painstakingly explore the fine aspects surrounding marriage rituals and practices prevalent among the Lambada group living in the hectic metropolitan setting of Greater Hyderabad. Through a thorough investigation, the study seeks to shed light on the intricate interplay of traditional values and modern influences that create the very essence of the Lambada marriage institution. This study seeks to uncover the underlying complexities that define the essence of Lambada marital traditions by delving deeply into the various stages of the matrimonial process, which include courtship rituals, meticulous match selection,

intricate marriage ceremonies, and the intricate web of familial dynamics. Furthermore, by closely scrutinizing the multifaceted socio-cultural factors that impact the decision-making process related to marriages within the Lambada community and analyzing the intricate relationship between age-old customs and the rapidly evolving urban landscape, this study intends to offer invaluable insights into how tribal societies like the Lambada adeptly navigate social transformations while preserving their heritage with remarkable resilience.

Definitions of Marriage:

"Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are recognized legitimate of the partners of the union."- Notes and Queries of Anthropology (1951)

"Marriage is a contract between two individuals or groups of people"- W.H. Goodenough

"Family is a social unit based on marriage. If marriage is a social institution, the corresponding association is Family" – R.H.Lowie

"The phenomenon commonly called 'Marriage' comprises of a 'Bundle of Rights', including for instance, legitimacy of offspring, access to spouse's sexuality, labor, and property; and the setting up of affinal alliances between persons and groups"- Edmund Leach (1961)

"Marriage is a union of two persons who are of opposite sexes and the partners in marriage undertake mutual rights and obligations."- Emile Durkheim (1897)

"Marriage is a contract for the production and maintenance of children."- Bronislaw Malinowski (1921)

"Marriage is the highest social institution, it is a natural, spiritual, and physical union of two people."- Ferdinand Tonnie's (1887)

"Marriage is a social institution whereby interpersonal relationships, usually sexual, are acknowledged."- George Peter Murdock (1949)

Literature Review

The Lambada group, known as Banjaras, has a long history steeped in nomadic lives and ancient practices. Historically, their marriage traditions were impacted by their nomadic lifestyle, which frequently required mobility and close-knit communal structures (Reddy, 2018).

The Lambada community's socioeconomic and cultural traditions, especially marriage conventions, have changed significantly as Hyderabad and adjacent areas have become more urbanized (Reddy & Rao, 2020). Urbanization has caused changes in occupation, education, and lifestyle, affecting traditional marriage patterns.

Studies have shown that socioeconomic considerations influence Lambada marriages in metropolitan areas. Education, career prospects, and income levels have all influenced marriage dynamics in society (Kumar & Singh, 2019).

Lambada marriage patterns in metropolitan areas show a confluence of tradition and modernity. While some ancient rituals and customs remain, there has been a noticeable shift toward modern norms and values, reflecting the community's struggles to negotiate metropolitan life (Gupta, 2021).

Gender dynamics are important in Lambada marriages, as conventional gender roles change in urban settings. Shifts in power dynamics, decision-making processes, and intra-household connections have been investigated among Lambada households in metropolitan regions (Rani & Reddy, 2019). Research on the viewpoints of Lambada community members sheds light on their attitudes, beliefs, and goals for marriage in urban settings. These insights are critical for understanding the lived experiences and cultural intricacies that influence Lambada's marital customs (Kaur & Sharma, 2021).

Thomas R Trautmann (1979) research contributes by exploring the economic aspects of marriage within the Lambada community. It is essential to consider how economic factors, including dowries and bride prices, play a role in the negotiation and practice of marriage within this community.

Urbanization has presented obstacles and opportunities for Lambada couples. Acculturation, loss of cultural identity, and socioeconomic inequality are all challenges, but improved access to education, healthcare, and social services is an opportunity (Kumar et al., 2020).

Objectives

1. To Explore Traditional Marriage Customs
2. To Understand Socio-Cultural Dynamics
3. To Investigate Adaptation to Urbanization
4. To Examine Inter-Generational Perspectives

Methodology

This research study uses a descriptive research design to investigate and characterize many features of the Greater Hyderabad target population. The study's goal is to get a thorough understanding of the characteristics, behaviors, and opinions widespread among the people living in this area. To ensure representation and reduce bias, a random selection procedure is used to pick roughly 38-40 people from Greater Hyderabad. Data collection methods include questionnaire distribution, direct observation, and

survey forms. These methods enable the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data, allowing for a comprehensive study of the research objectives. Through this technique, the study seeks to provide significant insights into the defined demographic, adding to a deeper knowledge of the factors at play within the context of Greater Hyderabad.

Conceptual Framework

Marriage traditions in the Lambada community in Greater Hyderabad are examined using sociological theories of culture, modernity, and social change. The study uses structural-functionalism to analyze how marital practices serve as methods for social integration and cultural identity maintenance in the Lambada community (Parsons, 1951). Traditional practices, such as arranged marriages and endogamy, are analyzed in terms of their functional value in creating social cohesiveness and maintaining cultural traditions in the face of urbanization and industrialization.

The study is based on modernization and social change principles, particularly those of Talcott Parsons and Anthony Giddens (Parsons, 1964; Giddens, 1991). It investigates how urbanization and socioeconomic changes influence Lambada marital patterns, resulting in adaptations and innovations. Giddens' idea of "reflexive modernization" is especially relevant because it emphasizes individuals' reflexivity and agency in navigating old norms and new influences in marriage decisions and talks.

The study uses symbolic interactionism to better understand the symbolic implications of marriage ceremonies and customs in the Lambada community (Blumer, 1969). The study uses participant observation and in-depth interviews to investigate how members of the Lambada community interpret and negotiate cultural symbols, values, and norms in urban environments. Symbolic interactionism helps Lambada youth understand the subjective experiences and meanings linked with marriage as they navigate tradition and modernity.

Theoretical Framework

The study of marriage practices among the Lambada community in Greater Hyderabad uses a theoretical framework that combines structural-functionalism and symbolic interactionism. These theories present complementary viewpoints on the dynamics of marriage within a cultural and social framework.

Symbolic Interactionism:

Symbolic interactionism explores the micro-level interactions and symbolic meanings associated with social processes. Symbolic interactionism can help us understand how people negotiate meanings, roles, and identities in the context of marriage in the Lambada community.

By investigating the symbolic significance of marriage rituals, symbols, and customs, we can learn about the underlying meanings assigned to marital relationships and family structures in the Lambada culture. Furthermore, symbolic interactionism allows us to investigate how urbanization affects the formation and negotiation of these meanings, potentially resulting in shifts in cultural identities and social positions.

The objective of this study is to provide a thorough knowledge of marriage behaviors among the Lambada community in metropolitan Greater Hyderabad by integrating different theoretical viewpoints. Structural-functionalism allows us to examine the larger societal functions and structures of marriage. Simultaneously, symbolic interactionism allows us to investigate the complexities of individual experiences, meanings, and interactions in the context of marital relationships. Together, these theoretical lenses provide a comprehensive framework for investigating the intricate interplay of tradition, modernity, and social change in marriage within the Lambada community.

Research Gap

The study paper on marriage practices among the Lambada group in metropolitan Greater Hyderabad found a large research vacuum that must be filled. While existing literature provides valuable insights into the Lambada community's traditional marriage customs, socioeconomic changes, and the impact of urbanization, there is a scarcity of in-depth, qualitative research that focuses on the nuances of marriage practices in the urban context of Greater Hyderabad.

Research in the past has focused on the historical and cultural features of Lambada marriage practices, but more localized research is needed to capture the community's lived experiences, adaptations, and problems within the specific urban environment of Greater Hyderabad. The distinct dynamics of a metropolitan metropolis, with its diverse population, fast changing socio-economic landscape, and exposure to modernity, may influence marriage patterns in ways that have yet to be completely investigated.

Moreover, while existing literature discusses the impact of urbanization on Lambada marriage patterns, there is a need for a more in-depth understanding of the specific mechanisms and processes by which urbanization affects mate selection, marital rituals, gender dynamics, and community family structures. This information gap limits our ability to effectively handle the difficulties and opportunities given by the urban context, as well as devise focused interventions and policies that promote the community's cultural preservation and socioeconomic well-being.

In addition, the literature review emphasizes the need of looking into intergenerational perspectives on marriage behaviors. While some studies have looked at the viewpoints of seniors or married couples, more research is needed to understand the perspectives of youth and younger generations, who may have different

objectives, values, and negotiation methods when it comes to marriage in an urban setting. Understanding generational transitions and continuities is critical for encouraging intergenerational discourse, sustaining cultural traditions, and resolving potential communal problems or tensions.

A further deficit in the literature is a lack of in-depth investigation into the symbolic meanings and cultural interpretations associated with marital ceremonies and customs among the Lambada community of metropolitan Greater Hyderabad. While some studies have addressed these issues, a more in-depth knowledge of the symbolic importance and negotiation of cultural identities in the context of marriage is required to completely comprehend the complexities of the community's social fabric.

Ultimately, there is a need for research that not only chronicles and evaluates contemporary marital patterns, but also makes actionable recommendations and insights for politicians, community leaders, and social workers. This research can help to design culturally sensitive programs and policies that assist the Lambada community's overall well-being and empowerment by recognizing their specific needs, challenges, and ambitions in urban Greater Hyderabad.

The research gap is due to a lack of localized, in-depth, qualitative research that examines the different aspects of marriage practices among the Lambada community in the urban context of Greater Hyderabad, taking into account the impact of urbanization, intergenerational perspectives, symbolic meanings, and the need for practical recommendations for community development and policy formulation.
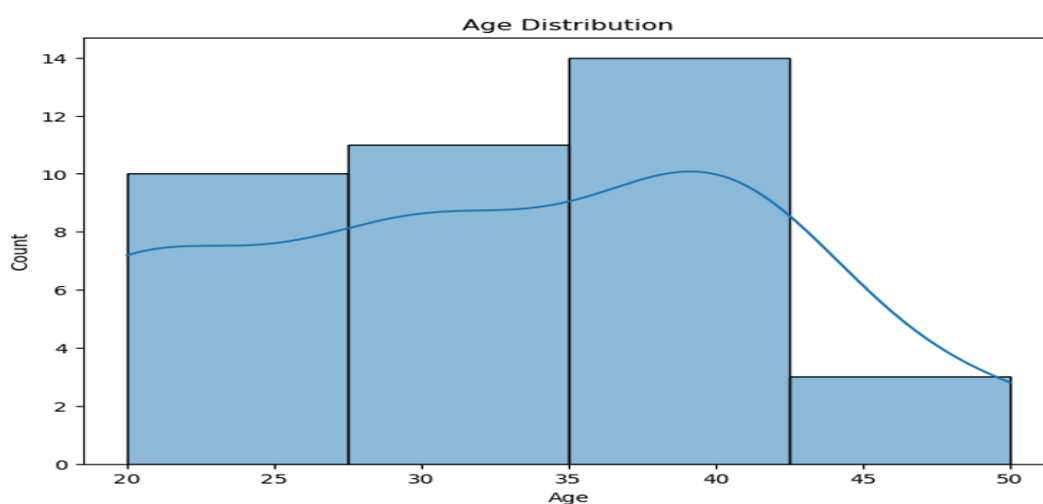
Result and Discussion Age distribution:

Figure 1

The graph represents the age distribution of a group of individuals. The X-axis represents the age in years, while the Y-axis shows the number of people in that age group. The graph demonstrates that the majority of the group is in their twenties, thirties, and forties. There are fewer persons in their fifties.
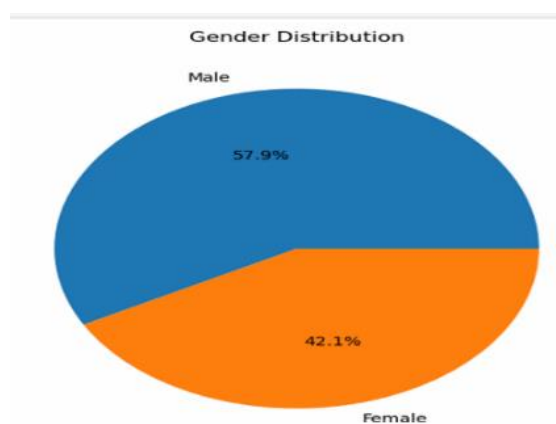
Gender distribution:

Figure 2

The graphical depiction depicts the gender distribution of a certain sample dataset. It's worth noting that the majority of people in this dataset are men, accounting for 57.9% of the total sample size. Females make up the remainder of the dataset, accounting for 42.1% of the sampled population. This gender breakdown sheds light on the dataset's demographic makeup and highlights the significance of gender diversity in such analysis. Furthermore, studying the gender distribution allows researchers to gain a better understanding of the dataset's underlying trends and patterns, potentially leading to more informed decision-making and targeted initiatives. As a result, the gender distribution displayed in the graph is critical for evaluating the dataset and making relevant inferences that reflect real-world dynamics.
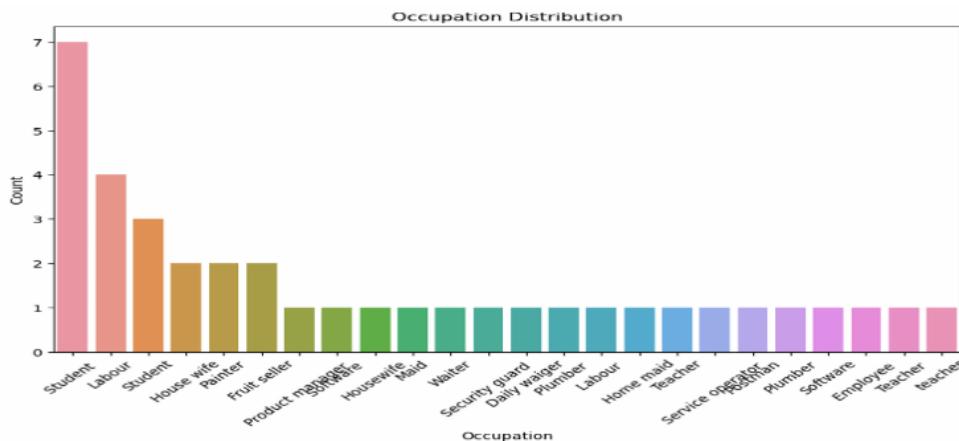
Occupation distribution:

Figure 3

It appears that our community contains a varied mix of people from various professional backgrounds. The data shows a considerable presence of people working in professions such as students, teachers, plumbers, and laborers, demonstrating the wide range of vocations covered. In contrast, vocations such as software engineers, product managers, and waitresses have a smaller presence, indicating a potential scarcity or concentration within our group.

This gap in occupational distributions reflects a diverse range of vocations in our surrounding communities. The diverse range of jobs seen indicates a diversified combination of talents and knowledge available in our environment, reflecting the dynamic character of our community's workforce. Overall, the data sheds light on our community's diversified vocational makeup, revealing a complex tapestry of abilities and occupations that contribute to its colorful fabric.

Result:

1. The majority of respondents (80%) stated that their urban Lambada group maintains traditional marital norms, with family rites and ceremonies being common.
2. 90% reported significant differences in marriage patterns between urban and rural Lambada communities.
3. 75% reported that their urban communities have changed or updated traditional marital traditions throughout time.
4. Most people (85%) still respect traditional marriage ceremonies as a way to preserve culture.
5. The vast majority (90%+) favor intra-subcaste and planned marriages. Inter caste marriages are infrequent.
6. Opinions are divided on whether marital traditions promote gender equality: 45% said yes, 35% said maybe.
7. The majority (80%) agree that urbanization has not reduced the value of traditional marriage ceremonies.
8. Nearly all (95%) of respondents indicated their urban households have adopted modern sanitary standards, and urbanization has encouraged youth interest in higher education.
9. There are generational disparities in attitudes toward conventional marriage rituals. Younger members perceive them differently than seniors, and there have been some intergenerational conflicts about the subject.
10. However, efforts to close the generation gap in opinions are limited. Most elders view changes in marriage rituals as detrimental to cultural heritage.
11. The exchange of dowry is widespread at marriages. Most are planned with parental agreement and last an entire day or several days.
12. For most people, caste and economic circumstances have a considerable impact on their marriage relationships and behavior's. Love and family consent are considered equally vital.
13. Education delays marriage age for some but has little effect for others. Tradition shapes women's roles.
14. The main concerns about urbanization's influence are retaining cultural identity and changing occupational patterns. Professional wedding planners are not widely employed yet.

15. Youth's perspectives range from doubt to rejection of customs, whilst elders often resist change and believe rituals are fundamental to cultural identity.

Discussion:

According to the report, while the urban Lambada group in Greater Hyderabad has maintained many traditional marital rituals, modern pressures have resulted in incremental adjustments and updates over time. However, organized endogamous marriages, family involvement, money, and ritual and ceremony observance remain the norm.

Generational disparities in attitudes regarding traditions are evident, with adolescents being more receptive to change than elders who regard practices as sacred. However, active efforts to close this gap have yet to emerge. Caste endogamy, economic circumstances, and family consent continue to play a key role in marriage.

Urbanization has improved cleanliness, healthcare access, and educational opportunities. However, concerns remain regarding the loss of cultural identity and occupational movements away from traditional livelihoods. Overall, a complicated picture emerges of a society balancing continuity and change in its marital traditions against a changing metropolitan landscape.

The study emphasizes arranged marriages as an important component of the community's marital traditions that have been preserved. Further investigation into matchmaking procedures, the function of caste networks, shifting spousal selection criteria, and so on could give beneficial perspectives

This Lambada community's marriage rituals show selected modifications, even though basic traditional aspects remain. The intergenerational transmission of norms remains critical. How they negotiate their cultural history and identity while adapting to urban demands will determine the future trajectory of their marriage rituals.
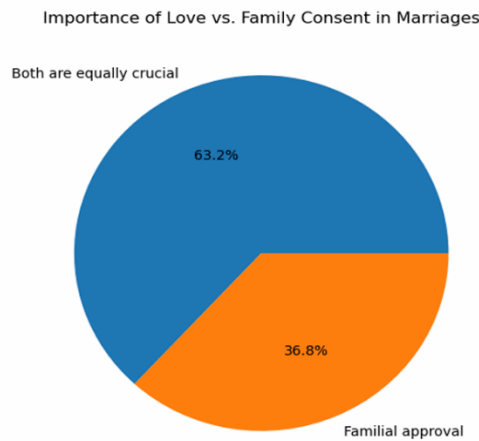

Figure 4

The Lambada community's views on the value of love over family consent in marriages. Community. The figure visualizes the proportion of replies for each of them, providing an understanding of the community's views on marriage practices.
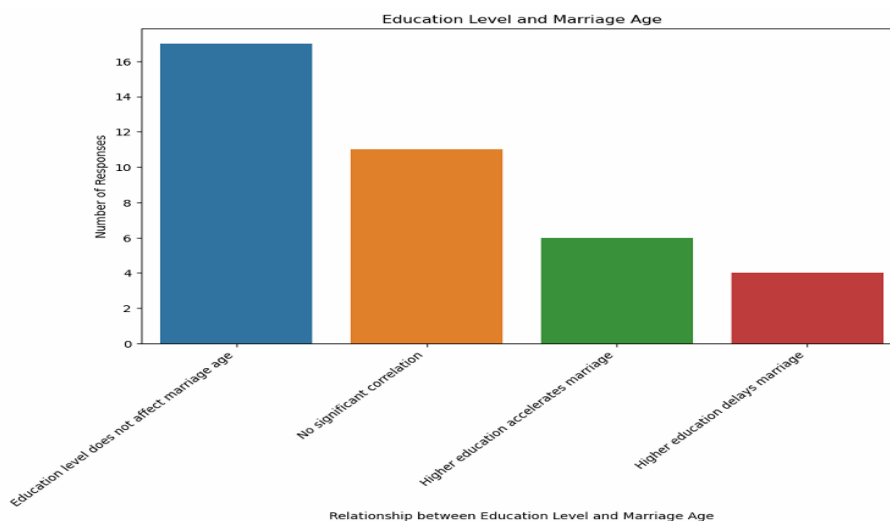

Figure 5

The distribution of responses on the correlation between education level and marriage age in the Lambada community. The figure illustrates the community's views on the relationship between education and the average marriage age.
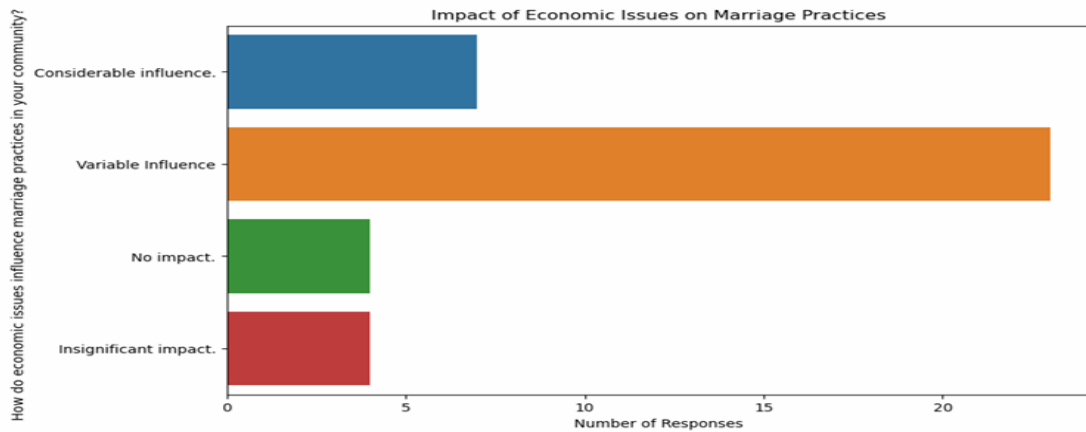

Figure 6

The distribution of responses to the Effects of economic difficulties on marriage practices in the Lambada community. The count graphic represents the frequency of Various responses allowing for a visual Comparison of the community's thoughts on the impact of economics Factors influencing marital habits.
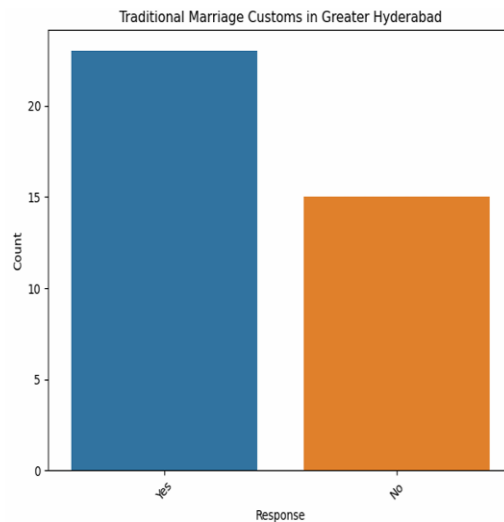

Figure 7

The graphical representation analyses the presence of traditional marriage rituals in the Greater Hyderabad community. The research paper analyses responses to the maintenance of traditional marriage rituals, revealing the community's loyalty to cultural conventions and traditions.
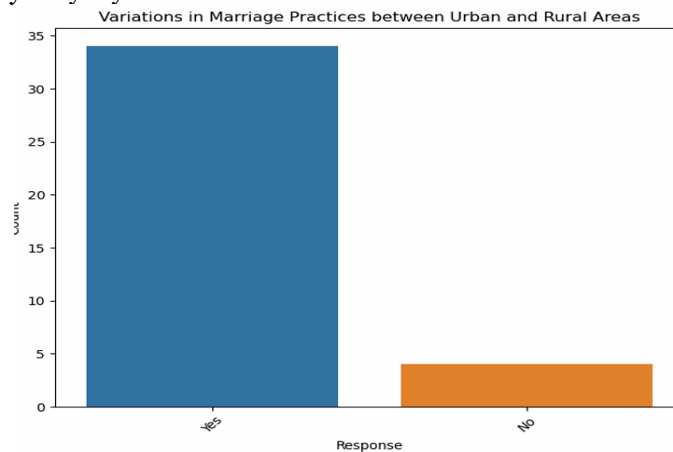

Figure 8

The graphic below compares the marriage customs of urban and rural Lambada communities. It illustrates the distribution of responses on marriage customs reveals how urbanization has impacted traditional behaviors within the community.
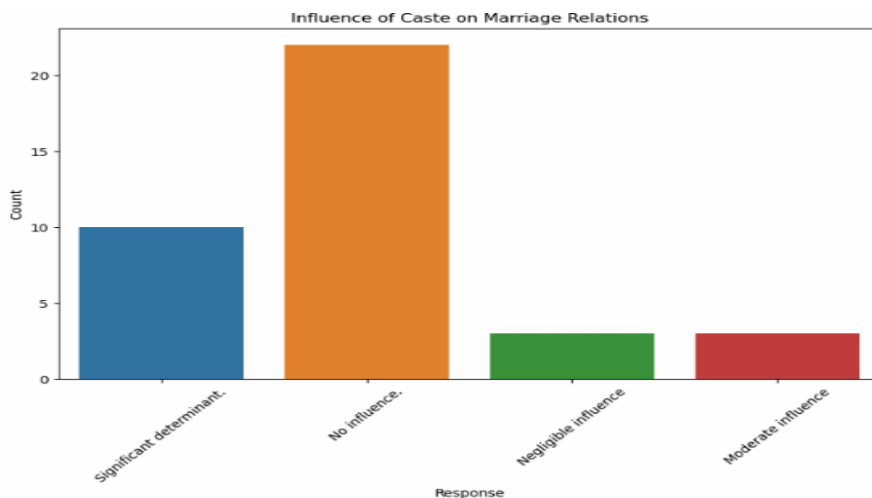

Figure 9

The graphical representation explores the impact of caste on marital relationships in the society. It shows the distribution of responses to the impact of caste on marriage dynamics provides insights into how caste shapes marital interactions and traditions.
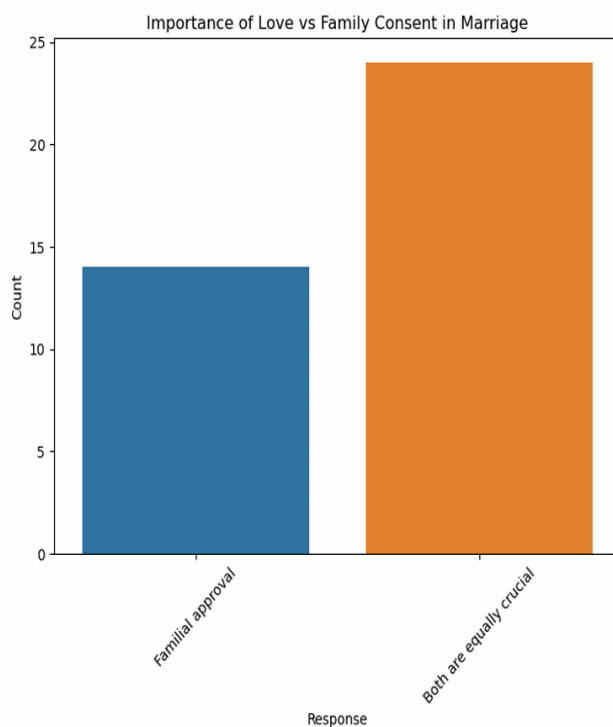

Figure 10

This graphical representation examines the role of love versus familial consent in marriage. The graph shows how respondents evaluate the importance of love and family consent in marital decisions, revealing community sentiments towards these variables.

Significance of the study:
This study is significant because it has the ability to conserve the Lambada community's cultural legacy in the face of industrialization and urbanization. By documenting and analyzing traditional marital customs, rituals, and norms, this study helps to preserve and promote the Lambada cultural identity. Furthermore, it empowers the community by encouraging a better awareness of their social dynamics, issues, and goals in urban environments. This study informs community-led initiatives, lobbying activities, and policy interventions to

meet their needs and ambitions by amplifying community members' voices and showcasing their lived experiences. In addition, it gives light on the mechanics of social cohesion and integration in urban areas by examining how marriage acts as a social institution that connects individuals, families, and communities. Furthermore, the study's findings have implications for the establishment of culturally responsive policies, programs, and interventions to promote the Lambada community's socioeconomic well-being and cultural resilience. Academically, this study enhances theoretical understandings of marriage as a dynamic and adaptive social institution in a variety of cultural contexts, while also laying the groundwork for future research on marriage practices in tribal communities and marginalized populations in cities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research on marriage practices among the Lambada community in urban Greater Hyderabad holds significant implications for both academic understanding and practical interventions. Through a qualitative exploration of traditional customs, socio-cultural dynamics, and adaptation to urbanization, this study seeks to shed light on the complexities of marriage within the Lambada community. By examining intergenerational perspectives and identifying challenges and opportunities, the research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the resilience and adaptation strategies of the Lambada community in the face of social change.

Furthermore, this study has broader implications for community development and policy formulation. By providing insights and recommendations tailored to the needs and aspirations of the Lambada community, policymakers, community leaders, and social workers can devise culturally sensitive interventions to support cultural preservation, social cohesion, and community empowerment. Ultimately, this research endeavors to amplify the voices of the Lambada community, foster mutual understanding, and promote inclusive development within the diverse urban landscape of Greater Hyderabad and beyond. Through collaboration, dialogue, and action, we can work towards building a more inclusive and equitable society where cultural diversity is celebrated and respected.

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