Society & Social Justice · GS - I

Do you think marriage as a sacrament is loosing its value in Modern India?

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2023	GS - I	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Examine the traditional sacramental understanding of marriage and the changes brought by modernisation, individualism, education, urbanisation and legal reforms; distinguish changing marital practices from complete decline of the institution; discuss both continuity and transformation in contemporary Indian society.

Model Answer

Introduction

In traditional Indian society, marriage was regarded not merely as a social contract but as a **sacrament (sanskara)** associated with family continuity, social obligations and religious duties. Modern India has witnessed significant changes in the institution of marriage, but these changes indicate transformation rather than its complete loss of value.

Body

Factors Behind Changing Perceptions

Individualism: Education and greater individual autonomy have increased the importance of personal compatibility, emotional fulfilment and choice of partner.

Urbanisation: Nuclear families and urban lifestyles have reduced the influence of extended kinship networks over marital decisions.

Economic independence: Increasing participation of women in education and employment has strengthened their bargaining power and ability to make independent choices.

Legal reforms: Laws concerning divorce, domestic violence, maintenance and women's rights have strengthened individual rights within marriage.

Changing attitudes: Inter-caste and inter-community marriages, later marriages and greater acceptance of divorce indicate changing social norms.

Why Marriage Continues to Remain Significant

Despite these changes, marriage continues to perform important social functions. It provides companionship, family formation, social identity and a framework for child-rearing.

Indian society continues to attach considerable importance to marriage, although its meaning is increasingly being negotiated through **consent, equality and companionship** rather than only duty and tradition.

Moreover, traditional practices have not disappeared uniformly. Rural-urban, class, caste and regional differences continue to shape marital institutions.

Conclusion

Marriage in modern India is undergoing a **transition from predominantly sacramental and duty-centred institution towards a more choice-based and companionship-oriented relationship**. Its changing form should therefore not be equated with the disappearance of its social value. Rather, the institution is adapting to new aspirations while retaining several traditional functions.