Chapter - 1
CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Marriage is an important social institution which combines in itself the physical, social, mental and legal aspects. This institution is found in all societies of the world. Marriage is a lifelong bond which aims at the individuals' biological, emotional, social and spiritual fulfilment and development, and which cannot be achieved in isolation. Different societies have different forms of marriage system. Marital relationships are the basis of all social relationships. The success and failure of marriage, depends upon the relationship between the husband and the wife. The traditional Indian concept of marriage, is changing from the horoscope matched, formally arranged, inter-family tie-up to a mode for "finding the right companion" on economically viable liaison, that is more open to the increasingly independent women who demand equal status. Today the conventional male-female roles of provider and homemaker are changing as the women goes out to find a place of her own in the society fighting age-old social prejudices. In marital adjustment the joint family too acts as a pressure group and as a shock absorber. Marriage involves not only the persons's capacity to adjust but also his ideals, attitudes and interests.

Marriage involves the union of two individuals, who will live in intimate association for the major portion of their lives. Each of these persons is a distinct personality with his own history and experience. Each has a different group of relatives although they may share mutual friends and associations within the community. Each one has built up certain attitudes and dispositions towards life as a result of his or her experiences. Each approaches marriage, with a conception of what it means and of what each partner should contribute to and receive from marriage. The differences in the meaning of marriage extend all the way from the physical act of sex to the most innate psychological and social implications. Moreover, it is affected by many of his social relations with others before marriage, and is modified by his social relations after marriage.
"Marriage and family are not only optional, they are essential as they meet man's deepest needs for companionship, affection and sexual expression" (Kumar & Rohatgi 1987). Veenhoven (1983) has equated a good marriage to an "indispensable heaven" on earth. It is said to be the most rewarding experience life can offer (Smith, 1961). A happy marriage is characterized by learning the art of living together- to share, to compromise, to accommodate and to plan together in the pursuit of effective performance of marital roles. (Kumar & Rohatgi, 1987). In turn, it makes the person feel needed, wanted, desired, approved, belonged and pampered to a degree not possible in any other human relationship. (Kumar, 1991).

However, a happy marriage does not occur by accident, nor can be had by mere wishing, but it has to be worked out jointly (Woodward, 1966; Kumar and Rohatgi, 1989). A happy marriage is realized, only when both husband and wife make a determined effort to make their marriage a success. (Kumar and Dhyani, 1996). This process of realizing a happy marriage actually involves bringing about considerable changes in their personality- the personalities they being with them at the time of marriage. Ruch (1970) correctly observes that, In a happy marriage it is more a matter of becoming the right person than being the right person. Happily married couples, are reported to show better mental health, less inhibited life satisfaction, husband-wife communication and overall higher life satisfaction (Anderson, 1980 ; Kumar & Rohatgi, 1986). They have been found more relaxed and emotionally stable than couples showing poor marital relationship (Kumar & Rohatgi, 1985).

1.1 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE

The institution of marriage is one of man's gratest masterpiece. It is not only the union of the two individuals man and woman, but also of two kinship groups. Marriage has been defined differently by various psychologists and sociologists.

In the ordinary meaning of the term, marriage is the social recognition of the practice, by which men and women live together as husband and wife to raise a
family. Willard Waller (1951) opines that "marriage is an arrangement in which people continue to live together in sickness and in health, in success and failure. It is perfectly possible for people to quarrel sometimes and yet live happily".

Dr. Carl Kelsey, (1948) of the university of Pennsylvania differed from Willard Waller and emphasized the idea that "marriage is a process not an event" quoted by Skidmer and Cannon. He explained marriage as the process of husband and wife adjusting to each other as long as they live together.

Burgess and Locke (1960) agree within Dr. Carl Kelsey and say that "A successful marriage is one in which two people have intelligently committed themselves to a lifetime together in which each seeks to enrich the life of the other as well as his own through cooperation, children and a happy home for children." Thus, above both the authors emphasized on adjustment process.

Ruch and Anderson (1963) sailing in the same boat, "Marriage is one of the most fundamental institution in our culture. It gives the individual an opportunity for the satisfaction of his needs for companionship, affection and sexual expression," says Ruch. And according to Anderson "Marriage is the sanctioning by society of a durable bond between one or more males and one or more females established to permit sexual intercourse for implied purpose of parenthood." Hence, both the above psychologists emphasized the social aspect of marriage than the individual - personal aspect of marriage.

According to Kumar (1991): "Marriage is characterized by a relationship that provides ample opportunities for the satisfaction of basic human needs like love, companionship and sexual expression in a shared role-relationship."

According to Kachroo & Kachroo (1981) "Marriage is the social recognition of the practice by which men and women live together as husband and wife to raise a family."

According to Horton & Hurt, "Marriage is the approved social pattern whereby two persons establish a family," as quoted by Kachroo and Kachroo (1981).
Elten Key says that, "marriage signifies the living together of two people upon the ground of love and the parenthood of children. Marriage is, thus an alliance whose offspring have social recognition and approval," as quoted by Dr. Hans Raj (1984).

According to Dr. S. Rau (1990) "Marriage is a union between a man and a woman and the Children born to them are recognized legitimate as the offspring of both the partners".

According to Johnson (1993), "marriage is a stable relationship in which a man and a woman are socially permitted without loss of standing in the community, to have children".

According to Murdock (1949) "marriage is the regular or normal cohabitation in the same household, and some degree of economic cooperation".

After having examined the above definitions and views it can be said that marriage is a socially accepted institution. It is a special type of sanction from person to person and relationship to relationship. Marriage is a process of adjustment and is based upon cooperation and it is a relatively stable relationship between man-woman or husband and wife as both are socially permitted in the society. Marriage is actually begun by conducting of legal or religious ceremonies or both. There is close and helpful relationship between husband, wife and children for a long period of time in marriage. Marriage is not something that 'comes naturally'. It is not a product of inborn behaviour pattern, sometimes called 'instincts'. It is an ancient and universal institution which provides a woman freedom from doubt, exploitation by man. Emotional needs for growth and development of child as well as its physical needs, are best fulfilled by two parents through the institution of marriage.

1.2 : HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

WESTERN CULTURE

The nature of marriage is intimately linked with the type of family existing at a period of time. Angels, in his book "origin of family, private property and estate" has given a revolutionary account of the development of marriage as an institution.
The family changed and developed as the mode of production and social relations changed and developed. In the primitive herd, relations between sexes were of a haphazard nature and consequently no family existed. As a social phenomenon, the family appeared in the primitive society. At first at the matriarchal stage, it had a group character when all the woman of a gens were the possible wives of all the men of another gens. Children did not know their fathers. They belonged to the maternal family consisting of a group of the mother's nearest relatives. Gradually a paired family appeared within the group marriage. At first it was a chance, temporary cohabitation of individual pairs and then it developed into a more or less lasting one. The fragile paired family which had no household of its own, was replaced by a more durable monogamic family which arose following the transition from the matriarchate to the patriarchal. The husband and father became the head of the family, and his wife and children lived with him under one roof. The family, acquired property which the children inherited from the father together with his name.

At first it was a slave owning society, then it was succeeded by a feudal and capitalist society depending on changing systems. In the slave owning and feudal societies a slave or a peasant could have a family only with the consent of, or at the discretion of, his master. As regards slaves they were often enough forbidden to have families. Under feudalism relations in a family acquired a clearly expressed class nature; marriages belonging to different estates were not permitted. A typical feature of a slave - owning or feudal society was the unlimited authority of its head over his wife, children and property, and the debased and oppressed status of the women.

The rule of the family head and the unequal status of the woman are preserved in the capitalist society inspite of the proclaimed freedom of marriage - family relations. The role played by material considerations was never greater than it is in a bourgeois family whose main aim and purpose is accumulation of wealth and its inheritance by descendants.
Another family which exists in capitalist society is that of a working man. Here marital relations usually rest on love, respect and cooperation of husband and wife. But this family too experiences the demoralising influence of capital. Capitalism deprives many low-paid workers, not to mention the unemployed, of a chance of marriage. A woman under capitalism carries a double burden: she is forced to work for the capitalist and usually for a lower wage than a man, and also to do the lion's share of the work involved in housekeeping and bringing up children. The woman's unequal status is determined by law and consecrated by bourgeois morality and religion. (Afanasyev, 1980).

There has been a controversy regarding the original form of marriage. Ellis 1970 observes that primitive man lived in a state of group marriage. Some theorists such as Westermarck and Spenser claim that monogamy was its original form, while other such as Morgan and Briffault contend that in its original form it was promiscuous (Lantz and Synder, 1969). According to Bachofen, Mclehan, Lippert, Kohler, Block and many others, it was not in the form of individual marriage but "group marriage" in which men in a group or tribe had indiscriminate access to all the women of the group and children born out of these unions were considered children of the general community (Westermarck, 1925). Todd refutes this idea of group marriage and terms it as intermittent promiscuity" (Todd, 1913).

Whatever may have been the original forms of marriage at least in theory, the most prevalent form is generally monogamy. But polygamy, polyandry and levirate forms are also found in vogue.

In monogamy which is the only legal form of marriage, a man marries with a single woman, raises children within the wedlock and performs all rites with his mate.

In polygamy, a man mates with more than a single woman.

Polyandry is the type in which one woman consorts with a number of men.
Levirate, is a form of marriage under which a woman is taken as the wife of the late husband's younger brother or even during the lifetime of the elder brother the younger brother exercises sexual rights over the wife of the elder brother.

INdIAN CULTURE

In India, since the dawn of civilization the two institutions namely marriage and family seem to have existed. In the vedas we find references of both these institutions. With the passage of time, both these institutions have undergone notable changes. Therefore, before one tries to study the marital adjustment in marriage, it is necessary to have a clear idea about the traditional concept and pattern of marriage.

Marriage during the earlier times, was not meant mainly for individual gratification, individuals interest and aspirations, but was rather a social duty towards the family and the community. Everyone was expected to do one's duty regardless of how one felt about it. Marriage was decided according to class, caste and gotras in the past. However, inter-caste marriages are allowed today.

Marriage in the past was a permanent union of the husband and wife where they were exhorted to strive their best to fulfill their marriage vow of not failing each other in the pursuit of Dharma, Karma, Artha and they discharged their responsibility, not only towards each other but also to the family, society and the world at large. There were no major conflicts or divorce.

In the past the attitude towards marriage and family living was conservative and the family relationship was authoritarian. In rural areas, conservative attitude towards marriage still persists. But in industrial and urban areas, there is a gradual shift from authoritarian to democratic family relationship.

The marriage partners may come from different areas. They don't always have a shared past. In other words, they come quite apart from prevailing patterns of ethnic, religious and class endogamy. The social philosophy behind the marriage is that is a social duty towards the family.
Some fifty years back, the marriage system in India was of a set pattern. As far as the choice of the life partner was concerned, the opinion of parents and particularly male parent ruled supreme. The girl had very little or no choice at all in choosing her life partner. If a girl dared to say anything regarding this matter she was considered to be rather too forward. The parents thought that it was their duty to safeguard her interest by subcting a man of their choice. In that period, the condition of a girl, was like a sacred cow; which was protected by others. In the absence of proper education, she had no scope to be independent, in other matters like earning for her own living. In short, she was dependent as a child on her parents and brothers, in youth, as a wife on her husband and in old age on her sons. (Manusmriti).

FUNCTIONS OF MARRIAGE

A good marriage guarantees sustained satisfaction of vital human-needs—both physical and psychological. It provides spouses "an opportunity for the satisfaction of their needs for companionship, affection and sexual expression" Ruch (1970). If so, then any failure on the part of married couples to strike a satisfactory marital relationship would mean depriving themselves of the satisfactions which seems so basic for normal, healthy growth of the person.

The three components, love, companionship and sexual need show high positive relationship and maintains a harmonious relationship within themselves. A disturbance in any of these three components brings about corresponding changes in other components to maintain that harmony.
Using this tri-component model, we can easily identify whether the given marriage is sick, and also if it requires corrective help. If we find that one of the 3 components is showing a low level of satisfaction, it should mean that the marriage is facing some problems. However, if two or all the three components start showing a low level of satisfaction, then it should mean that the marriage is facing some serious problems and is in dire need of corrective help (Kumar, 1991).

Marital relationship meets many important needs of the spouses.

1. Marriage provides total freedom to express individuality without the fear or ridicule or rejection. This power is not to be equated with subjugation or dehumanization of the partner but is utilized to achieve the marital goals co-operatively.

2. People have the need to belong and marriage is the safest and most enduring platform for the lasting fulfilment of it. The partners are integrated whole. There is a mutual interest in each other. Each is a distinct, unique individual, the only one of his/her kind and they are accepted as they are. Work and commitment of it may remove a person from the proscinity of the spouse, however, both are sustained by the emotional sense of belonging. They cannot survive in isolation from their kind. By their very nature, they need and strive intensely for relationships with one another. This inherent biological need for relationship is most clearly evident in the years of infancy, childhood and throughout the life. It is realised that men's deepest and most lasting concern which really dominates him provides the dynamics of his life in his relationship with other human beings in the personal sense, is in the relationship of love and marriage.

3. Need for love and affection, there is no other relationship except marriage which promises total affection without any strings attached. No pre-conditions, no ifs and buts, within marriage the person feels infinitely valuable, radically his own self and alive in every cell of his/her body. There is no threat or deprivation of love and affection.
People with balanced and natural attitude, ensure the fulfilment of these needs in their spouses. When these needs are insufficiently or inadequately met the edifice of marriage shows signs of strain and crumbling.

4. Marriage establishes the individual unequivocally, not only as an adult as defined by society, but also as an adult who is responsible for his own family and who is legitimately able to reproduce and near his off-springs in a conventionally sanctioned family consent. With a marriage one takes on a new role and with it a new status and responsibility to one's spouses and to one's home. Marriage provides one with a social identity and a partner to identify in a social setting to live with.

5. Children become accustomed to having their needs for affection, companionship, recognition and response met in the parental family. Moreover, they are conditioned to expect that the phenomenon of love and affection will carry over into a family of their own making.

1.4 PERSONAL QUALITIES CONTRIBUTING TO A SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE:

Certain personal qualities contribute to a happy marriage (Bottomore, 1978)

They are -

1) Consideration.
2) Unselfishness.
3) Confidence.
4) Trust.
5) Maturity.
6) patience.
7) Understanding.
8) Courtesy.
9) Self Control.
10) Honesty.
11) Adoptability.
Marriage is a cooperative enterprise. One should attempt to achieve physical, mental, social and emotional maturity, since success in marriage is dependent upon the degree to which such maturity is achieved. One should be considerate and adaptable because a successful marriage is built on a plan of "give and take".

1.5 NATURE OF HINDU MARRIAGE - A SANSKAR & NOT CONTRACT.

Hindu society is very old and with the passage of time certain traditions have been built around all the social organisations including marriage. Marriage in Hindu society is considered to be physical, social and spiritual bond between the husband and the wife. Since marriage existed even during pre-historic society, therefore it is not deep-rooted but occupies a pivotal position in the kinship organisation. Traditionally, the aims of Hindu marriage are said to be Dharma, Praja (Progeny) and Rati (Pleasure). Hindu marriage is a sacrament because it is considered sacred and it is said to be complete only on the performance of the sacred formality. The marriage is sacred because it is irrevocable. The parties to the marriage cannot dissolve it at will. They are bound to each other until the death of either of them.

Among the Hindus, Vivaha is a ritual and a formality, through which an individual has to go, to be able to start his or her life in the Grihasthasrama i.e., the householder's life. The meaning of Vivaha refers mainly to the ceremony of 'carrying away' the bride to the house of the bridegroom. Vivaha is generally considered as obligatory for every person; because in the 1st place, the birth of a son is said to enable one to obtain Moksha. The vedas ordain that Dharma must be practised by man together with his wife" (Manu). Vivaha is one of the sarira-samskaras (Sacraments sanctifying the body) through each of which every man and woman must pass at the proper age and time. Manu considers it as a social institution for the regulation of proper relations between the spouses.

The Hindu Sastrakaras are especially particular about the Vivaha of a woman, though it is also explained that every male should marry. For, a "wife is the very source (MULAM) of the PURUSHARTHAS, (motivating force of human activity), not
only of Dharma, artha and kama, but even of Moksha. Those that have wives can fulfill their due obligations in this world, truly lead a family life, can be happy and can lead a full life. According to the Hindu Vivaha system, if the elders fail to arrange her marriage within the proper time, it is permissible for such a young lady to take the whole responsibility upon herself of choosing her life mate and enter into wedlock with him. Vatsayana, too advises a young maiden who has attained youth to select a husband for herself and get married without waiting for the assistance and permission of her elders.

The expression "FORM OF MARRIAGE" is generally applied to the numeric variation in the partners in marriage, as Malinowski puts it. Accordingly, the forms of marriage usually listed are monogamy, polygamy, polyandry and group marriage. But in dealing with Hindu Vivaha the forms that are enumerated are -

1) The Brahma form, consisting of the gift (Danam) of a daughter by the father, after decking her with ornaments, to a man, learned in the vedas, and of a good character whom the bride's father himself invites.

2) The Daiva form, involving the gift of the daughter as above, to a priest who duly officiates at a sacrifice, during the course of its performance.

3) The Arsha form, wherein the father gives his daughter in marriage to the bridegroom, after receiving a cow and a bull, or two pairs of these from the bridegroom, in accordance with requirements of dharma and not in any sense with the intention of selling the child. In other words, the gift of cow and bull is to be made as a token of gratitude to the man who offers his daughter to the groom to enable him to fulfill his grihasthasrama obligations.

4) The Prajapatya form, in which the father makes a gift of the daughter, by addressing the couple with the Mantram, "May both of you perform together your Dharma", and has done due honour to the bridegroom.
5) The Asura form - in the four forms mentioned above, the important point to be noted is that it is the father (or a person in his place) who makes a gift of the bride to the bridegroom, but in the Asura form, the bridegroom has to give money to the father or Kinsman of the bride, and thus, in a sense purchases the bride.

6) The Gandharva form, wherein the mutual love and consent of the bride and the bridegroom is the only condition required to bring about the union. Neither the father nor the kinsmen need have a hand in bringing about the marriage. Such marriage may be subsequently consecrated by going through the sacred units of Vivaha.

7) The Rakshasa form is described as the "forcible abduction of a maiden from her home, while she cries and weeps, after her kinsmen have been slain or wounded and their houses broken". It is the capture of the bride by force.

8) The Paisacha form is one in which the man seduces, by stealth, a girl who is sleeping, intoxicated or disordered in intellect.

Manusmriti declares that of these forms, the Brahma, Daiva, Arsha, Prajapatya, Gandharva, and Rakshasha are lawful while the two forms Asura & Paisacha are unlawful and should never be practised.

For the Hindus, then Marriage is a Samskara, and as such, the relations between the marrying parties are of a sacramental character and not a contractual nature.

The concept of marriage is indissoluble. It means that the husband and wife after marriage have to adjust their tastes and temper, their ideal and interests instead of breaking with each other. When they find that these differ, it involves sacrifices on the part of both husband and wife.
LEGAL PROVISIONS FOR HINDU MARRIAGE:

The most important legislation on Hindu marriage is the Hindu marriage Act XXV of 1955. It sets down the following conditions for a valid marriage between two Hindus:

i. Neither party has a spouse living;

ii. Neither party is an idiot or a lunatic;

iii. The bridgroom must have completed 18 years of age and the bride 15 years of age;

iv. The parties should not be within the degree of prohibited relationship, unless custom or usage governing each of them permits a marriage between the two;

v. The parties should not be sapindas of each other unless custom or usage governing each of them permits a marriage between the two.

vi. Where the bride is under 18 years of age consent of her guardian to the marriage must have been obtained.

vii. Marriage may be solemnized in accordance with customary rites and ceremonies.

Under the Act of 1955 a marriage contracted while a former spouse is living or a marriage within the prohibited degrees of relationship or between sapindas is void.

A marriage whether solemnized before or after the commencement of the Act is voidable and may be annulled by the court on any or one of the following grounds:

a) If the respondent was impotent at the time of the marriage and continued to be so until the institution of the proceeding;

b) If a party to the marriage was an idiot or lunatic at the time of marriage;

c) Where the consent of the petitioner or the guardian was obtained by fraud;

d) If the respondent was peegnant by some person other than the petitioner at the time of marriage.
In Indian culture, marriage is considered to be one of the sacraments, through which every man and women must pass. Marriages have been arranged by parents or guardians, and they considered them to be sacred and obligatory performances.

In India, marriage took place very early, even before girls attained puberty. The social background was of the authoritarian joint family and caste with its domination in all spheres of life. The wife was not only attached to the husband as long as he was alive but even after his death. Due to this fact the practice of sati was existing.

In earlier days women were considered to be the weaker sect of the society. Her desires, likes and dislikes were never to be considered, and hence had very little scope of expressing her own desires.

Since independence many changes have been brought about in marital relations and property right of Hindu women. According to Hindu court bill woman have right to freedom for fuller participation in all the sectors of social economic and political life.

There has been a profound shift in the purpose and objectives of marriage, over a period of a few decades. Marriage was thought of largely in economic terms. This was reflected in the practice of arranged marriages in which the parents took the major responsibility for deciding whom their son or daughter would many. Both husband and wife had heavy work roles, if the family was to be a success. Work and property bound them together in a life long bond. The numerous duties performed in the home and on the form made the family relationship the primary one in every aspect of life.

The Hindu women considered it her sacred duty to make him happy at any cost and she lived for him. "'Husband to an Indian woman is not an individual, he is an ideal. The flame of her ideal love illuminates his heart too', says Chatterjee. As a river merging itself in the ocean, loses its identity, like this a wife was supposed to merge her individuality with that of her husband. Her only concern in life was to see that all services needed by her husband were properly performed by her. "The ideal of
PATIVRATA became so deep rooted in the mind of the Hindu woman that the practice of immolation became not only customary but something a woman aspired for".

Describing the traditional Indian woman Radhakrishnan as quoted by Kapoor writes, "Centuries of traditions have made the Indian women the most unselfish, the most self denying and most patient in the world, whose pride is suffering".

The setting of the situation is now changing. Marriage has come to be viewed as a means for personal happiness and companionship and not primarily as a means for subsistence or of survival. It is the union of a man and a woman, who are attracted to each other physically and psychologically and who expect to find continuing pleasure in one another's company.

The modern woman is no longer prepared to accept a social code which recognized the dominance of the male as binding on her. Many women have jobs. The majority who work do so because of economic need. Often the husband wants his wife to work because he cannot balance the family budget on his salary. But dangers may enter when she has to struggle long enough to manage a job and a husband on equal terms. At the same time he is not willing to give up his home comforts and his hold over her. He also wants her to stay as she was. Modern scientific thought has clearly shown that there is nothing inherent in the fact of sex which denies woman any privilege. There is also nothing dangerous in the concept of freedom in marriage. To quote Ellis, "Freedom can not destroy but rather confirm its stability and purify its practice". But in our traditional social structure, the working women are yet to get their due status. Society is still hesitant to render due status to an economically independent woman because the male factor always plays a dominant role in society.

Now-a-days, the traditional cultural values have undergone rapid changes. Now, the Indian society, so also the Assamese society and culture have become more materialistic. The social status of men has now become more dependent on money or other materialistic assets. One of the values of Indian culture is to become economically
self-sufficient. These values have also inspired the womenfolk to enter into various professions. As a result, the social status of women has undergone many changes. Consequently their mental outlook has also changed.

In modern Assamese society also, many women have joined such professions, which were once monopolized by the menfolk. Not only that, some women have also exhibited outstanding professional efficiency. There are not a single profession where women are not taking part. In our society, there are such people, who even now consider that the working women is coming out 'just for a recreation'. But the working women have a double responsibility to bear. First, is her family responsibility. However, she may be in a higher rank in her profession, she will have to look after the welfare of her family, and do all the household chores. Second, is her urge to promote her mental qualities. Many of the working women find it difficult to co-ordinate between the two, as a result of which their married life becomes very complicated and miserable.

Whether a working woman will continue her job after marriage, that is also sometimes decided by her prospective in-laws. A working woman sometimes has to give up her job after her engagement with a wealthy man. The bridegroom's family being very rich, the father-in-law sometimes imposes this condition, that his would be daughter-in-law will have to give up her job after marriage. Moreover, the father-in-law has the apprehension that his relatives will laugh at him for accepting a working woman as his daughter-in-law. This is the situation in our society, when a girl is made to give up her job after her engagement, whereas a boy thinks of his marriage only after getting a job (Baruah, 1992). The Assamese society do not favour their womenfolk taking such profession, which will undermine their traditional role of the mother and the wife. Therefore, the women's personality is often hampered, as they cannot accept the professions of their choice. There are many, who even though educated, and capable of earning a lot, suffer at the hands of their husbands and as a result problems arise in their married life.
Although the condition of women in Assamese society is more or less the same as in Indian Hindu society yet, there are certain aspects which have influenced the status of women in the positive way. The absence of dowry system, and the freedom of choosing their partners in modern Assamese society reflects a slightly better status of woman in Assam.

1.7 VALUES OF MARRIAGE TO-DAY:

There are three basic values of marriage (Desai, 1976). The first and no doubt the most important value sought in marriage is happiness. Life moves in terms of a different set of values now. Goals of marriage and of life also, were once much more stern than are those of today. With the increase of luxury and leisure, modern people have come to look upon happiness as a desirable goal, not only for marriage but for all of life.

A second basic value of marriage is permanence of the pair relationship. This value is held because it is recognized that human beings need the security of having someone always, to depend on someone, with whom they can build their life; until death, forces a separation. This value is important to the stability and security, both economic and emotional, of children who will be born to the marriage.

A third basic value in marriage, is the long accepted idea that marriage, is the natural state for adults. More people are able to marry than in any previous generation and the average age at marriage has declined. Young people are able to marry earlier than previously.

But with the decrease in institutional pressures towards marriage, there has been a great increase in personal need for marriage. Even though today marriage is not so indispensable as in earlier day's it is the way by which the urban individual expects to make his private life complete and worth while. Marriage is of his own doing and his greatest hope for happiness.
Nowadays, people have started to talk about marital happiness and unhappiness while such a concept was not existant in olden times. In ancient times, marriages were ordinarily arranged by the parents and their success was judged by their continuous efforts in the struggle of life.

A major reason for marriage break ups today is the widening mental and social gap between husband and wife. Mrs. Nischol formed that, "A large number of homes were homes in name only. They were not really well-knit families. The husband and wife lived together but they did not have common interests nor were they companionable. She further says that no two marriages are alike and there are hundreds of reasons for a marital break up".

In the past women accepted passively their traditional role as house keepers. But the modern Indian woman has refused to do so and this is one of the major reasons for marital disruption particularly among the upper classes.

Other marital problems in this age group are economic stresses and strains and the problem of bringing up children and the home is a battle ground.

Socio-economic incompatibility can also cause problems for the young couple. If the boy comes from a more affluent background than the girl's she may not be able to adjust to his way of life. If he comes from a poorer background, he feels uncomfortable in his wife's social circle.

Marriage, arranged by the respective families of the bride and bridegroom through family level negotiations is considered most appropriate both in urban and rural areas of Assam. But deviation is found in modern Assamese society. Many girls voice their opinion to marry a boy of their choice (Barooah 1993).

A successful marriage is a matter of making a series of adjustments. It should not be judged by the yardstick of happiness or unhappiness. In every marriage there are bound to be differences. "When couples say they never fight, one begins to wonder, whether they have any relationship at all. In every marriage there is bound
to be some conflict. (Travis & Baruch, 1971). Other couples carry on assuring that every marriage runs into trouble.

1.8 ADJUSTMENT IN MARRIAGE:

The concept of adjustment originated in Biology and was a cornerstone in Darwin's (1859) theory of evolution. The biological concept of adaptation has been borrowed and changed somewhat by the psychologists and renamed 'adjustment' to emphasize the individual's struggle to get along or survive in his or her social and physical environments. Adjustment consists of two kinds of processes: Fitting oneself into given circumstances and changing the circumstances to fit one's needs (Lazarus, 1976).

Marital adjustment is different in several important respects from other aspects of human adjustment. There is the peculiar circumstance that marriage requires the adjustment of a person to one other person. Marital adjustment is a continues never-ending process where two persons work out a common way of life in order to achieve continuing happiness (Desai, 1976). A successful marriage is one in which two people have intelligently committed themselves to a life time, together in which each seeks to enrich the life of the other as well as his own through co-operation, children, and a happy home for children. (Burgess, 1950). There is tolerance of each others' faults and respect for each others' virtues.

Marital adjustment depends upon interests, objectives, values, sharing confidences and on having no complaints about their marriage. It emphasises the harmonious or mutual participation in activities. It is the adjustment of husband and wife with each other (Williamson, 1966).

According to Schneiders 1955: "The concept of marital adjustment refers essentially to the art of living effectively and wholesomely within the framework of responsibilities, relations and expectancies that constitute the state of marriage. It means the ability to meet the day to day demands, vicissitudes and responsibilities of marriage with whatever degree of emotional equanimity and efficiency is required at the time. It
involves getting along with and enjoying the companionship of the marital partner, participating in the interests and activities of the family group, accepting additional responsibilities as they arise and changing one's style of life to correspond with changes in family life.

According to Burgess & Shultz 1954 "Marriage is a process of adjustment of husband and wife in which their personalities either achieve fuller expression or reach a dead level of routine activity or are frustrated. Further, they explained that adjustment means changes in the attitudes and behaviour of husband and wife which help both fulfil their marital expectations and wishes".

Burgess and Cottrel 1939 states that, "a well adjusted marriage may be defined as one in which the attitudes and acts of each of the partners produce an environment which is favourable to the functioning of the personality of each"

According to Burgess and Locke 1960, "A well adjusted marriage is a union where the attitude and the acts of husband and wife are in agreement on the chief issues of marriage such as handling finances, dealing with in-laws, where they have come to an adjustment upon interests, objectives and values, where they are in harmony, on demonstration of affection and the sharing of confidences and where they have few or no complaints about their marriage".

Herberts and Marguerite (1964) says "Marriage is a continuous process of getting along together and the constant challenge to keep the happiness it began with, and to improve it". So, marital happiness is the outcome of the product of marital adjustment.

Marriage itself does not guarantee happiness unless efforts are sincerely made to adjust with the situations. Adjustment means "literally to move toward what is fitting, appropriate, just or necessary for both parties. It is a blending, a meshing, and accommodating, a fitting together of two personalities on every level, from sharing the deepest emotions and dreams to the practicalities of maintaining a satisfying
family together'', it does not mean ''tinkering together a life arrangement'', that is just tolerable, or ''putting up with each other in a sort of battle for sexes''. But it is a ''creative process, which means a full willingness to recognize, accept and promote the unique potential of the partner'' (Mamoria, 1981). Mamoria Quothing D'Souza says (1981) marriage is like any other human enterprise ; and it rewards those who strive and toil to earn them. ''Like a matured garden, a genuinely happy marriage is the result of patient, and preserving effort, both before and after marriage''.

Adjustment in married life can be brought about by adoption of certain devices (Mamoria, 1981)

a) Considerateness for each other - If married life is to be harmonious it requires that husband and wife should be considerate towards each other. That is, they should have mutual respect for each other. This means that wife should be treated with courtesy and kindness, as equal partner. On the other hand, wife should also be loyal and respectful towards her husband. Disagreement with each other should not be published to others-not even to parents-for this lowers themselves in the esteem of others. The secrets of married life must be safeguarded between the two who share it.

b) Acceptance of the partner as he or she is: In every marriage there are bound to be a few areas where the couples cannot reach agreements, simply because no two persons are identical in their needs, tastes and interests. Therefore, the partners should not expect something extra ordinary or some special quality to be developed afresh, because habits and interests once formed are difficult to change. It has rightly been said that ''true love involves acceptance of the beloved as he or she is, not as one would want him or her to be or dream that he or she may be. Real adjustment cannot be achieved without respect and acceptance. This requires a mutual willingness to see the other, know the other, understand the other and accept the other''.

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The author of 'Love in the making' has given the following indications of true love conducive to marital harmony:

"1. Genuine interest in the other person and all that he or she says or does.
2. Community of tastes, ideals, and standards, with no serious clashes.
3. Greater happiness in being with this one person rather than with any other.
4. Real unhappiness when the other person is absent.
5. Great feeling of comradeship.
6. Willingness to give and take.
7. Willingness to give their consideration to the other party's judgement.
8. Pride in the other person when comparisons are made.
9. A wealth of things to say and do together."

C) Development of the art of living together: Marriage is a life-long union, a partnership between two persons, and a bond of love that cannot be easily broken, even when there are differences of opinion, attitude and behaviours. This requires personal adjustment between husband and wife. Adjustment must be deliberately planned and cultivated by each partner with joint responsibility. Each must try to know the interests, tastes and wishes of the other, and adjust accordingly. Adjustment means understanding, recognition, and appreciation of each other's nature, each other's needs, and each others roles in marriage. It means a husband really working at his marriage: he strives to be a better man, a better husband, a better father. It means a wife really working at her marriage: She Strives to be a better woman, a better wife, a better mother. Happiness in marriage has to be earned by mutual and cooperative efforts-not by finding faults, nagging or raving but by patience, consideration, and adjustment - by practising the art of living harmoniously together.
d) Satisfaction of needs of the partner: To make life worth living and enjoyable, "the partners must be able to satisfy the needs for affection i.e. being always first in another's heart and thoughts and putting that other person first in one's own; the need for security i.e., having a place where one belongs - permanently and unchangeably; and need for achievement, i.e., making a worthwhile contribution to home and society. Both husband and wife should be able to satisfy each other's emotional needs- that of living affectionate, kind-hearted, loving, thoughtful, sympathetic, faithful, loyal and patient. Both expect appreciation from one another for making a worthwhile contribution towards family happiness, or achieving their respective roles in making each other happy.

A wife has certain responsibility towards her husband and that is of giving inspiration to him in times of depressing tensions and despondency". Similarly, a husband owes obligation to his wife to know his needs, her doings and her expectations from him. A wife needs most the companionship of the husband, when she is lonely. The greatest gift a husband can give his wife is the gift of his time. Through companionship in marriage it becomes possible to "sympathize with each other, to reassure where there is doubt, to give coverage where there is fear, to strengthen where there is weakness".

Le Masters (1957) identifies nine sets of factors associated with marital adjustment: 1) Personality factors, 2) family background, 3) Social class background, 4) sexual factors, 5) in-law relationships, 6) attitudes toward money, 7) religion and basic values, 8) children, and 9) male and female subcultures. Udry (1974) Concurs with Le Masters that social class background and social mobility are important in marital adjustment. He also sees other factors affecting the adjustment or marital success of the couple as including 1) age at marriage, 2) relative age of the mates, 3) propinquity, 4) education of the spouses, 5) religion of the spouses, and 6) race of the spouses. Nass (1978) identifies major areas of marital adjustment to include 1) adjusting to in-laws, 2) adjusting to youthful marriages, 3) work-role adjustments, 4) gender-role adjustments, 5) leisure activities
and 6) adjusting to the family at home. These authors agree to a considerable extent on many of the factors and areas of marriage and family living wherein adjustments have to be worked out -or worked on-by married couples.

Marriage involves a reorganization of living and it is a continuing adjustment (Anderson, 1949). Marriage means that two persons who have previously lived by themselves as single individuals must learn to live together with common purposes and aims. Each of these two has built up his own habits and his own particular points of view and ways of doing things. Many of these habits must be broken or reorganized and a number of new ones formed. The reorganization covers almost every phase of living and personal habits. In many instances, meeting what would seem to be the major problems of marriage does not present as much difficulty as is involved in reorganizing minor activities. The major proportion of this reorganization is concentrated in the early years of marriage and is a hurdle that must be overcome if marriage is to be successful. While marriage contributes directly to the convenience, satisfaction, and pleasure of those who are concerned, there will be some respects in which it will not be quite so convenient, quite so satisfactory, or quite so natural as the state of single living which precedes marriage. Some adjustment, giving in, compromise, reorganization - is essential. So, marriage should be viewed as a continuing adjustment in which both marriage partners enlarge their life spaces.

A popular superstition, holds that marriage will straighten out the difficulties of a badly adjusted person. Thus some people assume that if a boy is a drunkard, a girl can marry him, reform him and save him, or that if a girl has a bad social record, her social inadequacies can be corrected by marriage. Persons with poor personality adjustment before they enter marriage tend to make poor adjustments in marriage and thus create unfortunate environments for themselves and others. Changes in environment, some times affect adjustment, especially when there are very bad features in the old environment, if the newly married couple continue to live in the same
neighbourhood or continue to be dominated by parents. A somewhat similar popular belief holds, that having children will somehow or other clear up personality difficulties. Here again, a substantial risk is taken, especially if the relationship between the parents is very poor. The chances are that the poor relationship will be continued, with the children as the unfortunate sufferers from something for which they were not responsible.

It is much better to think of marriage as genuinely wanted, and as a state to which the participating persons will contribute than to think of it as a curative device. Similarly, it is much better to desire children and to create a favourable atmosphere for them because they are wanted than to use children as a prescription to try to meet deficiencies which cannot be met by other devices. (Anderson, 1949) So, we can conclude that, in so far as it is humanly possible, personal maladjustments and difficulties should be cleared up in advance of marriage, and the persons undertaking marriage should look forward to it as an experience desirable in and for itself. Likewise it should be recognized that merely having children does not create an ideal family life. Although their contribution to marriage and family life is enormous, they are to be desired for their own sake rather than as secondary devices to meet other needs and deficiencies.

Marital adjustment is influenced by many psychological and socio-cultural factors. In the present study three factors are studied, viz., nature of marriage, employment status and span of marriage.

The nature of marriage has an important influence on the marital relationship and adjustment. In India arranged marriages are still a way of life, modifications are observed in recent times in large urban areas and among the educated youth. Boys and girls are given the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process of mate selection. Most of the youth are brought up to believe that their parents and close relatives will strive their best to find the most suitable match for them. Hence, they are ready to marry the partner chosen by the family.
Love marriages are frowned upon, and empathically discouraged, and the pair is considered non-conforming. Yet young people, more recently, tend to select the person they want to marry, and ask their parents for approval of their choice. This is mainly in urban areas. Such marriages, where the partners decide to marry without their parents having selected the mates, don't get the approval of parents, and often the dowry is not given, as a consequence, the parents of the boy, do not easily accept the girl. The other reason for not accepting love marriages is the violation of the traditional role that is denied to the parents of the boy and the girl (Barooah, 1993).

Marriage, arranged by the respective families of the bride and bridgroom through family level negotiations, is considered most appropriate both in urban and rural areas of Assam. But in modern Assamese society, deviation is found. Many girls voice their opinion to marry a boy of their own choice. When the marriage is mutually settled, the boy and the girl bring the matter to the notice of their respective parents (Baruah, 1991).

According to Kumar and Dhyani (1996), it is the very attitude towards the marriage that makes all the difference in a marriage, making it good or bad, than whether one has opted for love marriage or traditional marriage.

Employment status of the wife has on important bearing on the marital relationships. As different people have different attitudes towards the working wives, it influences the marital adjustment of the couples. Moreover, the employed women are not able to devote as much time towards their husbands and family as unemployed wives do. The dual responsibilities of the women may also produce stress and thereby interfere with the marital relationships. (Khanna & Verghese, 1970, Chastin 1985 and Srivastava, 1985). Sanzon (1975), Nicola and Hawkins (1985), and Bal (1988) on the other hand, have observed that wife's employment contributes positively to a couple's happiness in marriage. Womens' employment have greatly affected her status at home and in society. A womans' status in the family is related to whether she is engaged in economic activity or not. Their participation in the economic activity of the society tends to modify the relational system within the family and also influence their status in positive manner. (Gore 1965).
A number of investigations indicate that a woman works for two reasons: because she has to for her economic needs and she wishes to for her mental need. None of these reasons for which she alone is responsible, yet she takes on to herself many hours of hard work in office, in addition to her domestic responsibilities.

Women, when takes up a job or a career either on economic ground or purely for personal pleasure, ultimately becomes a matter of routine and by virtue of regular income, a necessity. The woman who comes out of a house with high ideals of combining a career and a home is disillusioned in no time. Her hopes and aspirations are shattered before she can built up the stamina to face them. While she puts herself up to share tribulations of a man’s life, but she soon finds in the midst of responsibilities and obligations which are normally those of a man.

A working housewife is often viewed with disapproval by the older generation and faults are found in her housekeeping and child care, only too easily and too often by them. She needs the husband's and children's support in favour of her in such case. They must therefore stand by her family and prove that they are neither inconvenienced nor neglected. This will take care of her already existing feeling of being no good mother, wife as she spends many hours away from home and in the office. It is the feeling which makes a working housewife, put in extra efforts into the household management; even at the cost of her health. She is in the kitchen before going to work, seeing to the needs of the husband and children. She sends the children to school before leaving and perhaps does the washing too. Then, the office work and on her return without any rest she again goes through the cooking, feeding, washing, routine till fairly late hours at night. And one would be fairly tired after all this. The bigger help to her can be her husband to give support to her both physically and mentally. The number of families will be very small, where a husband lends a helping hand to wife with the housework or care of the children after they return from work. This is done perhaps without the intention of being unsympathetic or unhelpful. It is perhaps, that he is by nature lazy or is merely the product of our tradition which has given the man in this
country, certain outlook in life and habit which prevents him from wishing to take part in the domestic work, housework which is meant for woman only. This is the attitude which prevent many of our men from being helpful in the house. (Dak 1988)

Martial relationship changes along with the span of time. In the earlier years of marriage, it is better then in the later years. Rollins and Cannon (1974), Lupri and Frideres (1981) and Glenn and Mclanahan (1982) have reported that marital happiness tends to be initially high and then starts slopping down with increasing marital span. Marital happiness tends to increase with increasing marital duration among working women, whereas it seems to decrease with increasing marital span for non-working women (Bal 1988). Housewives with longer marital duration shows significantly higher marital adjustment then their counterparts {Kumar and Maniyar, (1991) and Kumar, (1994)}. 

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