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IMPACT OF DATING APPLICATIONS ON CULTURAL VALUES AND SOCIAL NORMS AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of modern social dynamics, particularly the influence of digital platforms such as dating applications, on interpersonal relationships and social behaviour. With the rapid rise of technology, traditional forms of communication and relationship-building have undergone significant transformation. The research aims to analyse both the positive and negative effects of these platforms on individuals' emotional well-being, commitment patterns, and social interactions. Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, the study identifies trends, behavioural shifts, and psychological implications associated with digital dating culture. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how technology is reshaping human connections in contemporary society.

KEYWORDS: Dating application, Traditional values, Social norms, Communication

1. INTRODUCTION

Mobile dating apps like Tinder, Bumble, and Hinge have significantly transformed how young adults form and manage relationships. Beyond matchmaking, these platforms influence social behaviour, cultural attitudes, and norms around intimacy. Research shows they contribute to changing expectations, including a rise in casual relationships and shifts in how love and commitment are



perceived, especially across different cultural contexts. Despite their widespread use, limited research explores how dating apps affect deeper cultural values and social norms, particularly among college students. These apps may normalise behaviours once considered unconventional, reshaping views on relationships, gender roles, and social interactions. As spaces where global and local values intersect, dating apps play a key role in cultural change, making it important to study their impact on young adults' beliefs and practices.

2. OBJECTIVES

- To examine the extent and pattern of dating application usage among college students and the socio-demographic factors influencing such usage.
- To analyse the impact of dating application usage on students' cultural values, including attitudes towards relationships, family norms, and traditional social practices.
- To assess the influence of dating applications on the transformation and normalization of social norms related to dating, intimacy, and interpersonal interactions among college students.
- To evaluate students' ethical perceptions regarding dating applications, with reference to morality, privacy, and social responsibility of digital platforms.

3. RESEARCH METHADODOLOGY

Primary data was collected directly from respondents using a **questionnaire**. The study included a **sample size of 70 respondents** from **diverse academic backgrounds**, selected through a **snowball sampling technique**, where initial participants referred others. The **area of study** covered five oldest and reputed Arts and Science colleges in Coimbatore: **PSG College of Arts and Science, Krishnammal College for Women, Sri Ramakrishna College of Arts & Science, GRD College of Arts and Science, and Dr. N.G.P. Arts and Science College**. The **period of study** spanned **December 2025 to March 2026 (4 months)**.

Tools used for analysis:

Simple percentage analysis, Weighted ranking method, Chi-square test & ANOVA

4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Dating apps are increasingly popular and may be reshaping how college students in India view relationships and social norms. However, there is limited understanding of how these platforms influence traditional values in a culturally rooted society. This gap makes it difficult for researchers and policymakers to assess their broader social impact. Without proper study, digital dating may gradually normalize behaviors that differ from long-standing customs, potentially affecting future relationship patterns among young adults.

5. FINDINGS AND RESPONSES

TABLE 5.1

S NO	AGE GROUP	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	18-21	56	80
2	21-23	13	18.6
3	23-25	1	1.4
4	ABOVE 25	-	-
		70	100

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: Out of a total of 70 respondents, a significant majority—56 individuals, accounting for 80%—belong to the 18–21 age group.

TABLE 5.2

S NO	GENDER	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	MALE	19	27.1
2	FEMALE	51	72.9
		70	100

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: To know the exact opinion and expectation, to identify the gender is mandatory. As per Indian government record only male and female. **The majority of the respondents (72.9%) are female.**

TABLE 5.3
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

S NO	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	UG	63	90
2	PG	7	10
		70	100

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: The result showing that **the majority of the respondents (90%) belongs to undergraduate degree**

TABLE 5.4

S NO	YEAR OF STUDY	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	UG 3RD YR	53	75
2	UG 2ND YR	6	8.6
3	UG 1ST YR	4	5.7
4	PG 2ND YR	4	5.7
5	PG 1ST YR	3	4.3
		70	100

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: The study shows that **the majority of the respondents (75%) are from UG 3rd year.**

TABLE 5.5
FAMILY TYPE

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

S NO	FAMILY TYPE	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	NUCLEAR	49	70
2	JOINT FAMILY	20	28.6
3	SINGLE PARENT FAMILY	1	1.4
		70	100

INTERPRETATION: The study shows that **the majority of the respondents (70%) are from nuclear family**

TABLE 5.6 NUMBER OF MEMBERS IN A FAMILY

S NO	NO OF MEMBERS	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	2 TO 3	11	15.7
2	3 TO 5	45	64.3
3	MORE THAN 5	14	20
		70	100

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: The study shows that **the majority of the respondents (64.3%) are from 3 to 5 members in a family category.**

TABLE 5.7 ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME OF THE RESPONDENTS

S NO	ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	100000-300000	32	45.7
2	300000-500000	18	25.7
3	500000-800000	9	12.9
4	MORE THAN 800000	11	15.7
		70	100

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: The study shows that the majority of the respondents (45.7%) fall under the category of 3 lakhs to 5lakhs annual family income

TABLE 5.8 FREQUENCY OF USING DATING APP

S NO	FREQUENCY	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	DAILY	7	10
2	WEEKLY	4	5.7
3	OCCASIONALLY	4	5.7
4	RARELY	55	78.6
		70	100

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: The study shows that the majority of the respondents (78.6%) use dating apps rarely.

TABLE 5.9 DAILY TIME SPENT ON DATING APPS

S NO	FREQUENCY	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	LESS THAN 30 MINUTES	57	81.4
2	30 MINUTES -1 HOUR	6	8.6
3	1HOUR-2 HOURS	3	4.3
4	MORE THAN 2 HOURS	4	4.3
		70	100

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: The study shows that **the majority of the respondents (81.4%) use dating apps less than 30 minutes**

TABLE 5.10 FACTORS INFLUENCING TO USE DATING APPS

NO OF RESPONDENTS 70

S NO	FACTORS	NO OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
1	SERIOUS RELATIONSHIPS	6	8.6
2	CASUAL DATING	17	24.3
3	FRIENDSHIP	27	38.6
4	ENTERTAINMENT	13	18.6
5	CURIOSITY	10	14.3
6	SOCAIL NETWORKING	22	31.4
		95	100
	NO OF RESPONDENTS	70	

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: The data highlights that friendship and social networking are the primary motivations for using dating apps among respondents, while the pursuit of serious relationships is comparatively rare.

TABLE 5.11 RANKING OF APPS BASED ON USAGE

S NO	APP	RANK1 (4)	RANK2 (3)	RANK3 (2)	RANK4 (1)	TOTAL SCORE	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
1	TINDER	40	11	3	16	215	3.07
2	BUMBLE	22	28	11	9	203	2.9
3	OKCUPID	28	8	9	25	179	2.56
4	HINGE	21	8	28	13	177	2.53

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: Based on the weighted average, Tinder ranks first with the highest score of 3.07, followed by Bumble (2.90), OkCupid (2.56) and Hinge (2.53), indicating that Tinder is the most preferred app among the respondents based on usage

TABLE 5.12 NUMBER OF FAMILY MEMBERS AND THEIR OPINION ON DATING APPS_AFFECTING FAMILY VALUES

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.044	3	.015	.039	.990
Within Groups	24.828	66	.376		
Total	24.871	69			

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: From the ANOVA results, the significance value (p-value) is 0.990, which is much greater than the conventional threshold of 0.05. (**H₀:** There is no significant relationship

between number of family members and their opinion of dating apps affecting family values)

**TABLE 5.13
THE FAMILY TYPE AND THE OPINION ON INDIVIDUAL CHOICE OVER
FAMILY APPROVAL**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.604	3	.201	.806	.495
Within Groups	16.482	66	.250		
Total	17.086	69			

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: The ANOVA results show a significance value (p-value) of 0.495, which is greater than the standard threshold of 0.05 (**H₀:** There is no significant relationship between family type and opinion on individual choice over family approval)

TABLE 5.14 THE FAMILY TYPE AND SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE ON CASUAL DATING

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.227	3	.409	1.702	.175
Within Groups	15.859	66	.240		
Total	17.086	69			

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: The ANOVA results show a significance value (p-value) of 0.175, which is greater than the standard threshold of 0.05 (**H₀:** There is no significant relationship between family

type and social acceptance of casual dating)

TABLE 5.15 GENDER AND EFFECTIVENESS ON FORMING COMMITTED RELATIONSHIPS

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2- sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.528^a	4	.237
Likelihood Ratio	5.507	4	.239
Linear-by-Linear Association	.228	1	.633
N of Valid Cases	70		

a. 5 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: Since the p-value exceeds 0.05, there is no statistically significant relationship between gender and opinions on the effectiveness of dating apps in forming committed relationships.

TABLE 5.16 THE FAMILY TYPE AND REASON FOR SWITCHING OVER FROM TRADITIONAL TO ONLINE RELATIONSHIP

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.077	4	.269	1.094	.367
Within Groups	16.008	65	.246		
Total	17.086	69			

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: The ANOVA results show a significance value (p-value) of 0.367, which is greater than the threshold of 0.05 (**H₀:** There is no significant relationship between family type and reason for switching from traditional to online relationships)

TABLE 5.17
A) THE FAMILY TYPE AND REDUCTION OF IMPORTANCE OF
ARRANGED MARRIAGE IN OUR CULTURE

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.771	4	.193	.768	.550
Within Groups	16.315	65	.251		
Total	17.086	69			

INTERPRETATION: The ANOVA results indicate a significance value (p-value) of 0.550, which is greater than the standard threshold of 0.05 (**H₀:** There is no significant relationship between family type and the reduction of importance of arranged marriage in our family culture)

B) AGE GROUP AND DATING, APPS PROMOTING WESTERN CULTURE
AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.690	5	.138	.675	.644
Within Groups	13.096	64	.205		
Total	13.786	69			

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: Since the p-value (0.644) is greater than 0.05, **there is no statistically significant difference** in opinions about apps promoting Western culture among different age groups.

C) THE FAMILY TYPE AND CONFLICTS WITH FAMILY CULTURAL VALUES

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.803	5	.361	1.510	.199
Within Groups	15.283	64	.239		
Total	17.086	69			

SOURCE: PRIMARY DATA

INTERPRETATION: Since the p-value (0.199) > 0.05, the differences in perception across family types are not statistically significant.

6. CONCLUSION:

The study found no significant relationship between social or family factors and dating app usage, leading to acceptance of the null hypothesis. This means elements like family type, size, peer groups, and social influence do not strongly affect students’ use of these apps.

The results suggest that college students make independent choices about using dating apps, reflecting greater personal autonomy. Overall, dating app usage appears to be driven more by individual preference than by traditional or social influences, highlighting a shift toward self-determined behavior among young adults.

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