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## **THE FATE OF INDIAN WEDDING INDUSTRY IN POST COVID-19 ERA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The outbreak of covid-19 has affected the Indian wedding industry in an unprecedented manner. Particularly, due to the inherent nature of this industry, it would be among the first ones to confront the tremors of economic slowdown. Priorities for the weddings will be changed majorly. Key factors like spending choices, size of the gathering, wedding arrangements, etc. would be wisely taken into account by the families. This research paper attempts to analyze the changing trends of Indian wedding industry during the COVID-19 era.

India holds the 2<sup>nd</sup> position after US in size of the weddings, a report by KPMG in 2017. The researchers recommend using the findings and recommendations for improvising the Indian wedding industry in post COVID-19 era and to entertain all the facilities customers would prefer now onwards.

In a nutshell, this research paper would help the wedding industry a lot to improvise and adopt the new changes occurred after the pandemic COVID-19.

**Key Words:** COVID-19, Consumers, Indian Wedding Industry, Preferences, Weddings

## INTRODUCTION

Wedding is something where two individuals are united by a bond called “marriage”. However, in India, it is believed that marriage is not only between two individuals rather it is a bond shared by two families i.e.; bride’s family and groom’s family. Wedding can be of different types with different cultures, aspects and beliefs. Wedding in India is more like a huge celebration or like a festival. A very grand occasion focused with sparkles, colour, lavish arrangements with a lot of pomp and show. Indian weddings usually begin at least a week in advance. All the guests, music, dance, with trending decorations, delicious food all are the part of this extravaganza. The word “Indian Wedding” itself carries a bunch of an entire fortune and luck which people long to spend. In my perception, an Indian wedding creates an aura of joy and excitement all over and one’s happiness knows no bounds. There is an environment where gifts are exchanged, elaborated preparations are done more focused on food, fun, decorations, clothes, floral, etc.

The entire crowd and their eyes are enthralled towards the gorgeous bride and handsome groom. They are adorned with most precious jewels and attire. Although the expenditure, pomp and show make it an extravagant affair and not only the ceremonies but the whole environment at an Indian wedding is grand, full of colors and bright. The rituals and ceremonies are religious in nature and can vary from families to families, religions to religions and moreover place to places. Sometimes, people spend their entire fortunes in a wedding and this could decide their fate as well, because many a family becomes bankrupt and the worst part is that even after spending their life’s earnings in the wedding, the couple’s happiness after the marriage is not ensured.

An Indian wedding takes place for almost 5-6 days depending upon the rituals and ceremonies. Starting with all the planning till the execution of the planning an Indian wedding is all planned in terms of demand, ongoing trends, budget and all the requirements by both the families as well. Nowadays, a sum up of industries like event management companies, associate industries, etc., in weddings are emerging which helps the couple’s families to execute all their planning and moreover giving more than they have expected. This wedding industry comprises of different industries which all are a major part of a wedding.

Talking about the wedding industry, Indian wedding industry includes wide variety of Industries namely-

- a) Gems & Jewellery Industry
- b) Event Management Industry (comprises aspects like hospitality, venue, lightings & decor)
- c) Apparel Industry (includes attire, dresses)
- d) Associated Services (involves the horizons like cards, video-photography, beauty products industry, etc.)

All the above industry work together with best co-ordination and co-operates well to create a wedding event. The wedding industry is globally diverse consisting of different variety of types and traditions and rituals that are involved in ceremonies between ethnic groups, countries and parties involved. Nowadays, most wedding ceremonies involve the couple exchanging vows although in some religion there is an exchange of traditional vows that has been customary but these days couples often choose to create their own vows. The demand for wedding services is dependent upon the personal income of the consumer/ families, as well as consumer preferences for their wedding ceremony.

A report by KPMG which was conducted in the year 2017, reveals that Indian wedding industry holds the second position after USA in size i.e.; it has estimated that Indian wedding to be around \$40-50 billion in size. To be precise, India celebrates about 10 million weddings per year. Without the assistance of above wedding industry, no wedding can take place properly likewise without strong pillars no building can stand upright!

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Conducting a literature review has many various purposes. In some instances, a literature review is done in order to have background information to a research paper. In scientific papers, it serves the purpose of letting readers know what type of similar research has already been conducted on a concerned topic, and why new research is necessary. Regardless of the purpose, a literature review can add to the credibility of a paper, and as a stand- alone

document, it can be a valuable resource to professionals who wish to keep abreast in their field of expertise.

What a literature review is? Many of us mistakenly think that a literature review is simply a review of a text. This is not true. A literature review refers to a collection of material on a specific topic, generally written within a specific time frame. While a literature review is occasionally meant to stand on its own, it is more often done in effort to provide background information for a research or scientific paper.

Not much research has been done with this regard in India, but many researchers have been done the research work in abroad with this prospect. Indian wedding market outlook to 2020-focus on online matchmaking and wedding planning segment (2016) did a research on the different aspects of online matchmaking and wedding planning, the report also covered the segmentations by market structure, by geography, by a budget of Indian families, by wedding venues, by popular themes, etc. The research also reveals that a drastic rise in growth in the matchmaking segments for the last five years FY'2010-FY'2015.

Social factors influencing the choices of the Indian Hindu married women in marriage (2013), the researcher interviewed 20 married Indian Hindu women who were living in the US to identify and examine the social factors that influenced the choices of these women made regarding the various Vedic wedding rituals. The interviewed women identified the social factors as the influence of modernization and westernization in India, the role of family and community, and the role of education which affected their choices. These three major social factors played a significant role in their decisions and conceptualizing their choices in the ritual selection.

An assessment of future trends in wedding planning (2013), where an email link was sent to 50 wedding planners of California, out of which 10 wedding planners reverted with the responses. It was found that all regions of California had similar future wedding trends related to glamorous, 1920's or vintage themes. The responses from wedding planners also revealed that there was a minute difference between current trend in wedding planning and future trend in wedding planning.

Study on Indian wedding industry- a new boom (2010), where the researcher combined two aspects i.e.; marketing with the wedding industry. Where the researcher researched every

work from the starting of planning part till the execution part, where researcher refer to if wedding planner is ready to work why should the family take psychological pressure of all arrangements rather they should enjoy freely with the family. As these functions occur once in a lifetime and then are left only with the memories.

## **LIMITATIONS**

This study was limited by the following factors:

- The subjects did not represent all of the potential customers rather it is an average of all the customers who are interested in wedding industry.
- The study is being conducted in Jharkhand only so it is an average outcome of consumer preferences of Jharkhand only.

## **RESEARCH QUESTION**

- Will Indian wedding industry be affected due to COVID-19?
- What new priorities would be introduced in wedding industries in post COVID-19 era?
- How the Indian wedding industry would get through this pandemic and adopt the new changes in their existing procedure?

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research is a process in which the researcher wishes to find out the end result for a given problem and thus the solution helps in future course of action. The research has been defined as “A careful investigation or enquiry especially through search for new fact in any branch of knowledge.

The procedure using, which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena, is called methodology. Methods comprise the procedures used for generating, collecting, and evaluating data. Methods are the ways of obtaining information useful for assessing explanation.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

Research design is the specification of the method and procedure for acquiring the information needed to solve the problem.

**Degree of Research Question:** explanatory study is done for the study of consumer behavior and how they react in the post COVID-19 era.

**Time Dimension:** The study was done using cross sectional method.

**Research Instrument:** Questionnaire is the research instrument used here. The researcher has effectively used both open ended and closed ended questions.

## SAMPLE DESIGN

**Sample Population:** A population is a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement. All items in any field of enquiry constitute the universe. Here population refers to the number of consumers who are using and experiencing the utility provided by the industry.

The sample population includes people from various categories like:

**Sampling Area:** It is the place where sample is drawn. Here the researchers took samples from various districts of Jharkhand.

**Sample Size:** The number of sampling unit selected from the population is called the size of the sample. The sample size selected was 100 for consumer's survey.

**Sampling Technique:** Here the researcher uses probability sampling method i.e.; simple random sampling used as the sampling technique.

## DATA COLLECTION METHOD

**Primary Data:** Primary data are those, which are collected for the first time, and they are original in character. A suitable combination of questionnaire techniques & discussion with the respondents was used to collect the required primary data.

Primary data gives higher accuracy and facts, which is very helpful for any research and its findings. The researcher has collected primary data from questionnaire i.e.; formed a Google form and circulated the link throughout.

**Secondary Data:** The secondary data are those, which are already collected by someone for some purpose and are available for the present study. Secondary data was collected from the books, journals, magazines, websites and other such sources.

So, the researchers have opted for primary data collection as it is more accurate and helpful for further research findings.

### STATISTICAL TOOLS USED

**Percentage Method:** In this research paper, percentage method is being tested and hence used. The following formula is taken into account-

$$\text{PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS} = \frac{\text{NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS}}{\text{TOTAL RESPONSES}} \times 100$$

Hence, percentage method is used to show the information of all respondents in the form of pie charts and histograms.

### CHAPTER 3: DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

After collecting the data through primary data in the form of survey questionnaire, all questionnaires were not in a summarised form so data was observed and further process begun. After cleaning the data, tables were prepared, frequencies and percentage were derived.

The demographic profile of the whole population is as follows:

#### DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

SR. NO.	DEMOGRAPHICS VARIABLES	FREQUENCY
1.	<b>AGE</b>	
	i.) Less than 20 years	29
	ii.) 20 to 30 years	50
	iii.) 30 to 40 years	11
	iv.) Above 40 years	10
2.	<b>GENDER</b>	
	i.) Male	46
	ii.) Female	54

	iii.) Other	0
<b>3.</b>	<b>OCCUPATION</b> i.) Student ii.) Faculty/ Regular employee iii.) Business person iv.) Homemaker v.) Working professional	64 10 15 10 1

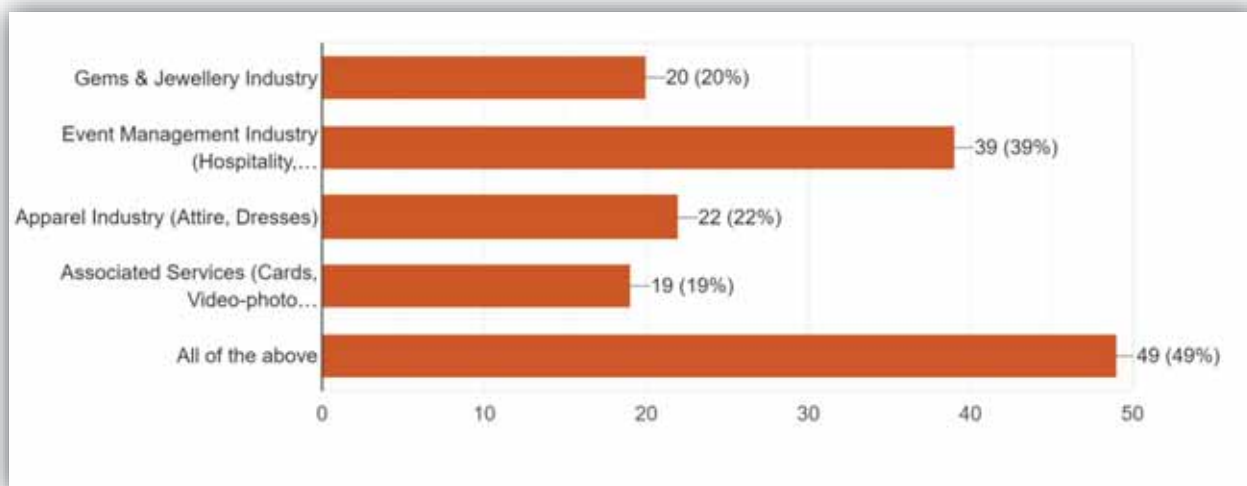
**TABLE 1**

**1. The preferences of the respondents towards which of the following industry had maximum growth-related reliance on the occurrence of wedding in pre-COVID era.**

<b>OPTIONS</b>	<b>NO. OF RESPONDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
<b>GEMS &amp; JEWELLERY INDUSTRY</b>	20	13.42%
<b>EVENT MANAGEMENT INDUSTRY</b> ( HOSPITALITY, VENUE, LIGHTNINGS & DECOR)	39	26.17%
<b>APPAREL INDUSTRY (ATTIRE, DRESSES)</b>	22	14.77%
<b>ASSOCIATED SERVICES (CARDS, VIDEO-PHOTOGRAPHY, BEAUTY PRODUCTS INDUSTRY, ETC.)</b>	19	12.75%
<b>ALL OF THE ABOVE</b>	49	32.89%
<b>TOTAL</b>	149	100%

**TABLE 2**





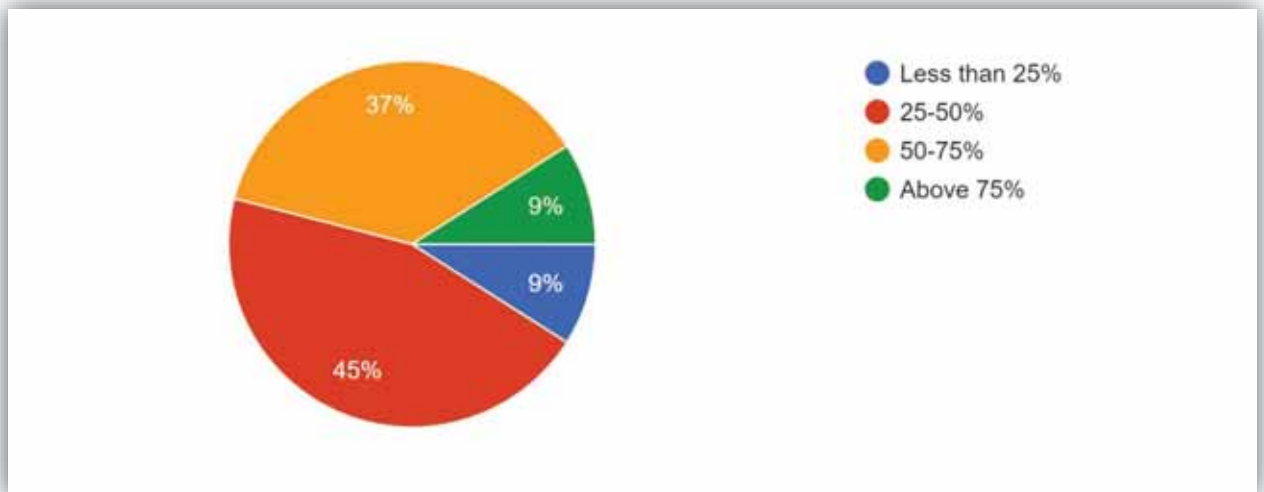
### Interpretation:

The above data reveals that 49% of the population thinks that all the industry be it gems & jewellery, event management, apparel and associated industry; all had growth related reliance on the occurrence of wedding in pre COVID era, whereas 39% of the total respondents think only event management companies had the maximum growth reliance in pre COVID era.

### 2. The preferences of the respondents towards percentage of personal saving that were utilized by general public on wedding in pre -COVID era.

OPTIONS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
LESS THAN 25%	9	9%
25-50%	45	45%
50-75%	37	37%
ABOVE 75%	9	9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

TABLE- 3



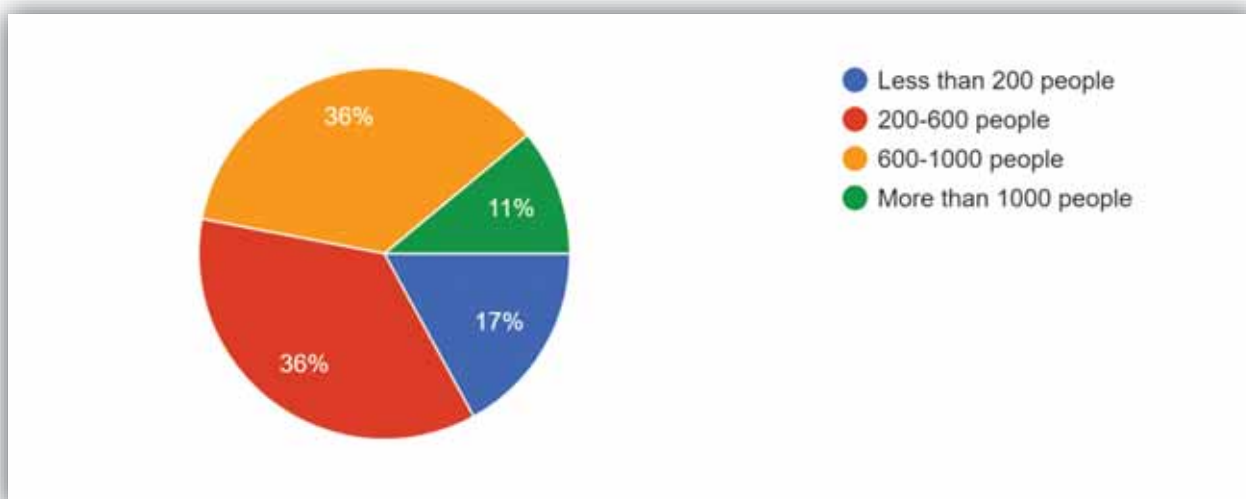
### Interpretation:

The above data shows us that 45% of the population thinks that around 25-50% of general public's savings were utilized on weddings in pre-COVID era. Wherein, 9% of the respondents opted for above 75% of the savings are utilized and 9% also thinks that less than 25% of the savings were utilized for the weddings in pre COVID era.

### 3. The preferences of the respondents towards the average size of gatherings in wedding events in the pre- COVID era.

OPTIONS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Less than 200 people	17	17%
200-600 people	36	36%
600-1000 people	36	36%
More than 1000 people	11	11%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

TABLE -4



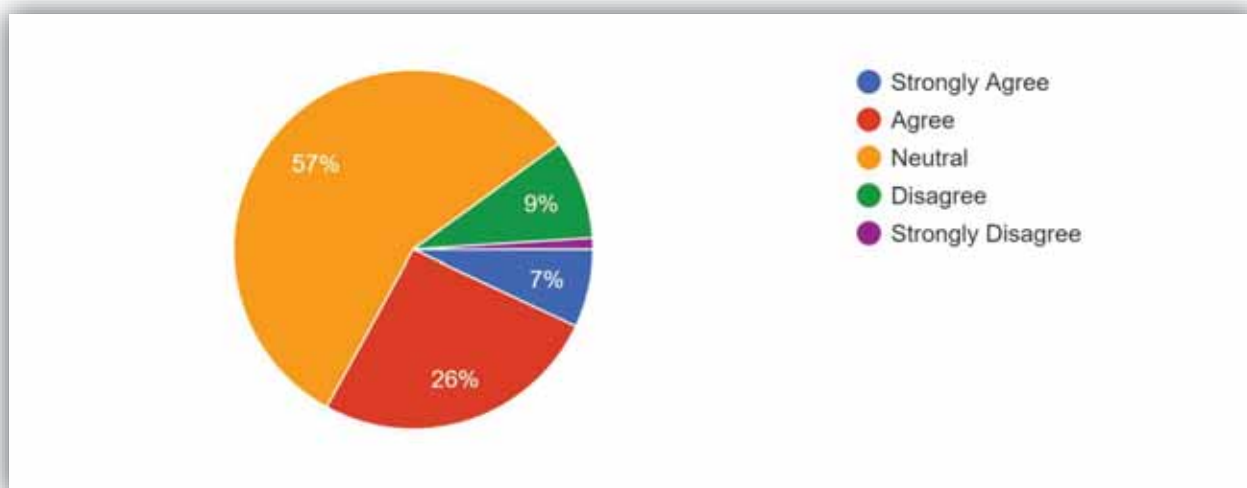
### Interpretation:

The above pie diagram show us the average size of gathering in wedding events in the pre-COVID era where in most of the respondent have opted for 200-600 people and 600-1000 people, i.e.; both are having a percentage of 36%, whereas other two aspects have 17% (less than 200 people) and 11% (more than 1000 people) respectively.

#### 4. The preferences of the respondents towards Indian wedding industry be accessed and trusted through various elements of technology like website, TV adverts, social media platforms, etc.

OPTIONS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AGREE	7	7%
AGREE	26	26%
NEUTRAL	57	57%
DISAGREE	9	9%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

TABLE -5



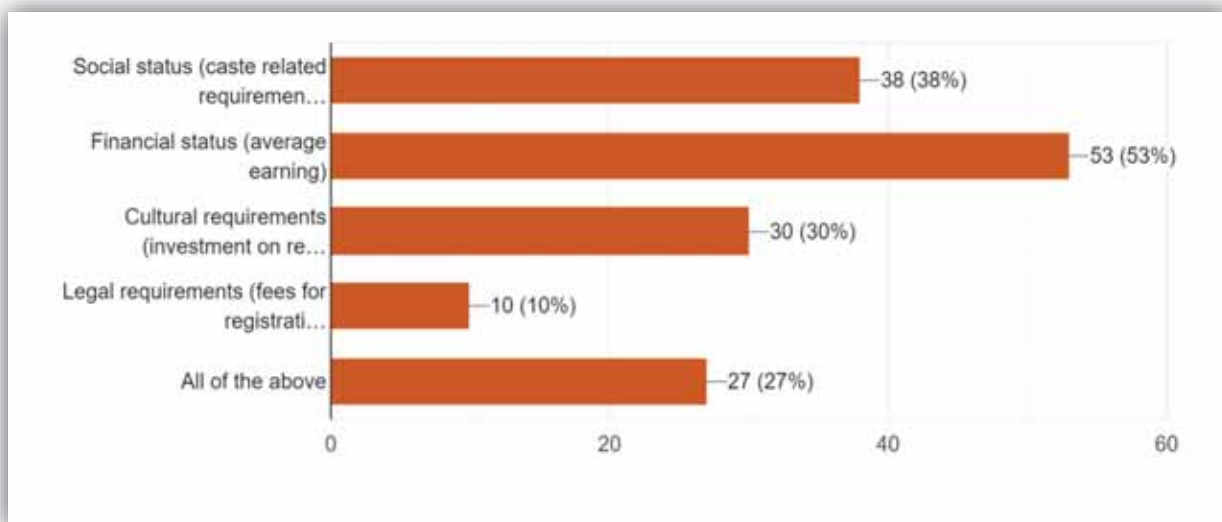
### Interpretation:

The above data shows us 57% of the population is neutral about the choice of trusting and accessing the various elements of technology in Indian wedding industry be it websites, TV adverts, social media platforms, etc. On the other hand, 26% of the population agrees with the statement and 7% strongly agrees wherein 9% disagrees and 1% is strongly disagrees with the fact of the statement.

### 5. The preferences of the respondents towards the spending capacity on a wedding in pre -COVID era were governed by which factors.

OPTIONS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
SOCIAL STATUS(CASTE RELATED REQUIREMENTS)	38	24.05%
FINANCIAL STATUS(AVERAGE EARNING)	53	33.54%
CULTURAL REQUIREMENTS (INVESTMENT ON RELIGIOUS RITUALS)	30	18.99%
LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (FEES FOR REGISTRATION OF MARRIAGE)	10	6.33%
ALL OF THE ABOVE	27	17.09%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100%</b>

TABLE-6



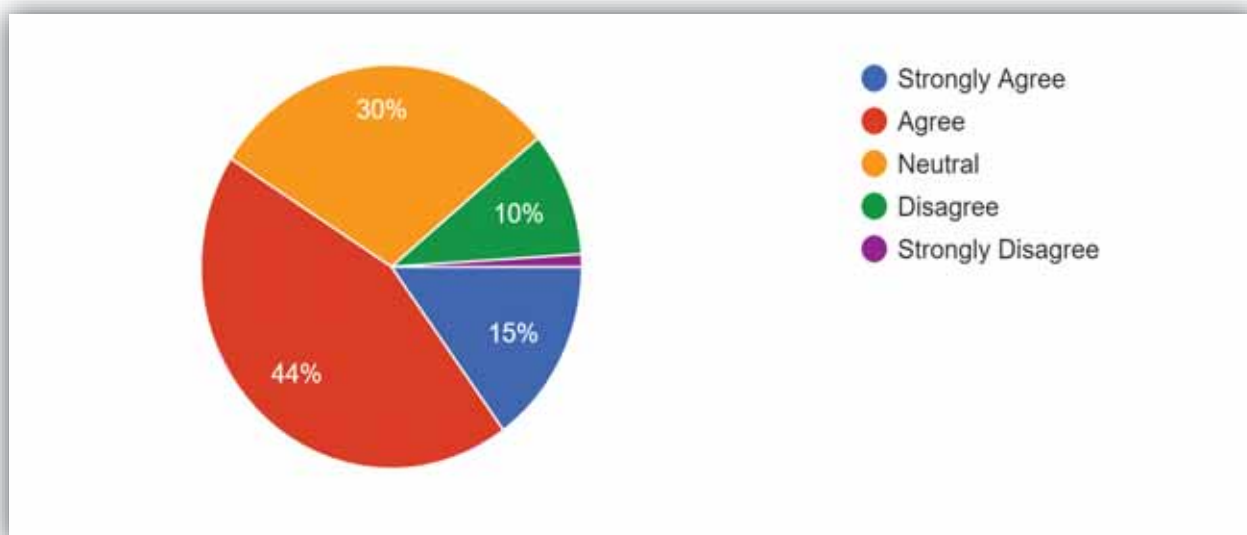
### Interpretation:

The above graph and details reveals the fact that the respondents think social status with 53% is the prior factor which is governed in the spending capacity of any wedding in the pre COVID era. Although, social status lies behind it with 38% and 27% of the population thinks that all the factors i.e.; social status, financial status, cultural requirements and legal requirements all are the governing factors of spending capacity on a wedding in the pre COVID era.

### 6. The preferences of the respondents towards occasions like wedding can majorly affect the economy of a country like India.

OPTIONS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AGREE	15	15%
AGREE	44	44%
NEUTRAL	30	30%
DISAGREE	10	10%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

TABLE-7



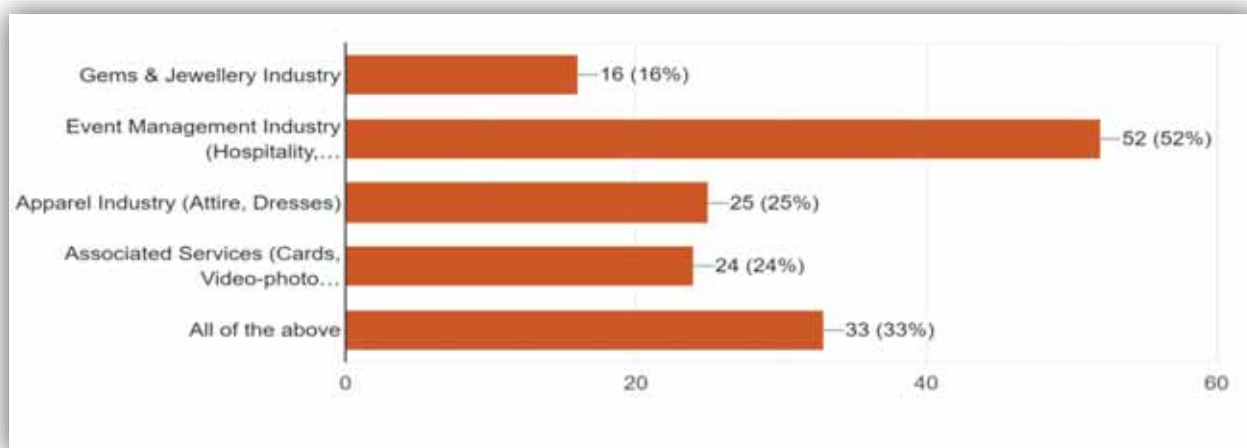
### Interpretation:

The above data and diagram portrayed that 44% of the total population agrees with the statement that weddings can majorly affect the economy of country like India whereas 30% of the respondents are not sure about whether weddings affects the economy or not i.e.; they opted for neutral. Although, 15% strongly agrees with the statement on the other part, 10% disagrees and 1% is strongly disagrees with the fact.

### 7. The preferences of the respondents towards which aspect of Indian wedding industry would get negatively affected by this ongoing pandemic (COVID-19).

OPTIONS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
GEMS & JEWELLERY INDUSTRY	16	10.66%
EVENT MANAGEMENT INDUSTRY (HOSPITALITY, VENUE, LIGHTNINGS AND DECORE)	52	34.67%
APPAREL INDUSTRY (ATTIRE, DRESSES)	25	16.67%
ASSOCIATED SERVICES (CARDS, VIDEO-PHOTOGRAPHY, BEAUTY PRODUCTS INDUSTRY, ETC.)	24	16.00%
ALL OF THE ABOVE	33	22.00%
<b>TOTAL</b>	150	100%

TABLE -8



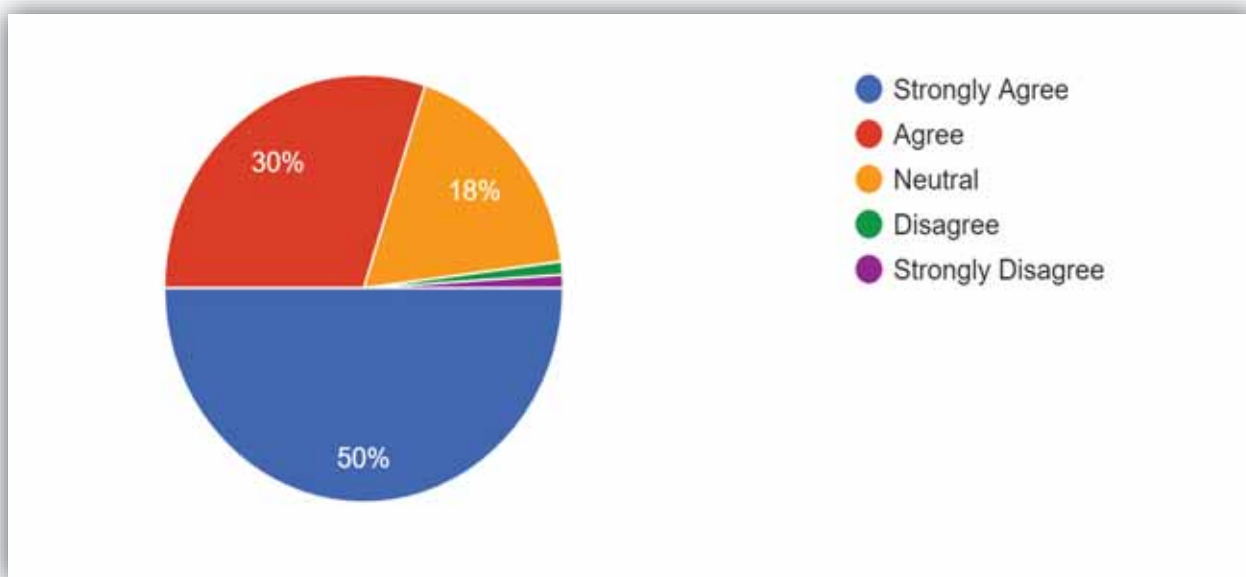
### Interpretation:

The above data when observed found out the as to which industry would negatively be affected by the ongoing pandemic and after evaluating, 52% of the population opted for event management industry, whereas 33% of the population opts for all of the above aspect i.e.; gems & jewellery industry, apparel industry and associated services industry. But 16% respondents also opted for gems & jewellery industry, 25% opted for apparel industry and 24% opted for associated services.

### 8. The preferences of the respondents towards pandemic will affect the size of gathering in the wedding.

OPTIONS	NO. OF RESPONDENT S	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AGREE	50	50%
AGREE	30	30%
NEUTRAL	18	18%
DISAGREE	1	1%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

TABLE-9



### Interpretation:

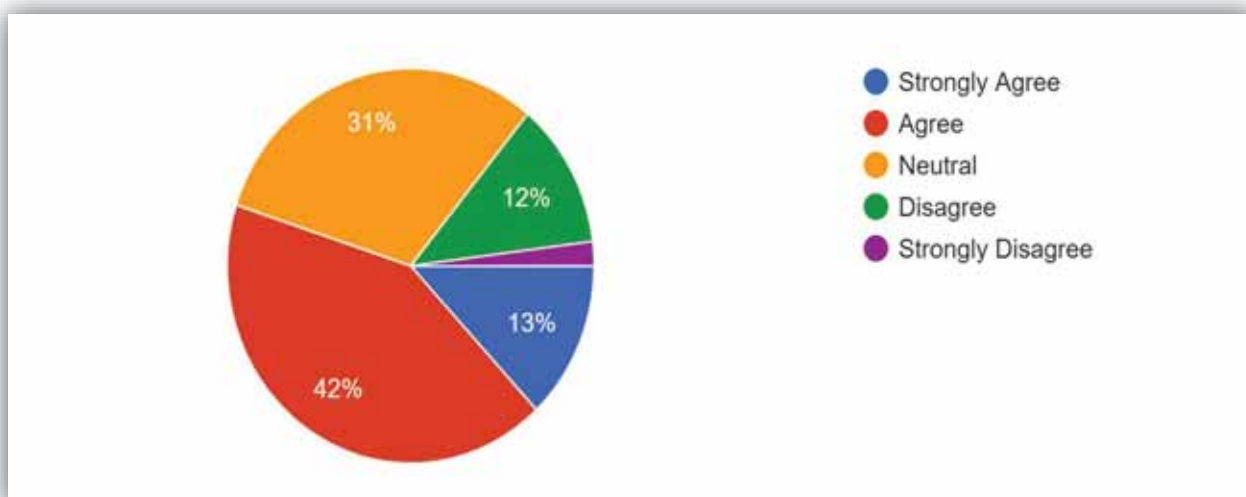
After observing the data, we found that 50% of the population strongly agrees with the fact that size of gatherings in the weddings will be affected by this ongoing pandemic. Whereas, 18% of the population is not sure about whether size of the gathering will get affected or not, 1% each opt for disagree and strongly disagree with the statement.

**9. The preferences of the respondents towards will technology overtake all the manual arrangements and will change the way of operating business involved in wedding industry.**

OPTIONS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AGREE	13	13%
AGREE	42	42%
NEUTRAL	31	31%
DISAGREE	12	12%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	2	2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**TABLE -10**





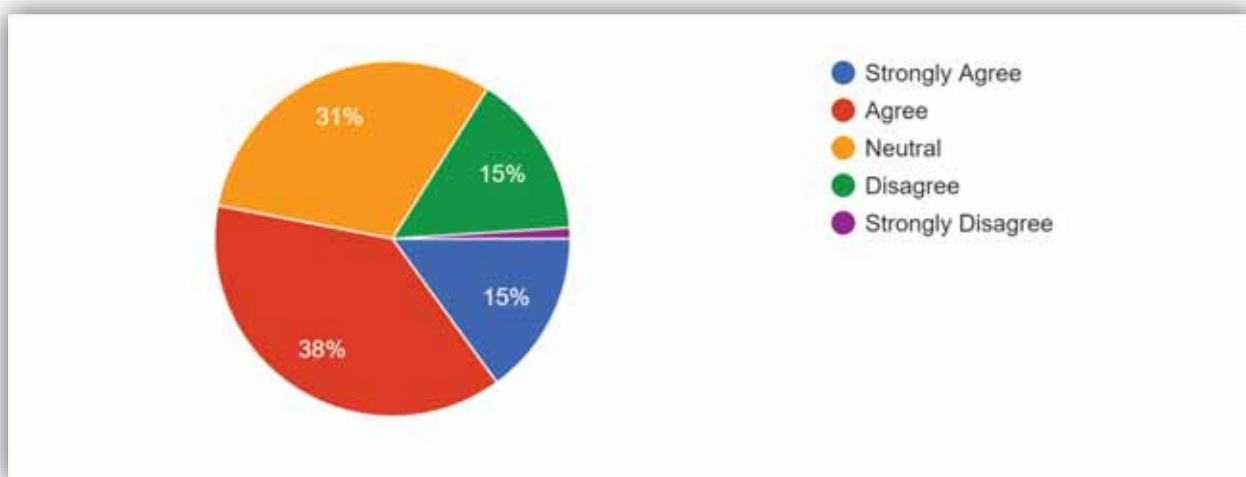
### Interpretation:

The above pie diagram show us that 42% of the population agrees that technology will overtake all the manual arrangements and will change the way of operating business involved in wedding industry whereas 31% of the population are still not sure about the fact and 12% of the population disagrees with the fact that if technology will take over the manual arrangements or not.

### 10. The preferences of the respondents towards the trend of “SMALL VIRTUAL WEDDINGS” will be preferred to “BIG FAT WEDDINGS” in post -COVID era.

OPTIONS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AGREE	15	15%
AGREE	38	38%
NEUTRAL	31	31%
DISAGREE	15	15%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

TABLE -11



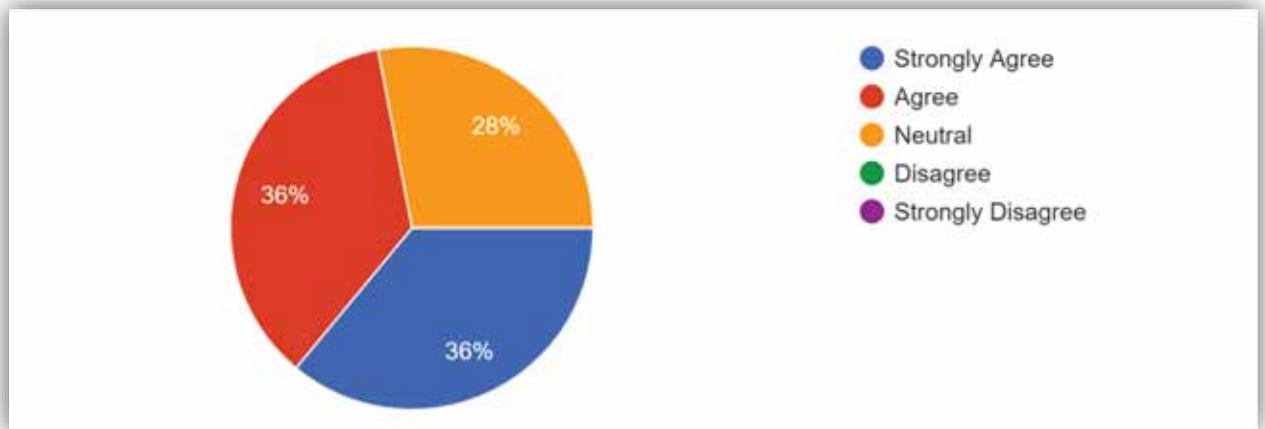
### Interpretation:

The above fact is about the new trend of “SMALL VIRTUAL WEDDINGS “will be preferred to “BIG FAT WEDDINGS” in post – COVID era where 38% of the respondents have agreed with the new trend and 15% of the population strongly agreed with the new trend but we found out 31% of the population were not sure about the new trend and also 15% disagrees with the fact.

### 11. The preferences of the respondents towards social distancing, use of sanitizers, e – invitations and hygienic procedures would be a necessity in the post -COVID era.

OPTIONS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AGREE	36	36%
AGREE	36	36%
NEUTRAL	28	28%
DISAGREE	0	0%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	0	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

TABLE -12



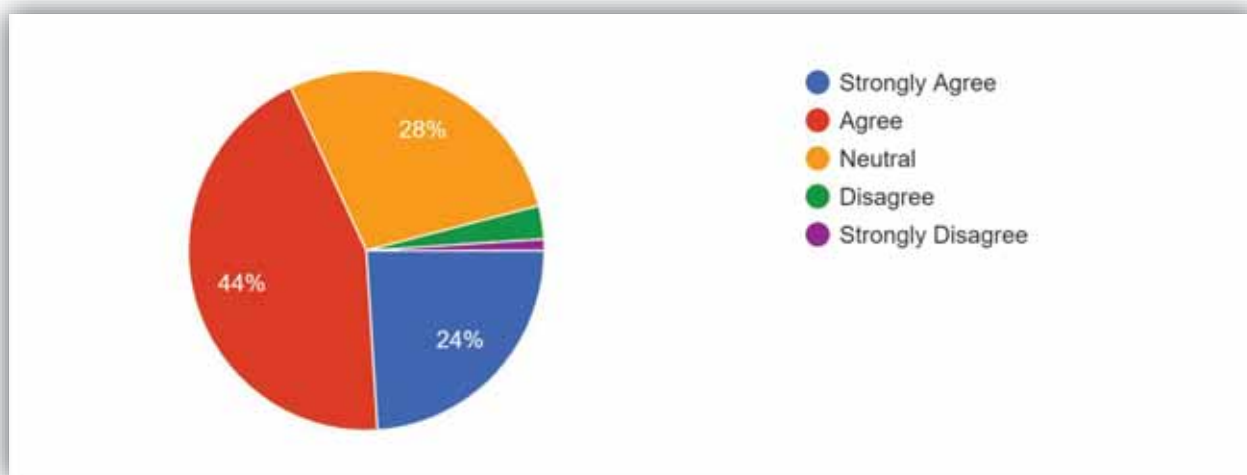
### Interpretation:

The above result of the survey shows a positive response towards the fact that social distancing, use of sanitizers; e- invitations and hygienic procedures would be a prior necessity in the post –COVID era where 36% of the respondents strongly agree and other 36% also agrees with the statement whereas 28% are not much sure about the usage will be a priority or not.

### 12. The preferences of the respondents towards the spending capacity will significantly decrease in the post –COVID era.

OPTIONS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AGREE	24	24%
AGREE	44	44%
NEUTRAL	28	28%
DISAGREE	3	3%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

TABLE-13



### Interpretation:

We found out that 44% agrees that spending capacity will get affected and eventually it would decrease in this ongoing pandemic, 28% is not sure about whether spending capacity factor will be affected or not.

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS (PRE COVID-19 ERA vs POST COVID-19 ERA IN INDIAN WEDDING INDUSTRY)

- ✓ We can find that in pre COVID era 49% of the population opted for all the industries is having maximum growth-related reliance but when asked about which industry would get negatively affected by the pandemic the percentage decreased to 33% , whereas 52% of the population chosen for event management industry specifically.
- ✓ Data revealed that in pre COVID era 45% of the population thinks that 25%-50% of general public's personal savings are utilized in an event like wedding but after the pandemic they think 44% of the population agrees with the fact that spending capacity would be decreased.
- ✓ 36% of the population respectively opted for each size slot attended a gathering of 200-600 and 600-1000 people in pre COVID era whereas 50% of the population agreed upon that there will be an effect in size of the gatherings in post COVID era.
- ✓ When questioned about whether Indian Wedding Industry be accessed and trusted through various elements of technology like websites, TV adverts, social media

platforms, etc. in the pre COVID era, 57% of the population was at neutral (i.e.; they was not sure about this horizon). However, in post COVID era 42% of the population believes that technology will overtake the manual arrangements and will change the way of operating businesses involved in wedding industry.

- ✓ Researchers also found that 44% of the respondents agreed upon the fact that occasions like weddings can majorly affect the economy of a country like India which reveals that wedding industry plays a vital role in economic upliftment too.
- ✓ The researchers also observed that 53% of the population thinks social status is the ultimate factor which governed the spending capacity in a wedding.
- ✓ 38% of the population stands for the new trend statement i.e.; “SMALL VIRTUAL WEDDING” will be preferred more than “BIG FAT WEDDING” in post COVID-19 era.
- ✓ A major change that will occur after the pandemic COVID-19 is the priority of using sanitizers, e-invitations and hygienic procedures; it will become a major prior part from the initial stage of wedding i.e.; planning of the wedding.

The above are the findings which we found to be a summarized informative study of the whole research paper. Depending upon the primary data, above findings have been drawn which will help in further research.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- We all know how COVID-19 has an adverse effect on almost every being on this planet so is the business and corporate world.
- We all found out the various aspects of consumer preferences which have changed over after the arrival of COVID-19 virus. The wedding industry will also face the unfavorable horizons due to this pandemic. However, Indian wedding industry would

majorly affect the economy too. The priorities of the consumers have changed all over and the alterations in various sectors in wedding industry would also be witnessed.

- Being a researcher, what I found is, the pandemic would change the whole scenario of an Indian wedding, and the gatherings would get majorly affected. The spending capacity would also be altered.
- Likewise, many new trends would fascinate the wedding industries as well as their consumers and industries would adopt them so as to provide the best services among all and to have an extra special experience for the bride and groom as well.

To wrap up, the researcher recommends taking the above findings into account in their execution of an event like wedding after the pandemic COVID-19; it is just as providing helping hands to them which when executed will give fortunes to the respective.

## **SUMMATION**

The research paper titled “Fate of Indian Wedding Industry in Post COVID-19 Era” has provided an aid to learn more about consumer preferences when nature of the surroundings changes.

The study also helped in understanding and analyzing more about the customer satisfaction and perceptions offered to them in two different scenarios. Every player in the wedding industry would aim for the highest but the industry should be alert in providing what the customer has demanded for. Taking into preference, that wedding industries should provide the excellent services to their customers as there can be many future potential customers in an event like wedding. The researcher hopes that the wedding industry will find the above findings relevant and include the entire essential changes into their accounts to which it will take them miles ahead of the competition.

Our objectives are also specified now like Indian wedding industry would have to adopt the new changes and alterations according to the preferences of the population which was observed through our questionnaire survey and it is clearly perceived that industries can no longer use the existing procedures which were at use in pre COVID-19 era. If any industry fails to provide the improvised services to their consumers they might lose to be in the competition and hence they might lose the future potential customers eventually.

In a nutshell, fate of Indian wedding industry could be determined by the findings and the execution of the event. Sanitizers, masks and all the hygienic course of actions would always be a priority after the occurrence of COVID-19 in all the gatherings be it wedding or corporate party.

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