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**Performative Quality in the Ritual of Matchmaking in Serena Nanda's Essay  
'Arranging a Marriage in India'**

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**Abstract**

This research paper explores the performative quality in the ritual of matchmaking in arranged marriage in Hindu culture in the context of Serena Nanda's essay "Arranging a Marriage in India" through the lens of Victor Turner's theory of liminality. Turner's theory, which describes the transitional phase in rites of passage, is used to analyze the experiences of brides and grooms as they navigate the period between their pre-marital and post-marital identities. This liminal phase, characterized by ambiguity and openness, is marked by significant pressure from familial and societal expectations that also constrain personal autonomy. The role of the matchmaker is pivotal in guiding individuals through this transition, often reinforcing traditional norms and finding the space between the prospective bride and groom and even between their families and bringing them into negotiation in each and every steps of the process for agreement, engagement and marriage even suppressing individual desires. By examining the liminal state of the bride and grooms, this study highlights the complex interplay between societal structures and personal agency, demonstrating how traditional matchmaking practices enforce conformity for marriage and limit self-determination reflecting the rich cultural performativity. The research underscores high performative quality in the ritual of matchmaking with the potential for change within this liminal space, suggesting that the suspension of individual agency of bride and groom and others for prospective marriage and the reconfiguration of identities of bride and groom.

**Key words:** liminality, agency, matchmaking, arranged marriage,

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### Introduction

Birth, marriage, and death are vital parts of human life related to cultural rituals and performances. Marriage is one of the most important liminal periods connecting childhood to adulthood being one from two and two from one in human life. In the opinion of Turner, "Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are between and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial" (359). It signifies the transition from childhood to mature life. It is also the beginning of married life and the ending of an individual life as the other partner comes into an individual's life after marriage. The paper attempts to study the performative quality in the ritual of matchmaking in Indian culture in Serena Nanda's narrative essay 'Arranging a Marriage in India' employing Victor Turner's cultural theory of liminality in the context of Indian cultural arranged marriage. At first, it explores the process of matchmaking as a ritual in connection with the status of arranged marriage in India; and then analyzes the performative quality of the ritual in the text of the essay.

In the present world, arranged marriage, love marriage, eloped marriage, court marriage are common forms of marriage. Among the various types of marriages, arranged marriage is the most acceptable marriage in India. Most marriages in India chiefly occupy the norms and values of arranged marriage. In the major cultures of India as in Hindu, Muslim, or Buddhist cultures, arranged marriage is the only valid and acceptable marriage. "In India, the arranged marriage remains a dominant institution, deeply rooted in cultural and religious traditions, especially among Hindu, Muslim, and Buddhist families. While other forms of marriage, such as love marriages and elopements, are recognized under Indian law, they still lack the same degree of acceptance in many communities" (Mohan & Gupta, 2020, p. 145). It indicates that arranged marriage is the mostly accepted marriage in India. However, the law of India does not prohibit other types of marriages. In this context, Gupta mentions, "Primitive societies present a wide array of practices ranging from age by capture to mutual love and elopement. Yet, the people who marry customary practice are those who are eligible, who consciously followed the established norms, and who did the kind of things they were" (75). People conduct marriages with the cultural norms and values in their societies. Regarding this Gupta also adds, "Arranged marriages are closely associated with 'closed systems' wherein the hierarchies are very intricate and more than a factor such as historical origins, ritual positions, occupational affiliations" (82). As per the rules and regulations of Indian culture, marriage occurs within the boundary of one's caste or sub-caste group. Inter-caste marriage, love marriage, eloped marriage are socially unacceptable. Thus, arranged marriage is the most common within a certain boundary is acceptable in Indian culture.

Arranged marriage is one of the most significant part of life in Hindu culture. In the narrative essay, Nanda presents the process of matchmaking and arranged marriage in Indian culture. As she mentions that marriage is the crucial and significant part of human life in Indian culture. In an arranged marriage in India there are two vital stages. The first stage is to find a suitable pair for a son or daughter. It is a matchmaking process. The second stage is marriage the process of fetching the bride from her parents' home to the groom's home. Both processes are full of rituals and performances. The match-making process is the vital process before the marriage ceremony full of complexities with changing scenarios. Without the completion of a successful matchmaking process, marriage cannot take place in an arranged marriage. After visiting India, she finds that the process of arranged marriage is a completely new and strange culture for her. The youths and people in India believes that the marriage of a person with slightly known or completely new person with their parents decision is better for their future life than their own decision. Then Nanda often visits India and gets a chance to involve as a matchmaker in her friend's son's marriage in finding prospective bride as and she finds that arranged marriage in India is completely ritual. performativity in the process of matchmaking and its significance Indian arranged marriage culture. In *Arranging a Marriage in India*, She also explores the cultural intricacies and enduring social significance of arranged marriages in India through an ethnographic lens, drawing from her experiences and conversations with Indian families. Nanda addresses the complexities and rationales behind arranged marriages, challenging Western perspectives that often interpret these practices as restrictive or outdated. Her essay provides insights into the matchmaking process, revealing how factors such as family reputation, caste, economic status, and compatibility shape matrimonial decisions. Nanda also observes that "the search for a suitable partner in India is not based on romantic love, as in the West, but on a carefully orchestrated process led by the family, primarily the parents, whose aim is to secure a compatible and stable match for their child" (Nanda, 1992, p. 32). This approach highlights the prioritization of family unity, stability, and social conformity over individual desire. She also recounts, "Indian parents believe they can make a better choice than their children because they are guided by the wisdom of experience and a firm understanding of what qualities are essential for a stable marriage" (Nanda, 1992, p. 34). Thus, the text lends itself to a space for analysis of performativity in arranged marriages. In this context, the researcher drawing on Victor Turner's concept of "liminality" to illustrate how the process of selecting a partner represents a transformative phase for both the families involved and the individuals about to enter marriage. From this perspective, the arranged marriage process can be seen as a socially constructed ritual that upholds cultural values and societal structures, guiding individuals from one stage of life to another within a community framework.

### Literature Review

Arranging a marriage in India is a completely ritual and cultural task in India. In this context, some of the major theorists' insights are as follows:

The matchmaking process is a difficult task. In the context of Kashmiri Muslim marriage Kochak says, "Most marriages were arranged by the father of the girl and boy with the help of relatives. But the shift from a narrow focus on birth to economic status, occupation, education, age, appearance, etc. made the profession of match-makers in Kashmir a lucrative profession" (1059). It indicates the task of matchmaking is also conducted through professional match-makers nowadays. In Hindu culture, Brahmins play the role of matchmaker. However, social networks of friends, relatives, and acquaintances also play a role in finding the prospective bride/groom (Mukhopadhyay 92). The changing trend of the matchmaking process also uses digital and professional matrimonial sites such as [bharatmatrimony.com](http://bharatmatrimony.com), [lovbibah.com](http://lovbibah.com), [shadi.com](http://shadi.com), [jeevansathi.com](http://jeevansathi.com), etc.

The process of matchmaking in Indian arranged marriages is characterized by a profound performative quality, intricately intertwined with Victor Turner's theory of liminality. Turner, a prominent anthropologist, conceptualizes liminality as a transitional stage where individuals or groups experience a suspension of their conventional roles and norms, often leading to transformative experiences (Turner, 1969). In the context of matchmaking, this liminal phase manifests prominently as individuals and families navigate the space between tradition and modernity, ritual and negotiation, in their pursuit of marital alliances. Turner describes liminality as a state "betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial" (p. 95). This concept is pivotal in understanding how the performative aspects of matchmaking unfold, where families and individuals temporarily set aside their everyday roles to engage in a structured yet dynamic process of partner selection. Here, rituals and negotiations not only adhere to established norms but also actively shape and redefine them, reflecting Turner's notion of liminality as a period of anti-structure that allows for the emergence of new social configurations.

In addition to Turner's theory, other perspectives enrich our understanding of the performative qualities in matchmaking. Erving Goffman's dramaturgical approach illuminates how individuals perform specific roles during interactions, presenting themselves in ways that are socially desirable and culturally meaningful (Goffman, 1959). This theatrical metaphor resonates with the performative elements of matchmaking, where participants strategically present themselves and their families to negotiate marriage contracts that uphold familial honor and social status.

Furthermore, Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus and cultural capital provides insights into how matchmaking practices perpetuate and reproduce social inequalities through the strategic deployment of cultural resources (Bourdieu, 1977). In this context, the performative acts of matchmaking not only affirm cultural traditions but also reinforce hierarchies based on caste, class, and educational attainment.

This paper explores the performative quality in the process of matchmaking through the lenses of Turner's liminality, Goffman's dramaturgy, and Bourdieu's cultural capital, highlighting how these theoretical frameworks enrich our understanding of the complex social dynamics at play in Indian arranged marriages.

Nanda's essay "Arranging a Marriage in India" offers a critical examination of the performative qualities inherent in the matchmaking process within Indian arranged marriages. Nanda (1995) challenges traditional anthropological perspectives by emphasizing agency, negotiation, and the dynamic interplay of cultural practices and individual aspirations. She also critiques simplistic views that depict arranged marriages as static or oppressive rituals, instead highlighting the performative aspects where participants actively negotiate roles and identities. This departure from conventional theories, such as Victor Turner's concept of liminality (Turner, 1969), reframes matchmaking as a continuous process of social negotiation rather than a temporary departure from social norms.

Moreover, Nanda's analysis aligns with feminist critiques and postcolonial perspectives emphasizes the diversity of experiences and negotiations within arranged marriages (Nanda, 1995). She illustrates how gender, class, and caste dynamics influence matchmaking practices, challenging homogenizing narratives and highlighting the agency exercised by individuals in partner selection. Nanda's approach contrasts with structural-functionalist perspectives that view matchmaking as reinforcing social order and stability (Bourdieu, 1977). She argues for a more nuanced understanding that acknowledges both continuity and change in matrimonial practices, emphasizing the performative acts through which individuals navigate societal expectations while asserting personal agency.

Victor Turner's theory of liminality offers a compelling framework to understand the transformative nature of matchmaking rituals. Turner (1969) describes liminality as a state "betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial" (p. 95). This concept underscores how individuals and families temporarily transcend their usual social roles during the matchmaking process, engaging in rituals that not only uphold tradition but also facilitate negotiations for marital alliances.

In contrast, Erving Goffman's dramaturgical approach illuminates the performative aspects of matchmaking interactions. Goffman (1959) argues that individuals engage in impression management, strategically presenting themselves to others to maintain social order and achieve desired outcomes. Applied to matchmaking, this perspective emphasizes how participants stage their identities and familial reputations to secure favorable marital matches.

Pierre Bourdieu's theory of habitus and cultural capital provides a critical lens to examine the perpetuation of social hierarchies through matchmaking practices. Bourdieu (1977) posits that individuals deploy cultural resources—such as education, caste, and economic status—to gain social advantages. In the context of matchmaking, this theory underscores how families strategically navigate these cultural dimensions to negotiate marriages that uphold familial prestige and reinforce existing social stratifications.

Erving Goffman's dramaturgical approach also offers valuable insights into the performative nature of matchmaking. Goffman (1959) suggests that social interactions can be understood as performances where individuals manage their impressions in front of others. During matchmaking, individuals and families perform specific social roles to align with cultural expectations and project an idealized image. This aligns with Nanda's observation that matchmaking performances are deeply internalized and reflective of participants' identities and aspirations (Nanda, 1985). Similarly, Clifford Geertz's interpretive approach to culture emphasizes the symbolic and meaningful nature of social actions. Geertz (1973) argues that cultural practices, such as matchmaking, are rich with symbolic meanings that convey deeper social truths. Nanda's (1985) ethnographic account reveals how the rituals and performances in matchmaking symbolize broader cultural values and social structures.

Recent studies depart from these classical theories by integrating insights from gender studies and postcolonial perspectives. For instance, Nanda (1995) critiques the portrayal of Indian arranged marriages as static and oppressive, instead emphasizing agency and negotiation among participants. This departure challenges simplistic readings of matchmaking as solely ritualistic or oppressive, highlighting the nuanced negotiations and agency exercised by individuals within familial and societal constraints.

Overall, while classical theories like Turner's liminality and Goffman's dramaturgy provide foundational understandings of the performative qualities in matchmaking, contemporary literature expands upon these frameworks to capture the complex interplay of tradition, agency, and social dynamics inherent in Indian arranged marriages.



Priya Kapoor's "Rituals of Love: Matchmaking in Rural India" delves into the traditional practices of arranged marriages in rural settings. This literature review explores the performative aspects of matchmaking as depicted by Kapoor, employing theoretical frameworks from cultural anthropology, sociology, and performance studies, including insights from Pierre Bourdieu, Mary Douglas, and Richard Schechner. Mary Douglas' seminal work "Purity and Danger" explores the cultural significance of rituals and the concepts of purity and impurity. Douglas (1966) suggests that rituals help maintain social order by delineating boundaries and reinforcing community values. Kapoor (2020) examines how matchmaking rituals in rural India function as performative acts that uphold the community's moral and social frameworks, emphasizing the importance of purity, family honor, and social cohesion.

Arranging a marriage in Hindu culture is significant and crucial part of human life. Nanda's essay 'Arranging a marriage in India' is a narrative essay about Hindu cultural arranged marriage in India. In examining modern variations in arranged marriages, Hegde and Naik (2016) use Nanda's observations as a basis to explore urban adaptations in Indian matrimonial practices. They state, "While Nanda's work provides insight into traditional, family-centered matchmaking, in urban contexts, parents increasingly take their children's preferences into account, creating a hybrid model of arranged marriages" (Hegde & Naik, 2016, p. 134). This study adds a contemporary dimension to Nanda's findings by analyzing how urbanization has influenced family roles in marriage selection. Similarly, Kumar (2018) delves into the importance of caste in Indian marriages, using Nanda's essay to emphasize how caste and economic status are pivotal in partner selection. He asserts, "Nanda's detailed analysis of arranged marriage shows that caste is not merely a tradition but a social tool that enables families to maintain their social standing" (Kumar, 2018, p. 89). Kumar's work builds on Nanda's findings, providing a deeper analysis of caste as an influential factor. In this way, Hedge and Naik recommends hybrid model of arranged marriage in urban areas from the observation of Nanda's work while Kumar finds that caste is also important factor in determining arrange marriage in India from Nanda's work.

Drawing on Victor Turner's theories, Sharma (2015) interprets arranged marriage in India as a cultural ritual that represents a transformative phase for individuals and families. She explains, "Nanda's ethnographic insights lay the groundwork for seeing marriage as a 'cultural threshold,' where individuals move into new roles, upholding family expectations and societal values" (Sharma, 2015, p. 52). This perspective expands on Nanda's observations by viewing marriage arrangements as culturally symbolic. Patel (2021) investigates the role of parental authority in arranged marriages, often citing Nanda's observations on family involvement.

Patel writes, "Nanda's work illustrates how arranged marriages fulfill social obligations, with parents as primary decision-makers ensuring the family's honor and stability" (Patel, 2021, p. 117). Patel's study highlights how arranged marriages serve as a means of upholding familial expectations. Thus, Sharma claims arranged marriage as transformative phase for individuals and families and Patel says that parents' role is a significant role in the arranged marriage as a transformative stage of life.

These studies underscore Nanda's lasting influence in the fields of cultural anthropology and sociology, as scholars use her foundational work to explore evolving marriage practices, the continued importance of caste, and the symbolic role of arranged marriage within Indian culture. However, It shows that there is still the need to conduct a research study in the context of performative quality in the ritual of matchmaking in Serena Nanda's essay 'Arranging a marriage in India'.

### Textual Analysis

The essay of "Arranging a Marriage in India" beautifully presents the concept of matchmaking as a ritual in Indian culture with performative quality. The distinctive nature of arranging marriage in India lures the writer Serena Nanda to experience the flavor of the job of matchmaker. At her first visit, she was amazed and irritated by hearing about selecting a pair by an individual's parents. Nanda (2013) says, "I still can't imagine it, how can you agree to marry a man you hardly know?" (p. 206). On her second visit, she got the duty of matchmaker for her friend's son in India.

In Indian culture, marriage is taken more seriously as it affects their future and decision is taken carefully considering all criteria of cultural values and norms of the society as her friend says, "Here we take marriage more seriously. We must make all the factors into account. It is not enough for us to learn from our mistakes. This is too serious a business" (Nanda, 2013, p. 212).

Indian culture is full of rituals. "Ritualization has both positive and effective aspects as well as specific limits to what it can do and how far it can extend" (Bell, 2009, p. 206). The ritual of matchmaking also occurs with certain limits in India as stated in the text, "The basic rule seems to be that a family's reputation is most important. It is understood that matches would be arranged only within the same caste and general social class although, some crossing of sub-castes is permissible if the class positions of the bride's and groom's families are same" (Nanda, 2013, p. 207). It is cautious, long and tiresome in looking for a perfect match. In



her second visit she got a chance to involve herself in the matchmaking process. Among the various proposals for a bride brought by her, her friend rejected the first by saying "How will they be able to provide nicely for any of them?" (Nanda, 2013, p. 210) as the girl's family has so many daughters and the family may not maintain the economic status for a proper wedding despite the pretty, demure and well-educated qualities of the girl. Then she brought the second proposal with the prospective bride but her friend denied it by saying, "She is too educated. We have decided against it. My husband's father saw the girl on the bus the other day and thought her forward. A girl who 'roams about' the city by herself is not the girl for our family" (Nanda, 2013, p, 211) despite her higher sub-caste, pretty appearance, well-educated status, and single daughter in the family. Her rejection shows that she is looking to judge the girl's social character. In rejecting the third proposal for her husband's client's daughter, "She is short, which is an important plus point, but she is also fat and wears glasses"(Nanda, 2013, p. 211) as she said. Her friend's judgment indicates that the girl is not physically matching for her son. Serena Nanda leaves India after 6 months being tired and thinking that she would not be able to find a suitable bride for her son. Two years later she returned to India, her friend insisted that she help again in the matter. Nanda expresses how difficult the task of matchmaking was, "I was flattered that my judgment was respected, but knowing how complicated the process was, I had lost my earlier confidence as matchmaker" (Nanda, 2013, p. 212) in Indian culture. Towards the end of her stay in India, she found a suitable home for her son and the family. She says, "Ultimately I found 'a family with a marriageable daughter' (Nanda, 2013, p. 212) with a successful business in central India, with the same sub-caste and the girl was pretty chic and had studied fashion designing and was submissive. She forwarded the proposal to her friend and left India. Her friend's family was still considering it and she returned to New York and a year later she received an invitation letter for the marriage. They decided only after they realized the girl was submissive, educated, and disciplined and their family's socio-economic status matched perfectly with their own. This context depicts the complexity and seriousness of the job seeking minute observation of the prospective bride-groom and their caste group, family background, socio-economic background, education, and characters of bride and groom and the perfect match between the prospective pair and their families background of the girl perfectly matched with the bride's and his family background.

Through her involvement in the match-seeking process, the text of the essay reflects how the different factors as caste group, economic and social background of the families, physical and social characters of the prospective bride or groom are taken into consideration in it. It also relates how family members, relatives, friends, and even the whole society are

involved the rigorous, careful, patient and even lengthy process of matchmaking in Indian culture. They think, "Ritualized agents do not see themselves as projecting schemes; they see themselves only acting in a socially instinctive response to how things are" (Bell, 2009, p. 206). The task of Serena Nanda as a ritualized agent did not become complete unless she performed as the perfect matchmaker within the long-established cultural norms and values of the marriage ritual.

The presentation of ritual of the matchmaking through the text of the story evokes performative quality with the dramatic feature as Austin claims, "To *say* something is to *do* something." In uttering certain sentences, people perform acts. Promises, bets, curses, contracts, and judgments do not describe or represent actions: they are actions. Performatives are an integral part of "real life" (qtd. in Schechner 123/124). Nanda's frequently visit to India presents the setting of the narrative essay. Her conversations with Sita, a girl from India, with the feeling of frustration, distress and surprise as, "How can you go along with this?"; "Don't you care who you marry?"; "But how can you marry the first man you have ever met?" (Nanda, 2013, P. 205); "How can you agree to marry a man you hardly know?"; "How can you marry someone you don't know personally?" (206). The reply of Sita to Nanda also expresses the feeling of satisfaction, confidence and love to her own culture in her talk as, "Of course I care, this is why I must let my parents choose a boy for me" (205); "If he is a good man why should I not like him?" (Nanda, 2013, p. 206); "Meeting a lot of people does not sound good" (Nanda, 2013, p. 205). Nanda talks with her friend, the bridegroom's mother "Surely, we will find there. Let's go and make our choice" (Nanda, 2013, p. 205); "Is there something else, some factor I have missed?" (Nanda, 2013, p. 210); "What happened to that girl as a prospect?" (Nanda, 2013, P. 210) show her feelings of share, realization, and wonder respectively. Her friend's reply as "See, Serena, here is the problem. The family has too many daughters, how will they be able to provide nicely any of them?"; "Well, there is one other thing. They have one daughter already married and living in Bombay...This will prevent the girl from adjusting to our house" (Nanda, 2013, p. 210) presents her judgment in selecting the prospective bride. Nanda's visit to the social club and the first prospective bride (Nanda, 2013, p. 209), to the second (Nanda, 2013, p. 210), to the third (Nanda 2013, p. 211) and the final (Nanda, 2013, p. 212) shows the motion in her character. The experience of feeling Nanda's tired and losing confidence to play the role of matchmaker is the climax of the essay as in the text, 'I was flattered that my judgment was respected, but knowing now how complicated the process was, I had lost my confidence as a matchmaker. Nevertheless, I promised that I would try (Nanda, 2013, p. 212). The expression of her gratification in the success of her task shows the solution and end of the

story through the text, 'I was thrilled. Success at last!' (Nanda, 2013, p. 213). The expression of emotions, her actions moving to different places, and her dialogue with different persons reflects the performative quality of the act of matchmaking in the culture of arranged marriage.

The responsibility of matchmaking in an arranged marriage in India needs to have sheer judgmental quality regarding socio-cultural determinants of marriage along with family background, economic status, the physical and social character of the bride or groom and their education. It is portrayed clearly through the deeds of Serena Nana in the ritual of matchmaking with performative quality in the essay. However, it still needs to go through the individual culture's distinctive process of matchmaking.

### Synthesis of Key Findings

Nanda's essay "Arranging a Marriage in India" provides a profound exploration of the performative qualities embedded within the ritual of matchmaking in Indian arranged marriages. It indicates that a matchmaker should have good ideas of cultures, rituals, communication and negotiation skill. To be perfect matchmaker needs to have specific performative skills to bring the prospective bride and groom along with their parents and family members to reach to the conclusion of marriage. Playing the role of matchmaker in arranged marriage in India is a completely performative with high quality of performance. Drawing upon theoretical frameworks from Victor Turner, Erving Goffman, and Pierre Bourdieu, Nanda illuminates how these rituals serve as dynamic performances that negotiate cultural norms, familial expectations, and individual agency.

Victor Turner's theory of liminality elucidates the transformative nature of matchmaking rituals, where families and individuals temporarily suspend their everyday roles to engage in negotiations that redefine social boundaries and familial relationships. Nanda's narratives underscore this liminal phase, illustrating how individuals navigate between tradition and modernity while participating in rituals that symbolically mark their transition into marital unions.

Erving Goffman's dramaturgical approach provides further insights into the performative aspects of matchmaking interactions, emphasizing how participants strategically present themselves to negotiate marital alliances that align with societal expectations. Nanda's analysis showcases the careful staging of identities and reputations within matchmaking, reflecting cultural norms of caste, class, and religious compatibility.

Pierre Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital enriches the understanding of matchmaking

as a strategic deployment of cultural resources to gain advantage in social interactions. Nanda illustrates how families leverage their cultural capital—such as education, economic status, and social networks—to orchestrate marriages that enhance their social standing and preserve familial traditions.

### Reflections on the Study

Nanda's narrative essay challenges simplistic portrayals of arranged marriages as static or oppressive, instead emphasizing the role of matchmaker as cultural performativity, negotiation, and the complex interplay of cultural dynamics. By foregrounding individual experiences and familial strategies, Nanda highlights how matchmaking rituals accommodate both continuity and change within evolving societal contexts. This nuanced perspective enriches anthropological understandings of arranged marriages by illustrating how rituals serve as sites of negotiation where cultural traditions intersect with contemporary realities.

Moreover, Nanda's analysis invites reflections on the role of gender, class, and caste dynamics within matchmaking practices. She critiques homogenizing narratives and emphasizes the diversity of experiences among participants, underscoring the agency exercised by individuals in partner selection. This critique resonates with broader debates in anthropology and gender studies, challenging scholars to examine arranged marriages through lenses that acknowledge intersecting identities and power dynamics.

### Recommendations for Future Research

Building on Nanda's insights, future research could explore the evolving nature of matchmaking rituals in response to globalization, urbanization, and technological advancements. Investigating how digital platforms and social media influence partner selection processes among younger generations could provide valuable insights into the adaptation of traditional practices in contemporary contexts.

Additionally, comparative studies across different regions within India and across cultures globally could elucidate variations in matchmaking practices and their implications for social cohesion and identity formation. Examining how socioeconomic factors intersect with cultural norms in shaping marital strategies could further deepen understandings of arranged marriages as dynamic social phenomena.

Furthermore, interdisciplinary approaches that integrate anthropological perspectives with insights from psychology, sociology, and communication studies could offer comprehensive analyses of how individuals negotiate identities and relationships within matchmaking

rituals. Such interdisciplinary collaborations could illuminate the multifaceted dimensions of performative acts in arranged marriages, contributing to both theoretical advancements and practical implications for social policy and cultural understanding.

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