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NON - TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE PROPOSALS : A SURVEY

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500 marriage proposals appearing in the Sunday English newspapers were subject to study. The characteristics of those advertising and those sought for in their partners were coded into 15 sections and subjected to statistical analysis. The features of study included race, religion, caste, age, profession, dowry, horoscope, family wealth, position and social connections and attributes, physical and abstract, in the prospective partners. A high proportion of Roman Catholic and Christian advertisers and relatively few Tamils and Hindus were seen.

Religion and caste were specified more often than race and only a small minority stated they would accept partners from other religions and castes. The mean ages for male and female advertisers were 32.6 and 29 years respectively. A high proportion of female teachers sought partners and, similarly, teachers were in demand as brides. The majority of Tamils insisted on dowries and a high proportion of Tamils desired doctor brides. The chief male attributes desired seemed to be that they be teetotallers and "sober" while prospective brides were expected to be attractive, educated and good charactered. The type of person advertising and the increasing trend of newspaper advertisements for marriage partners are discussed and possible explanations offered.