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## Exploring Young People Perspective on Premarital Sex in India

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### **Abstract:**

*Premarital sex is one of social phenomena that involve many social concerns in both developing and developed countries. Evidence from various research studies indicate that despite socio-cultural taboos, youth in India do engage in pre-marital sex. Therefore, the paper aims to explore youth perspective about premarital sex and other sexuality related issues. The study has elicited interesting results in terms of how sex has been interpreted differently by both males and females and different justifications for accepting or not accepting it. The study shows that acceptance of premarital sex is still fairly low among females and somewhat higher among males. Many females expressed their agreement on to engage in a pre-marital sex with the expectations of marriage while, for males, it is more associated with satisfying sexual needs, showing off, status symbol, dating, and physical intimacy etc.*

**Keywords:** Youth, Sexuality, Pre-marital sex, Attitude, and Virginity.

### **1. Introduction**

Premarital sexual relationship is an important topic – especially in today’s world. Premarital sex is serious moral issue confronting the youth. Today, the youth are exposed to different environments and holds diverse perspective on premarital sexual relationships. Whether to engage in premarital sex is a question of critical importance. For better or worse, the effects of this decision often last a lifetime.

Pre-marital sex is largely considered as sexual intercourse between individuals, before marriage. It is generally used in reference to individuals who are presumed not yet of marriageable age, or between adults who will presumably marry eventually, but who are engaging in sexual activity prior to marriage (Lucas, 2000 and Ramesh, 2008). It is widely discouraged not only in India but, in many countries. In many cultures in Asia, pre-marital sex is banned to prevent unwanted pregnancy in women (Perkins et al, 1998). While, In India, pre-marital sex is culturally wrong. Besides, the recent Delhi Court judgment on 5<sup>th</sup> January, 2014 states that pre-marital sex is “immoral” and against the “tenets of every religion”, no religion in the world allows pre-marital sex (The Times of India, 2014).

Young people (aged 10-24) constituted almost 315 million in 2001 and represent 31% of the Indian population (Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, 2001a). In India, globalization, urbanization, rapid economic growth and the extensive reach of media have vastly changed the realities of young people in just a generation. The declining age at puberty and the increasing age at marriage have created a growing window of opportunity in which young people may engage in premarital romantic and sexual relationships. In many of the societies it is being increasingly accepted as a trend in ones’ lifestyle (Hindin & Hindin, 2009). There are several factors identified after many studies such as higher mobility, and migration of younger people to towns and cities in search of jobs, massive urbanization resulting growing population, influence of modern mass-media and information technology, better life style, changing modes and erosion of traditional customs and social norms etc. are responsible for encouraging pre-marital sexuality in cities (Kumar & Tiwari, 2003).

Although the transition to marriage continues to occur early both for young women and men, age at marriage is clearly rising among younger cohorts (IIPS and Macro International, 2007). These changes provide opportunity to engage in pre-marital romantic and sexual partnerships for youth in India. There is research evidence of early onset of sexual activity among young people in India. Studies in different cities showed that almost 10% of young women and 15-30% of young men indulged in premarital sex (Population Council, 2004). Evidence from a growing body of research indicates that between one in seven and one in three young men and fewer than one in ten young women had ever engaged in pre-marital sex (Abraham and Kumar, 1999; Alexander et al., 2006; Awasthi, Nichter and Pande, 2000; Brahme et al., 2005; Collumbien, Das and Bohidar, 2001; Jaya, Hindin and Ahmed, 2008; IIPS and Macro International, 2007; Jejeebhoy and Sebastian, 2004; National Institute of Medical Statistics and

National AIDS Control Organisation, 2008; Potdar and Koenig, 2005; Pradhan and Ram, 2007; Ram, Bhat and Dwivedi, 2007; Santhya, Jejeebhoy and Ghosh, 2008; Sujay, 2009). In India, there are two major studies that shed light on factors associated with pre-marital sexual initiation among young men and pre-marital physical intimacy, including sex among young women in India (Abraham and Kumar, 1999 and Alexander et al., 2007). At the individual level, studies suggest that education is inversely associated with the initiation of pre-marital sex (Alexander et al., 2007 and Gupta, 2000), while engaging in economic activities is directly associated with it (Abraham and Kumar, 1999; Kayembe et al., 2008 and Rich and Kim, 2002).

The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) study in this area has explored pre-marital sexual behavior of young people and indicates that youth in India do engage in pre-marital sex and that for many young people, pre-marital sexual experiences are characterized by multiple partnerships, lack of contraception or condom use and for young women, by coercion as well (NFHS-3, 2006). Besides, as there is a vast difference in expectations about sexuality for both males and females, there is evidence of premarital sexual activity in the country, with the rates being higher for men than women. At the national level, reported premarital sex is still fairly low among women (1.8%) and somewhat higher among men (12%) (Subaiya, 2008). A number of studies highlight the persistence of widespread gender-based double standards in India with regard to female chastity and premarital sexual activity. Young women are much more likely to report love and commitment as leading reasons for engaging in sexual relation.

Premarital sex is on the rise and is becoming more acceptable in many of the societies. This might also lead to teenage pregnancy, induced abortion, reproductive tract infection (RTIS), sexual transmitted diseases (STDS) including HIV/AIDS. These might definitely influence adolescent sexual health and the whole of their life. The number of studies related to topic is very low. Given the increasing shift towards premarital sex and its increased prevalence among youth, it is necessary to conduct in-depth study to gain more knowledge with regards to premarital sex. The current study aims to explore youth's attitude towards premarital sex, factors that affects the notion of Premarital Sex and gender differences related to it.

## **2. Method**

The study was basically intended to see the prevalence of premarital sex among the youth and to understand their perspective on this topic.

### *2.1. Sample*

Participants of the study were unmarried youth of both sexes. Sample consisted of 30 youth (15 males and 15 females). Participants were selected randomly from different colleges of Delhi. All the participants gave their consent to participate in the study. All of them were college going.

### *2.2. Tools*

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods using in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, and psychological test for data collection. In focus group discussions, the study used set of hypothetical questions to stimulate the participants to give their perspective about the issue.

### *2.3. Sexual Attitude Scale*

The Brief Sexual Attitude Scale developed by Hendrick, Hendrick and Reich (2006) having 23 items was used. It included four sub-scales which were Permissiveness (10 items), Birth Control (3 items), Communion (5 items), and Instrumentality (5 items). The items were all written as statements and the respondent rates his/her degree of agreement in a five point Likert scale.

### *2.4. Pilot Study*

A pilot study was carried out to test the feasibility of the study and the interview used. Five students were chosen to conduct the pilot study. The results of the pilot study show that a few questions had to be simplified. Based on the experience of pilot study, some changes were made in the way of conduct of interviews.

### *2.5. Procedure*

The data was gathered through interviews, focused group discussion, and sexual attitude scale from the youth who were 18-24 year old from different colleges of Delhi. 30 youth were taken as sample. Interview was conducted primarily in English. The interview conducted was followed by focused group discussion and sexual attitude scale.

### *2.6. Analysis of Data*

Data was descriptive in nature and was subjected to content analysis. The data were jointly collected, coded, and analyzed in order to find emergent themes and guide further data collection. Verbatim responses of the participants were also noted to give clarity to the data, whenever necessary. Common themes were identified in various data sources and links between them were established. After identifying themes, the next step was analyzing the data. In addition, the tables and graphs were designed to enhance the understanding of concept.

### 2.7. Ethical Consideration

Many youths were reluctant to talk about sexuality or things related. Therefore, it is very crucial to respect the respondents' anonymity. Verbal consent was given before each interview or focus group discussion. Tape recording was made only when the respondents permitted it. Every respondent was informed about the objectives of the research.

## 3. Cardinal Findings of Interview

The aim of using interview was to explore youth's perception, attitude, prevalence, and present understanding and gender differences related to premarital sex.

### 3.1. Perspectives of Heterosexual Relationship

To get into a love relationship is desirable among youth and they are quite common, nowadays, so youth take on relationship becomes highly imperative. In terms of heterosexual relationship, out of total 30 participants, 22 participants (73%) are reported single, seven participants (26.6%) are seriously committed in a love relationship with opposite sex, and one male participant is in a relationship with same sex friend. Out of 22 participants who are reported single, 11 participants reported that they were in love relationship but had broken up due to some reasons. Out of these 11 participants, who were in a love relationship, eight were males and three were females. Findings show that breakup rate is high among males than females.

About having a relationship, females viewed it as a long term commitment whereas, males expressed their expectation from a relationship to fulfill their sexual needs, showing off, dating, sharing, and physical intimacy etc. Out of 15 males, only five reported to believe in long-term relationship, while out of 15 females, 12 reported to believe in long-term relationship. For 73.3% of males, relationship with a girl becomes need after certain point of time as compared to females. One of the male participants also mentioned "I also want to be in a relationship for showing off and for fulfilling my physical needs". Also, one said "I prefer to be single because I cannot control my feelings. I keep dating casually".

#### 3.1.1. Choice of Partner

On selecting a partner for themselves, they expressed their desires of an ideal boyfriend or girlfriend. Males expected their partner to be were loyal, well educated, understanding, good looking, caring, and intelligent. Whereas, females expected their partner to be caring, loving, who can accept me the way I am, intelligent, understanding, decent etc. and very less mentioned that boy should be good looking. In addition, one of the females responded that *usual stuff should be stable*. Briefly, for males, physical appearance of their partner desires the most than for females.

#### 3.1.2. Places where one can find a partner

The most preferred places to seek for their partner emerged out to be malls, colleges, social networking sites, movie halls, and among friend circle. Whereas, 33.3% of total participants thought that a partner could not find, you cannot go somewhere to find a partner, and it comes by chance. One of the females responded by saying that "I don't know about the places where people usually go to find a partner". One of the male participants said, "It is not like we are predators. We do not roam here and there to find a girlfriend/boyfriend".

### 3.2 Perspectives of sexual acts

Sexual acts were seen as all the activities related to sexuality that youth could be involved in before marriage and other types of sex acts that they approve.

#### 3.2.1. Approved Sexual Activities

Vast responses were given by participants pertaining to the kind of activities in which youth could be involved during a relationship. The most basic and acceptable act of a relationship is kissing. The set of activities, commonly approved by most of the youth population, are hugging, kissing, foreplay, and cuddling (Figure 4).

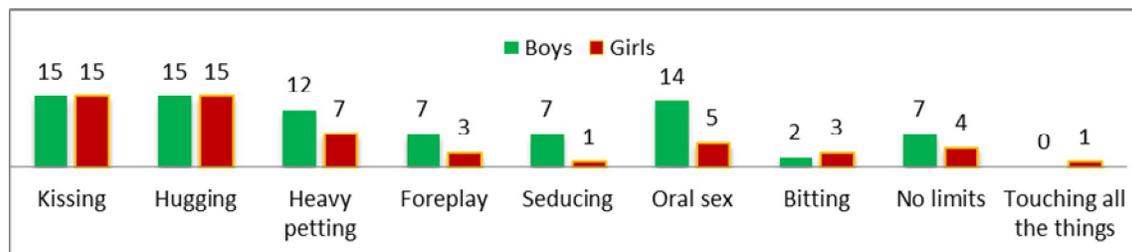


Figure 1- Approved sexual activities among youth

Besides the commonly acceptable acts among both the sexes, there are some acts which have been exclusively mentioned by males for example, seducing, heavy petting and oral sex. Whereas, touching all the things, heavy petting and biting have been mentioned exclusively by females. A significant number of male participants mentioned and approved of heavy petting as compared to females. In general, participants viewed kissing and hugging in a relationship is very basic and normal.

Also, the expression and desire of oral sex in a relationship, was found to be prevalent among males. Males expressed agreement on doing oral sex, if their partner is ready. They viewed it as to strengthen a relationship, for enjoyment, safe, getting closer to partner and natural. On the other hand, females show reluctance to indulge in it. A very few of them agreed on it (see figure 1). One of the females said "I feel pukish, even the thought of oral sex is disgusting". Majority of participants said that they never have had an experience of oral form of sex. Out of total participants, seven participants (23.33%) have an experience of oral form of sex.

### 3.2.2. Lovers become sexually active during dating

To become sexually active is common and normal while dating. Participants mentioned that sexual activeness depends upon the place, situation, and frequency of their meetings. If they are meeting after long time, then couples usually become sexually activity during dating.

### 3.2.3. Initiation of Sexual Acts

To 56.7% of the participants, if it is a girl or a boy who is initiating the act, does not matter. Since, everyone has different needs, so both males and females could start their sexual activities. While, for 43% of the participants said that males should have to start first, since society in general supposes men should be ones who start the sexual act first and girls usually feel shy to initiate, mentioned by participants.

| <b>Lovers become sexually active</b> | <b>Male (15)</b> | <b>Female (15)</b> | <b>Total (30)</b> |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Anybody                              | 7                | 10                 | 17                |
| Boy                                  | 8                | 5                  | 13                |

*Table 1: Initiation of Sexual Acts Classified by Sex*

### 3.2.4. Places to get Intimate

A desired and comfortable place plays a significant role to get intimate with partner. Most common places mentioned by both the sexes are home, movie theatre and isolated places (Figure 2).

| <b>Places to get intimate</b> | <b>Male (15)</b> | <b>Female (15)</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Home                          | 9                | 11                 |
| Movie theatre                 | 3                | 6                  |
| Isolated places               | 3                | 6                  |
| Car                           | 2                | 2                  |
| Hostel                        | 2                | -                  |
| Hotel                         | 2                | 1                  |

*Table 2: Places to get Intimate*

For females, home to be a safer and secured place to get intimate whereas, males mentioned varied places to get intimate.

### 3.2.5. Exposure to Pornographic Material

At the present time, the accessibility and availability of pornographic material is quite easy through various internet sites. All male participants have had watched some kind of porn movie. Males began watching porn movies at the age of 16-18 years. On the other side, 73% of females reported to watch porn movie. In case of males, frequency of watching a porn movie depends on their feeling, mood, for fun, for releasing stress etc. One of the male participants said, "We need to watch porn movie, for masturbating".

In general, the frequency of watching a porn movie was less among females as compared to males. Most of the females watched porn movies out of curiosity while males expressed the need of watching it after some point of time.

### 3.2.6. Awareness about Contraceptive Methods

Participants found to be aware about at least one method of contraception. The most widely known methods were condoms and oral contraceptive pills. Fewer participants mentioned of copper-T (reported by 33.3% and 40% of young men and women, respectively). Besides that, only one female has mentioned about IUD and one male participant has mentioned about vaginal pills and injection for not getting pregnant.

### 3.3 Perspectives of Sexual Meanings

Under this section, two aspects were explored. Sexual meaning for the first aspect has been explored in the meanings of the sex act, the second aspect has been accessed as the meanings of being a man and a women.

#### 3.3.1. Meaning of sex

For males, sex means intercourse, fun, pleasure, desire, art of making love, and biological needs. Out of total males, for 20% of male participates, sex means to have child, and to strengthen health. On the other hand, majority of females viewed sex as sexual intercourse after marriage, desire, and part of love. 46.7% of female participants also mentioned, sex means meeting of two souls, pleasure, physical intimacy, penetration, and basic desire. Findings indicate significant gender differences in terms of perception about meaning of sex for both the sexes. For about 80% of males, sex means pleasure and fun while, for 66.7% of females, sex is an art of making love.

To explore the difference in the meaning of sex for the opposite sex, males responded that sex is only about need, fun, and pleasure of both the partner. In addition, few of them said that there is difference in meaning of sex for females because of their different needs. Two of the male participants said "Girls need reason to have sex, boys just need a place" and "For girls, sex is physical and mental attachment". In contrast, females mentioned that for males, sex is about fun and pleasure. It is common among males because they do not have fear of getting pregnant.

#### 3.3.2. Virginitly

Virginitly is always a matter of discussion in our society especially when high value is placed on female virginitly. In terms of virginitly, the study found some of the respondents had very open thoughts about virginitly. There were mixed responses given by both the sexes.

Some of the responses given by male participants were "I do not care about virginitly", "I do not expect my partner to be virgin, what is so great about being virgin?", "For boys, virginitly is not an issue but I want my partner should be virgin because, I do not want that anybody points out on her character".

Some of the responses given by female participants were "The thing you should always preserve before marriage", "Only over-rated", "It is hyped by society, because it is difficult to recognize the virginitly of the boy and the girl can be recognized easily", "Virginitly is just a term; he should be virgin to himself".

Many of the respondents both the sexes expressed their desire of a virgin partner, if they are also virgin. The most common response given by both the sexes were "if I am virgin, I want my partner to be virgin".

### 3.4. Female Sexuality and Societal Perception

The commonly voiced reasons of controlling female sexuality are safety issues, fear of rape, fear of getting pregnant and concern of marriage, reported by participants. Females are supposed to come early at home, males are free to go anywhere, and they can enter home in the midnight. These standards are maintained in our society because of the existing patriarchal system even voiced by participants as well. For females, maintaining the pre-marital chastity is important for family's reputation and to get a good and educated groom but, males have nothing to think about their purity because they can easily get bride for their marriage without any question. The findings indicate that many restrictions are placed on females due to old belief system and societal pressure whereas males have more liberty in terms of everything. One of the female participants said, "For me Delhi is not safe, but for my brother Delhi is safe". On the other hand, one of the male participants said, "Boys are allowed to fuck anyone".

### 3.5 Acceptance of Premarital Sex

For many participants, sex happens naturally when someone is in a love relationship. A very distinctive response was mentioned by one of the female participants is "it is important to have an experience of sex before marriage because you should know how to satisfy your partner". Out of total males, three male participants said, "It is important to do it before marriage". Some of the responses by participants who said it is important to indulge in pre-marital sex before marriage were "You should know, what to do, how to do?.. Otherwise it could be embarrassing in front of your partner" and "It is important to practice and if I practice then may be, I would be able to know the pain of the girl very well".

Pertaining to the acceptance of pre-marital sex before marriage, 13.3% males and 46.7% females showed disagreement on it. They mentioned their perspectives on not indulging in sex before marriage. One of the male participants said, "I don't want to hurt the emotions of any girl by asking her for doing sex before marriage". One of the female participants said, "I am afraid of the society and of my own self. I think I will not be loyal to my husband, if I do sex before marriage".

On the other hand, 86.6% of males and 53.3% of females expressed their agreement on it. For females' sex before marriage is acceptable. Some of the responses given by females were:

- "I am ok with it; sex is only penetration for me. It happens naturally. I am controlling my feelings but when I feel the need of doing sex, then I will do".
- I do not think that there is any problem in doing so, only when I am in a serious relationship. I would like to do sex only with whom I will marry".

- “I am confused, for pleasure and love I want to do, but I also have fear of losing my virginity. Because virginity of girl can be recognize easily”.

For males, sex before marriage is basically for enjoyment, curiosity, fulfilling physical needs, and in a serious relationship. While for females, sex before marriage is for the sake of relationship and love.

| Reasons                      | Male (15) | Female (15) |
|------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Physical needs               | 7         | 3           |
| Enjoyment                    | 5         | -           |
| Curiosity                    | 4         | -           |
| Expression of love           | 2         | 6           |
| Showing off                  | 4         | -           |
| For the sake of relationship | -         | 6           |
| In a serious relationship    | 5         | 8           |

*Table 7- Reasons of Indulging in Premarital Sex Classified by Sex*

In general, indulgence in premarital sex is for the sake of serious relationship or in a serious relationship and for satisfying physical needs are the most common viewpoints shared by both the sexes.

The most leading concern of youth before engaging in premarital sex is the use of contraceptives (reported by 33.3% and 80% of males and females, respectively) for not getting pregnant or do not want to make their partners pregnant. One of the males said, “Girl should not get pregnant... (Don’t want to be unmarried dad)”. Besides, 13.3% males and 20% females expressed their concern for satisfaction of the opposite sex partner and serious commitment in the relationship. Also, few of female participants worried about whether they would marry to the same person or not.

### 3.5.1. Importance of Sex Education

Participants felt immediate need of providing sex education for creating awareness among masses. Though, talking about sex is a taboo and restricted in our society, yet premarital sex is rising in our society. Therefore, it is important to aware youth about sex and issues related to it.

## **4. Cardinal Findings of Focused Group Discussion**

Two group discussions were carried out with one group of males and one group of females. Each group consisted of four participants.

Findings of focused group discussion carried out by one group of females were: females hardly share about things related to premarital sex among their peers. However, three of them agreed on engaging in sex before marriage in a love relationship. One of them said “Everything becomes cooler if there is social approval. It is not like that, nothing is happening; actually, the thing is people do not want to disclose it. They hide their feelings because society will not accept it”. Also, one of the respondents said “Society is regulating us. Sex is not something that we indulge in openly. I have my own rationale. Society demands, it should be hidden so I am not going to tell anybody”.

Only one said “I would not indulge in sex before marriage because I am not able to deal with the feeling of guilt that comes up after doing sex before marriage. Society’s perception is the reason of that guilt”.

Females believe that society has double standards for both males and females. If a girl does something, it leads to the reputation of family, while for a boy nothing matters, they are free.

Findings of focused group discussion carried out by one group of males were: All the males of FGD have showed approval on engaging in sex before marriage in a relationship. One male participant said, “It is the ultimate expression of love and if you think about sex in a love relationship then it is normal”. Majority of participants believed that society has put many restrictions on us but it does not mean that you stop living your life. One of the male participants said, “I always do whatever I feel, I think, if I feel to have sex with someone then society doesn’t matter”. Another response given by one of the participants was “if I am in love or in commitment and I will not tell this to my family”.

The discussion on sex before marriage is quite common among boys than to girls. One of the male participants mentioned about the opinion of one of his male friend that “you should lose your virginity once before getting married”.

## **5. Cardinal Findings of Sexual Attitude Scale**

The study used Brief Sexual Attitude Scale for exploring the attitude of youth regarding sexuality. The BSAS four scales include Permissiveness (10 items), Birth Control (3 items), Communion (5 items), and Instrumentality (5 items).

### *5.1. Permissiveness*

It was found out that 45% of males and 66.25% of females strongly disagreed with all the statements under this component. This showed that majority of the participants showed less permissiveness towards premarital sex and sexuality. In specific, males

moderately agreed with two statements i.e. Casual sex is acceptable and it is possible to enjoy sex with a person and not like that person very much. On the contrary, females disagreed with these two statements. Out of total participants, around 50% of participants both male and female strongly disagreed with the statement i.e. one-night stand are sometimes very enjoyable.

#### 5.2. Birth Control

87.5% of male and 83.3% of female participants strongly agreed with the statements that are birth control is the part of responsible sexuality and birth control is the shared responsibility of both the sexes.

#### 5.3. Communion

The statements under this component are concerned with sex as a medium of intimate communication. Out of total participants, 47.5% of males and 45% of females strongly agreed to all statements. It was strongly agreed by 40% of participants that at its best, sex seems to be the merging of two souls.

#### 5.4. Instrumentality

Instrumentality concerned with the biological dimension of sexuality. Out of total participants, 25% of boys and 32.5% of girls, strongly disagreed and 40% boys and 20% of girls, moderately disagreed with the statements i.e. sex is primarily taking of pleasure, purpose of sex is to enjoy oneself, sex is primarily physical and a bodily function like eating. This showed that for majority of participants, sex is more than physical. For many of males, sex is not only primarily taking of pleasure; it is also a form of expressing love and enjoyment of both the partners rather than oneself.

### 6. Conclusion

The attraction towards opposite sex and need to get intimate is normal in youth. Though the need of having a relationship is common for both the sexes during their youth yet, there are different expectations expressed by both males and females. Majority of females believe in long-term relationship which possibly lead to marriage whereas, males expressed the need of having a relationship for satisfying their sexual needs, showing off, status symbol, dating, and physical intimacy etc.

Besides, the perspectives of both the sexes were different in terms of understanding the term sex, social construction of sexuality, virginity etc. For majority of the females, sex is more of emotional attachment and linked to long-term commitment. While, males perceived sex is for pleasure and fun. Indeed, these differences are due to the diversified views and gender roles imposed on both the sexes. Females are expected to suppress their feelings especially those related to sexuality. Females shared that they are subjected to strict supervision and commonly prohibited from socializing with males outside their families. In contrast, young men, who enjoy more freedom, find it easier to explore sexual activities before marriage. To a degree, the double standards are always active, making premarital sex less of an infraction for males than it was for females. Many girls expressed their fear of losing their virginity before they are married. In the Indian society, much importance is given to the virginity of the girl whereas nobody talks about virginity of a boy. Since, virginity of a girl could be recognized, it could put question mark on girl's chastity. The young themselves are aware of these double standards. Although the society has changed to a great extent yet in many cases some preconceived notions still exists. The wide disparity between men and women in their perspective about premarital sex indicates that there are different rules for men and women with regard to non-marital sex in India.

In general, youth had a positive attitude towards pre-marital sexual activities pertaining to kissing, hugging, cuddling, heavy petting etc. Only a few males were reluctant to get into pre-marital sexual relationship because, they do not want to hurt the emotions of their girlfriends without their agreement on it. The acceptance of premarital sex is still fairly low among women and somewhat higher among men and is controlled by societal norms and society's attitude towards premarital sex.

### 7. Recommendations for Future Work

Concerning with research finding and discussion, the research proposes some recommendations in attempt to have better research on youth in the future. The present study has limitations of having small sample size residing in urban areas of Delhi, and it does not represent the diverse youths' population in India. Hence, the findings cannot be generalized. Because of social change, many young adults may engage in sexual activity of various types. It therefore may be helpful for parents to accept that such behavior occurs. This acceptance may help foster communication in the family. Some parents refuse to talk about sex with their children and assume it does not occur. This does not allow children to consult with their parents when they have problems. Family communication should be developed.

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