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# IIT IIM Shaadi: The Matrimonial Website For The 'Upper Caste, English Educated'

By **Shambhavi Saxena** in [Cake, Society](#)

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When Taksh Gupta's family began looking for a suitable match for his cousin brother, they ran into an unexpected problem. Says Gupta, *"He was a pass-out from BITS Pilani and IIM Bangalore and we had trouble finding a girl who would be equally qualified."* And it was this incident that led to the creation of [IITIIMShaadi.com](#) in 2014.

Since its launch, the service has received a lot of flak, most notably from [Feminism In India](#). In an open letter to the founders, feminist activist Japleen Pasricha highlighted that IIT-IIMShaadi had lower entry requirements for women users in order to widen the pool for men to choose from. Heavy criticism followed from [Women's Web](#) too, as people wondered why there had to be a matrimonial website dedicated to India's top colleges.

The idea is simple: matchmaking for highly educated individuals, because (as the site announces) *"alma mater matters."* And its strict eligibility criteria really sets it apart from other matrimonial services. As Gupta explains, you can be from any field – management, engineering, law, finance, medical or fashion design – but you have to be an alumni of the top colleges in your field to even register. Commenting on their premier services (personalised offline matchmaking), Gupta says *"We have an unbelievable record of about 70% success rate, and that is unheard of in the industry."*

Currently there are 8,000 active members, whose profiles (and educational qualifications!) were painstakingly authenticated by a two-person team. But the number of profiles awaiting authentication come up to about 25,000. What's attracting all these folks to IITIIMShaadi? Are we witnessing changes in how people choose partners, preferring intellectual compatibility over other traits? Have people's needs changed? Gupta certainly thinks so. He says, *"Marriages is between two hearts and two bodies but also two minds. High education makes one open to accept the differences. People with similar educational background understand each other's work and living styles."*



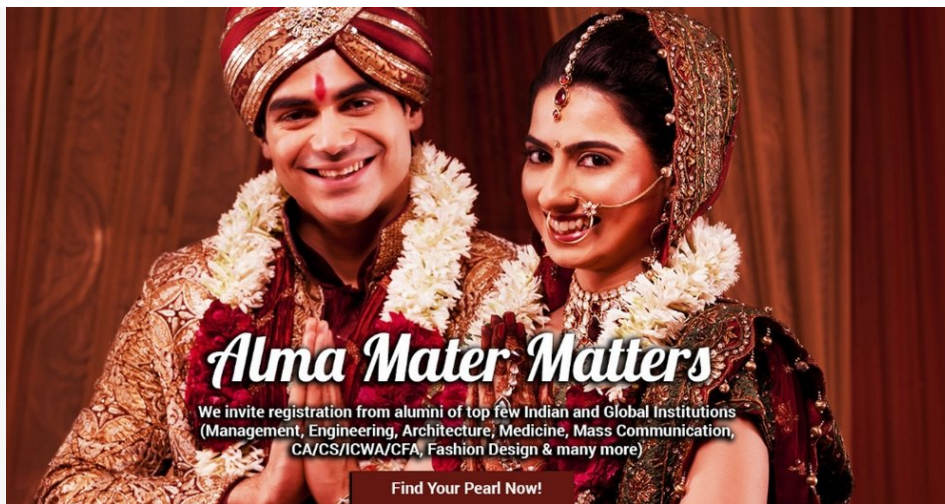
**"मुझमें किसी भी व्यक्ति को लेकर सेक्सुअल भावनाएं नहीं आती हैं"**



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Source: IITIIMShaadi.com

It's not for nothing that millennials have taken to spouting the phrase "*brainy is the new sexy*". Being on the same mental wavelength as your partner sounds like a pretty sweet deal. And for Gupta, trying to address this need constitutes ITIIMShaadi's "*soaring success*". The number of marriages facilitated by the service have steadily increased. There have been 60 so far, of which 31 happened in 2017. Gupta claims that marriages which are not reported back to the site are potentially double or triple that number.

But a whole matrimonial service dedicated to it? We wondered how students from said premier institutions felt about it. Sneha, a former student of IIT, doesn't favour choosing partners based on the institution they come from, just as she wouldn't choose based on caste or religion or complexion. But she points out yet another issue: "*You know the hype that is created about IITs and IIMs? They're just kind of perpetuating that same idea, within matrimony.*"

In the same vein, recent IIT graduate Manan\* said there was an element of elitism at play. "*Maine survey nahi kiya hai, lekin bina survey kar ke mein keh sakta hu ki 99% of the profiles must be English-educated, upper-caste Hindus. Yeh bas unhi ke liye bana hai, jab ki India mein sirf 10% population English speakers hain.*"

Rose, another ex student of IIT Roorkee, thought the service seemed odd at first, then saw the appeal to prioritising educational status. "*Every tiny sect you can think of has a different marriage site out there. I don't want to look at a site, but if I were to, I suppose this one's more palatable than most.*"

But can a service like this really upstage centuries-old 'determinants' like caste, class, or religion? Professor Vivek Kumar, a sociologist from Jawaharlal Nehru University says no. "*Hierarchies and caste endogamy always existed. I think it is reinforcing the older hierarchies, but with very modern techniques which were not available earlier.*" He hands it to the internet for connecting people across various divides, but finds that it makes divisions of caste, sub-caste and sub-sub-caste even more pronounced. "*The paradox is*

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that modernity is trying to reinforce and reproduce the identity it was supposed to deconstruct!"



Students at Indian Institute of Technology.

In response to criticisms, Gupta stresses that the intention of IITIIMShaadi was never to harm, inconvenience, or disrespect any section of society, and that he was plainly creating a niche service. *"For people who continue to argue with me, I have a great article I share with them. It's something I studied at Harvard, called 'The Long Tail'. Niches are best for the demand, the supply side, and (here's my favorite part) often also those who are not part of the niche."*

And IITIIMShaadi users are putting that niche to work. For example a 29-year-old woman from IIM Ahmedabad looking for a groom sent in a very particular request. Says Gupta, *"She wanted someone to commit to be a house-husband, who would be happy with the idea of her working throughout their lives and him staying at home and take care of household chores, and babies."*

So, is the service creating enough room to unsettle at least some of the old hierarchies? Maybe. Maybe not. But the fact that it exists points towards some fascinating shifts in modern Indian society.

\*name changed on request.

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Sourav Halder

Recent time it is observed that apart from caste & Religion a new division is gradually increased i.e University degree. Recently money is not only consideration beside that from where you get your degree i.e also consider. Recently <https://99marriageguru.com/> also provide similar service for IIT & IIM graduate

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