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BRIHAN MAHARASTRA COLLEGE OF COMMERCE

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A PROJECT REPORT ON

AN ASSESSMENT OF DESTINATION WEDDINGS: THE NEW VOGUE

SUBMITTED TO

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BACHELOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS (B. B. A. I. B)

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SUBMITTED BY

BHUMI AGRAWAL

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF

PROF. SHILPA KULKARNI

Completion Certificate

THESIS CERTIFICATE

1. The Research Project entitled “An Assessment of Destination Weddings: The New Vogue” submitted to Brihan Maharashtra College of Commerce, Pune for the award of Bachelor of Business Administration (International Business) is based on my original work carried out under the guidance of Prof. Shilpa Kulkarni from 1st December, 2019 to 31st March, 2020.
2. The Research Work has not been submitted elsewhere for award of any degree.
3. The material borrowed from other source and incorporated in the project has been duly acknowledged and/or referenced.
4. I understand that I would be held responsible and accountable for plagiarism, if any, detected later on.

Date: 14th April, 2020



Signature of Student

Counter signed by

Supervisor

BBA (IB) Department Head

ABSTRACT

Weddings have developed into a central piece of every single culture over the globe. A wedding is an imperative life event. Each couple needs to ensure that their extraordinary day ends up being the best it tends to be. Moreover, the world is loaded with trends today. Globalization keeps on escorting the extension of trends. And one of these is "Destination Weddings". A destination wedding is a wedding where the engaged couple just as the visitors need to venture out to a destination away from the neighborhood or hometown to go to the ceremony.

There are wedding organizers accessible these days who will assist you with organizing your wedding directly from picking a scene, masterminding lodging too the adornments and so forth. Wedding organizers have been effective in publicizing destination weddings. It is an as of late created business in the occasion the executives business nonetheless; it has seen a development pace of approx. 30% consistently.

The purpose of this research is to realize what the individuals see as present and future trends in wedding planning. The goal of the investigation is to survey the changing wedding trends in India and over the Globe, an impression of web-based life in building up the trend, the advertising approaches utilized by the different wedding organizers, economic effects on wedding destinations and on amplifying small scale businesses of wedding packaging. The study attempts to seek for the progressions obvious in the Indian weddings regarding ceremonies, embellishments, venue, food, and so forth.

The study is based on primary data as well as secondary data. Primary data is collected from wedding planners. A questionnaire was distributed to the top wedding planners across India. What's more, the hotspot for optional information is research papers and articles on the web.

The result of the research is that Bollywood has been the greatest impact to change the trends in the wedding. Motion pictures like *Ye Jawaani Hai Deewani* or big names like Anushka Sharma, Deepika Padukone, and Sonam Kapoor have been the trailblazers for Destination weddings. Indian weddings have been changed drastically from an intimate gathering in a wedding hall to a big fat Indian wedding in the gigantic City Palace of Udaipur. There are new trends in the wedding like an exotic resort wedding, sundowner wedding, beachside wedding, and much more. The wedding organizers have been handily advancing the destination wedding on the online life by posting extra conventionally lovely pictures on the social media platforms. This has indicated a positive effect on the economies of the spots which are famous destination wedding center

points, for instance, Jaipur, Udaipur, Goa, etc. Likewise, it has been demonstrated a shelter to the small scale businesses like confectionaries, packaging, decorators and flower vendors, and so forth as they have a colossal foundation of clients.

This data will be helpful to a wedding organizer, bride or professional, to make creative, well-informed wedding decisions. The limitation of the research is less number of respondents. The data could not be collected in person.

Further studies can be coordinated on each exact trend area to decide progressively express insights concerning every future pattern at various locations and then comparative analysis of this data. Additional wedding organizers ought to be reached from abroad to get an increasing number of respondents. In future researches, wedding planners ought to be conveyed through meetings or calls, as to obtain more inside and out reactions.

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BHUMI AGRAWAL

BBA (INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS)

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INTRODUCTION

A wedding is an event that rejoices the union of marriage between two people. A wedding is the merriment of an era. In India, a wedding is given immense importance in the social life of a person. Marriage is a kind of social obligation in India. Here the marriage does not only unite a man and a woman but also two families. These two families are from different backgrounds and cultures. Marriage is given so much of the significance because the girls leave her home and the boy gets a whole new responsibility altogether. The wedding is not only a celebration of the love between two people but also an auspicious start to their journey towards a new life.

According to Coontz (2005), “weddings today are the first chance a couple gets to announce to the world their chosen joint identity”. The impression of a joint identity inspires the couple to apply certain widespread trends to exhibit this identity in the most exclusive way possible. Be it a grand fete for hundreds or a warm gathering of the closed ones, it is a day when the dreams come true. The purpose of this research is to assess the current and future trends in wedding planning in India.

The parents save all their life to do a lavish wedding of their children. Weddings in India are usually not an intimate one. The wedding ceremony in India is generally a feast for hundreds of people. The relatives, friends, colleagues, business partners, neighbors, people from the same community and many others are invited to an Indian wedding. There is this prevalent feeling in India that your wedding should be better than your neighbor’s wedding.

Weddings have become a showcase for India’s middle class of their growing disposable incomes. This is because even the middle class now wants a savor and feel of elite weddings. They are spending the best possible after seeing the world around. The reason for this is that their disposable income has seen a significant rise.

The wedding ceremonies of Laxmi Mittal and Raveena Tandon changed the entire outlook of Indian weddings. Earlier, Indian weddings used to be those traditional ones. Only after these two marriages, destination wedding came into vogue. They have set up a world stage for the imaginative themed Indian weddings at exotic destinations such as the palaces in Rajasthan. From a banquet hall to a beachside wedding, the tables turned 360 degrees in terms of Indian weddings. People are moving towards King and Queen Types of a wedding where the old palaces and forts of the Indian kings are used for the destination wedding. This is exactly what is called “A big fat Indian wedding”. This has made the magnificence and charisma of Indian weddings enticing and enrapturing.

This paper will share findings on the socio-economic changes that have had an impact on the wedding industry. The change in the Indian wedding rituals owes a lot to the Bollywood which has been influencing people’s mindset for ages. Couples being influenced by all these societal factors want their wedding day to be perfect. It has been generally observed that the girls dream about their wedding day since teenage. To make the dream come true, couples go above and beyond to keep up with the latest trends. This study will be evaluating the impact of social media in hyping up the trend of the destination and themed weddings predominant nowadays.

To ensure that they are meeting the societal expectations or going even above the expected standards, the couples now seek a wedding planner. Wedding planning came up as a business because of the lack of time with the people to plan and execute their wedding. It has flourished in recent years. The concept has been incorporated well by many entrepreneurs of today because of growing market demands, little overhead costs of running such businesses and high profits guaranteed. This study will also be incorporating the study of how the wedding planners have been successful in promoting the destinations wedding, the marketing approaches used by them.

A wedding planning business is a part of the fast-rising event management industry. The Indian wedding market is predicted to reach a market size of INR 45,000 cr by 2020, with a probable

annual growth rate of 25-30%. And it is still getting bigger and better. Factors such as the growth of the middle class, a prosperous economy and superstar endorsements – adequately enthused by social media-induced ambition - have contributed to this growth. According to an estimate in 2013, the size of the live entertainment business was around INR 9.4 billion. The estimated growth rate of the industry is around 19% CAGR over the next five years which will be approximately INR 22 billion. Most importantly, this growth is because of augmented marketing budgets, and an increased emphasis on the prominence of live entertainment, as part of the publicity spends of corporate. The industry has already displayed its caliber by magnificently hosting the big fat Indian weddings nationally and internationally over the past few years.

The wedding industry is also the home to certain cottage industries such as packaging ventures, invitation card makers, florists, confectioners, etc. This is because a wedding planner usually does not own any of these businesses. He is the one who knows different vendors and gets to you the one who suits your needs the best. This paper will study the impact of a destination wedding on a small scale industry such as the packaging industry.

Today's wedding planners have been not only providing the solution to many of the problems in wedding planning in a single platter but also marketing some different kinds of weddings. Wedding planners have been very successful in marketing themed wedding and destination weddings. They have successfully eliminated the taboo of the traditional wedding culture and got something extravagant in the menu. A destination wedding is something that is hyped up these days. A destination wedding is a wedding where the engaged couple, as well as the guests, have to travel to a destination away from the hometown to attend the ceremony. Many beautiful locations across the globe seem to be perfect for destination weddings. To name a few, Cinigiano in Italy, Soufriere in St. Lucia, Payangan in Bali, Paris in France and Negril in Jamaica. These are amongst the top wedding destinations. In India, there are many beautiful places for destination weddings as well. Udaipur, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Goa, Kerela, Lonavala, Shimla, Rishikesh and Jaisalmer are considered to be the best places for a destination wedding in India.

This research will be studying the impact of the destination wedding on the economy of the locations which are popular venues for the destination wedding.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of terms

- Wedding- an event that rejoices the blending of marriage amid two people
- Wedding planning- the act of scheduling and preparing for an upcoming wedding ceremony and reception
- Bride- an engaged woman who is planning for her wedding presently
- Trend- an existing prevalent style or preference
- Future trend- a style that will be widespread within the upcoming years
- Destination wedding- a wedding where the couple and the invitees travel to a location other than their hometown for the wedding

For the review of literature, the following databases were utilized: An Assessment of Future Trends in Wedding Planning by Avery Ruonala, A History, and Analysis of Weddings and Wedding Planning By Clare Finnell, Wedding Planning and Management services in Delhi by Sangeeta Jain, "Your Dream" Virtual Wedding Planning System by S.Nithila, D.Madushyani, W.M.P.S.G.Perera, M.Nivethan, and Gayana Fernando, Wedding planning at its finest by Cassie Todd and Factors Influencing the demand for Themed Wedding Packages by Sivemalar Krishnan. Information was also obtained from the websites www.economictimes.com, www.wikipedia.com, and www.entrepreneur.com. This review of literature is systematized into the subsequent topic areas: the history of wedding, wedding planners, wedding trends, packaging ventures, and economic impact on the Destinations.

Wedding History: In Europe, Marriage was a "Marriage by capture" back in the 15th century. The family members of the bride could come to protest the wedding or to steal the bride so the members present at the wedding needed to be prepared to protect the bride and groom and also to fight off the bride's family. The groomsmen were responsible for helping in kidnapping the bride. Hence they were also called "Bride's Knights". Because of this reason, the best man did

not use to be the groom's closest friend instead he used to be the most affordable swordsman who could ensure that the wedding goes on smoothly. Similarly, a tradition that we see today that the father of the bride walks down the aisle with his daughter had originated at the same time. The motive was to safely let the bride walk on the way to the groom. There was one more reason why safety was important as there were chances that some other suitor would try to take the bride, or she might try to escape.

There were no restrictions on the color of the bridal outfit till the Elizabeth Era. Also, there was no strict rule of a feast. It could be neighbors providing the feast in a kind of potluck style. A very interesting point to be noted here that bathing and washing clothes were considered to be luxury and not everyone could afford it. Hence to cover up the foul smell of the invitees, flowers were used for decoration. Strong flowers such as fresh rosemary, roses and even garlic stems were used to add more pleasing cologne to the wedding function.

In the Regency era (1811-1820), a new tradition of wearing white gowns in the wedding was introduced. This was because white was a very popular color for debutantes that is to make the first appearance. Other soft colors such as pink or blue were also worn.

Weddings became more comprehensive and decorative in the Victorian era (1837-1901). Decorations and noteworthy planning became far more rampant and vital to the celebration and white wedding dresses became more popular after the wedding of Queen Victoria in 1840.

The history of hiring a professional wedding planner can be traced back to the times of Second World War. This was the time when weddings were more formalized. It is to be noted here that post World War 2, more women began to work instead of staying at home. This is since, during the war, all the men were gone fighting in the war. Figures reveal that by the early 1960s, more married women were in the labor force than at any previous time in American history. Women

now had lesser time to plan for their wedding. This made them look for someone who can do that job for them. This could reduce their stress to a great extent.

Though there is no solid documentation to trace the exact beginning of wedding planning as a business, it can be said that during the medieval times when weddings became more multifaceted and a social occasion rather than a modest ceremony and meal, wedding planning became a genuine carrier.

The Indian wedding is entirely different than that of an American or European wedding. Indian weddings are comprised of various rituals that are prescribed in the Gruhya sutra composed by various rishis. The Indian wedding is a vedic yajna. It comprises of three universal rituals namely Kanyadaan, Panigrahana, and Saptapadi—which means giving away of his daughter by the father, voluntarily holding hands near the fire to signify union, and taking seven 'steps before fire' respectively. However, the pre and post-wedding rituals vary significantly from region to region. The only common thing is taking the seven vows in presence of the fire. The Indian wedding is influenced to a very great level by the foreign weddings nowadays. Inclusion of bachelor party, pre wedding photoshoot and musical nights are some new add-ons to the Indian weddings.

Wedding planners: The romantic view of a wedding was not the way it was earlier. Earlier, wedding was given importance because of its economic aspect. For family and economic benefits, marriages were made hoping that the consequences will be love. That is why arranged marriages were more popular than love marriages. The trend of a love marriage is popularized in recent periods.

As the aspect of personal satisfaction is now attached to the weddings, couples are more excited to make the fantasy of their dream wedding come true. This very reason exaggerates the

lavishness of the wedding and the amount spent on such a wedding is significantly more than a normal wedding. Couples will go above and beyond to make their wedding perfect. But the question arises that how are they supposed to make it so perfect? These days social outlooks have set very high wedding standards. The trends in the wedding change every year. Trends in weddings can vary from simple style trends to wider logistics trends. The simple style trends referred to here relates to wedding colors, themes, floral arrangements, and beauty styles. They have nowadays become the center staged trends. These popular trends can appear to be the most important for a bride, but the wider trends are just as significant to study when planning a wedding. Trends like the budget agreed and venue location can greatly impact the verdicts made concerning the wedding planning. These trends influence the dream wedding. To keep up with these trends, the couple looks for a wedding planner.

A wedding planner knows the best way to take care of everything in a wedding. He knows the subjects to be addressed in a specific type of wedding. In short, he is personally conversant with weddings. He knows which vendors to use and which ones to elude. The most important service they provide is Time. Using a wedding planner is the only way to handle everything with the least hassle along with making sure that one meets all the traditional prospects of a wedding.

Why is it that in the past couples could do all the planning by themselves, but now they are hiring someone to do it for you? What has changed? Is it ever feasible or desirable to do it yourself or with the help of others and still have a "successful" and enjoyable wedding?

The answer is that the life of the people in today's era is full of hustle. People nowadays have no time even for the important stuff of their life. They have switched to online shopping because of a lack of time to actually go and buy the outfit that you are going to wear for the entire day. So many important tasks of our life have become automated just because of shortage of something called "time". In such era, people can't plan their dream wedding. There are thousands of things to be taken care of when you plan a wedding. Missing out on any of them is not an option.

Hence, people go for hiring a wedding planner. A wedding planner can carry the load of managing the caterers, the photographer, and musicians and so on off your hands. While this

may sound exciting now, it will be realized that these were some really critical issues as your wedding day will approach; because that is the period, when your time can be at a premium.

Magazines, television, billboards, all are quickly rising with bridal news. In 2011, Kim Kardashian's, a reality star and fashion icon, a million-dollar wedding was the talk of the year, and just before that Kate Middleton and Prince William's wedding was all over the news across the world. Social media is exalting weddings when in fact they are full of planning, stress, and chaos. As a planner, it is the aim and obligation to turn dreams into certainties and to generate ideas and bring it for them to life. The cumulative costs of weddings and new trends in weddings all are reasons that a wedding planner is a necessity to help save and release stress that comes with such an unforgettable event.

The latest trend in the Indian wedding industry is to hire wedding party coordinators to take care of the entire wedding event. The reason is that the Indian couple wants a perfectly planned and performed wedding ceremony. Though the major customer segment of this industry generally plans everything well in advance, they sometimes realize that they cannot make a cost-effective decision. The customers hence see for some professional advice to make sure that the important aspects of the wedding meet the perceived expectations which are strongly affected by social values.

Wedding Trends: According to Winikka and Ma, themes namely "homestead elegance" and "dinner party chic" were popular in the year 2013. Here, the focus was more on outdoor weddings. It combined the natural details outdoor with the graceful and classy elements which create an exclusive diverse theme that can be seen within all of the evolving trends. This was the time when more attention was given to the neutral color palette or the pastel shades of color. The themes constituted of more lush, romantic floral arrangements. This also influenced bridal beauty styles. These were the smaller trends that affect a wedding but some broader trends can become a limiting factor when planning a wedding. One of those is the budget allotted to that particular

wedding. The budget is measured in every choice about the wedding and regulates how huge and extravagant or modest and trivial the wedding must be. According to the U.S. bridal industry, the average couple had a \$26,989 wedding in the year 2012. Currie mentioned that "many families save for years and spend significant amounts on wedding clothing and receptions, even though the event itself is short-lived". According to Daniels, Lee, & Cohen, the planning period is considered to be a period of irresistible enthusiasm throughout which couples are much more likely to overlook their concerns and worries and go on a wedding planning spending binge. However, the 2007 recession made many couples to tighten their budget. According to the Wedding Report by McMurray in 2010, the expenditure on weddings declined by almost 23% in the year 2003-04. Though the amount spent on weddings have now increased if compared to the past, couples nowadays are leaning towards more strict and mindful of their overall wedding-related expenditures. To stay within the limits, the couples are focusing on the wedding planning process by spending more time into it to assure that there is not any extra spending. The new wedding trends are helping couples to discover a cost-effective way to make their wedding special.

The next limiting factor to a wedding is the Venue. Venues are given significance because their atmosphere is linked to the memories of the wedding forever. Venues are usually the very first decision made in the wedding planning process. Venues are generally of two types: Traditional or Modern. Traditional ones are the historical monuments, museums or palaces whereas the modern ones are the country clubs, beach sides, resorts, etc. Nowadays, wedding themes decide the venue for the wedding. This has made the destination weddings so popular in recent years. According to Daniels & Loveless, Destination weddings are weddings that are held in a location that the couple does not reside in, often in an exotic or popular tourism destination. Even though these theme and destination weddings are rising in fame, many couples incline to choose to hold their weddings at more traditional or all-inclusive sites than to follow the widespread inclinations.

Martha Stewart proposes useful and easy methods to save on a wedding venue. Initially, choosing a date can be complicated. Numerous venues have their own high and low season. Not only selecting a particular month will help fight high costs, but also picking up a, unlike day out of the week. The most shared day to tie the knot is Saturday; however, a Thursday or Friday may cut the venue cost by 20%. Backyard weddings are nowadays more noticeable through the media. Choose a friend or family member who has an overgenerous backyard to marry. Christian Slater's, a famous actor, an upcoming wedding will be in his private backyard. Further celebrities include Kendra Wilkinson, a previous playmate, who was wedded in the front yard at the Playboy mansion. While these examples comprised more excessive price tags, it demonstrates that backyard weddings are a trend.

Packaging ventures: An example of a small scale packaging venture which got boom because of the destination wedding and wedding planners is "Nimantran". It is owned by Manju Agrawal, who started a small shop of invitation cards and planning décor from the handmade paper her husband exported in Patel Nagar, Delhi in 2006. Her first-year turnover was Rs. 3.5 lakhs. Her business flourished with the wedding exhibition "Vivah" held in the Taj Palace hotel in Delhi where she got business from a wedding planner from Bangkok. Soon she turned her store into a showroom. Her customer base grew to 600 in 6 years which also consists of some big names like Jindals and Dhoots. Currently, she employs 30 people.

Economic impact on the Destinations: Indian hospitality has encouraged the destination wedding industry to a very large extent. And these destination weddings are redefining the Indian wedding culture which is very popular for lavishness, customs, and traditions spread over numerous days. This trend of a destination wedding is originally not an Indian concept. However, its percolation into the globetrotting Indian millennial's culture was foreseeable. The concept of wedding halls is no longer fashionable. The perfect, fairy tale setting is something which is in vogue. The wedding planners, banquet organizers, wedding apparel designers, etc. have received a sudden, strong and positive effect because of the destination weddings. However, the biggest beneficiary will be the hospitality sector.

The amount spent on weddings in India is almost one-third of the savings of the people. Fed on a stable social and even mainstream media diet of luxurious celebrity weddings, Indian millennials are more than enthusiastic to invest in 'curated weddings' and will choose the most unusual and exotic milieus they can afford to celebrate their big day. Rajasthan, Goa, Kerala, and Uttarakhand are few of the most preferred locations. Rajasthan is chosen for a royal wedding because of its palaces and forts, Goa and Kerala are popular for an ideal beach wedding while Uttarakhand is for the nature lovers as it has the most remarkable mountain backdrops. These options are also used by couples from other countries. This is not only because of the location but also because India is comparatively affordable in terms of air travel and accommodations. Following is a table showing the average cost of luxury properties rent for a day:

Popular Beach Destinations	Avg. Daily Rate (ADR) for Luxury Properties in INR
Goa	16,000 - 19,000
Kovalam	10,000 - 12,000
Kochi	9,000 - 11,000
Popular Royal Destinations	Avg. Daily Rate (ADR) for Luxury Properties in INR
Jaipur	34,000 - 39,000
Udaipur	27,000 - 37,000
Jodhpur	38,000 - 42,000
Popular Mountain Destinations	Avg. Daily Rate (ADR) for Luxury Properties in INR
Mussoorie	12,000 - 18,000

The Indian hospitality industry has been on an upswing for the last few years. The intensifying taste for destination weddings is indisputably a boon for the Indian hospitality industry. The Indian hotel industry has seen a growth in the revenue per available room of 9.6% in the year 2017 which arrives at a total of Rs. 3927 RevPAR. Because the demand was outperforming the supply, the growth saw a slight reduction with 9.5% in the year 2019. The data indicates that the period of 2014 to 2018 had witnessed an increase in transaction volumes of approximately INR 64.4 billion where the previous peak being in 2015 at about INR 19.9 billion. The amplified

growth of the hospitality sector is because of government subsidies and schemes to push the hotel construction and tourism. However, the last few years have also been volatile due to an excess of hotel rooms and rivalry from new brands and shared economy models. The Indian hospitality industry can have an important game-changer if the wedding tourism and destination weddings are promoted skillfully in this mixed market situation. We can already see the positive impact of the worldwide promotions of India's globally representative locations. With the addition of almost 1282 keys in the year 2018 alone, Jaipur has seen an increase in the room supply. Rajasthan is the most prevalent destination for hosting a royal-themed wedding in India. Surely, Goa has been no straggler either as it saw the major signing of keys in 2018 at 2209 keys. This even outpaced Bangalore with a margin of 192 keys. The sturdy rise in supply will be a solid improvement for Goa, one of the most desirable destination wedding hotspots in India.

The key to the success of destination weddings in the future is Personalization or customization. The new couples have been demanding some newer locations like waterfront properties with helipads and pillar-less ballrooms or ancient forts that delivers an even bigger historic touch to the 'royal wedding' philosophy. Apart from the popular locations of Rajasthan, Goa, etc. many offbeat venues like Mahabalipuram and the Andaman Islands are also finding courtesy. Mussoorie and Simla provide a tranquil, hilly and even Colonial Era background to destination weddings. A perfect setting for memorable pictures and drone footage to share on the social media platforms will always be the primary criterion for all destination weddings.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is a quasi-type research which is a combination of both exploratory research and secondary research. It consists of primary data as well as secondary data.

The base review of the research was made from various research papers on wedding history, management, trends, etc. The references of these papers can be found in the bibliography.

Based on the above research, this study attempted to answer the following Research Questions:

1. Which are the popular locations for destination wedding in India?
2. How much amount is spent on a wedding in India?
3. What kinds of locations are preferable?
4. What do wedding planners see as current and future trends in wedding planning?

Following Assumptions are made:

- All survey participants were professional wedding planners in the wedding industry.
- All subjects utilized their professional knowledge and answered survey questions to the best of their ability.

Scope of Study: The subject of the study were from all over the India. Hence, the scope of study is India.

Description of Subjects

A questionnaire was distributed to professional wedding planners throughout India. The wedding planners for this survey were found by searching online on Google. Google was chosen because it provides lists of professional wedding planners throughout the nation along with their contact number, email id and website. The subjects for this study were approximately 116 participants. Out of which 29 subjects responded to the questionnaire. This shows an approximate response of 25%.

Description of Instrument

The instrument used for this study was a 13-item questionnaire that was created by the researcher and distributed using email. The instrument was created on Google forms as an online questionnaire. A copy of the instrument can be found in Appendix A.

The instrument contained both close-ended and open-ended questions. The initial items on the questionnaire asked demographic questions regarding the subject's place of business, the amount of time they have worked in the wedding industry. The next items covered the possible future trends in the wedding industry, specifically location/venue trends, décor trends, and wedding theme trends. The parameters of these questions were that trends means bold colors, photo booths, signature cocktails, and live bands, etc. locations are in context to palaces, museums, wineries, private estates, gardens, beach sides, resorts, banquet halls, etc. decorations articles relates to the use of lightings, antiques, tables, candles, etc. and decoration themes such as vintage, modern, glamorous, etc.

Description of Procedures

The emailed of the professional wedding planners was extracted from Google search engine on 17th March, 2020. The professional wedding planners found on these sites were then contacted through email and asked to participate in a research study on future trends in the wedding industry. A copy of this first email can be found in Appendix B. Planners were emailed a link to the questionnaire on Google forms. A copy of the questionnaire email can be found in Appendix D. In order to increase the number of respondents, the wedding planners were also contacted through their social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook. After three weeks, data submitted on Google form was downloaded to an Excel spreadsheet.

Method of Data Analysis

The initial items on the instrument were designed to qualify whether the chosen wedding planner was valid as a subject and establish the planner's qualifications. Validity was established if the subject had enough experience in the wedding industry to be able to understand and determine current and futures wedding trends. Next items were designed to

determine the current and the future trends in the wedding industry.

The item on the questionnaire answered a research question. The first research question asked was about the popular locations for destination wedding in India. This question was addressed by asking where the subject has successfully organized destination weddings. Answers were compiled and analyzed to determine the popular destinations in India.

The next research question asked the amount spent on weddings in India. The research question was answered by asking wedding planners how much is the money spent on a normal wedding and on specifically on a destination wedding in their experience. A line graph was made where the city mentioned in the above question was taken on the X-axis and Y-axis showed the amount spent. Two lines to show the expenditure on a normal wedding and on a destination wedding were used respectively.

The next research question asked was the kinds of preferable locations. The research question was answered by asking wedding planners to rank the choices of the kinds of location given. Five popular kinds of location were provided namely Beach sides, palaces and historical monuments, resorts, banquet halls and hotels.

The last research question asked what wedding planners see as current and future wedding trends. In order to address this research question, the subjects were asked questions on various prevailing wedding trends such as use of flowers for jewelry and decoration, color of bridal outfit, articles used for decorations, etc. An open ended question was asked about the other emerging wedding trends. A pie chart was made out of these to know what things have got the most preferences.

RESEARCH ANALYSIS

The data is collected from two sources. One is primary source and the other one is secondary source. The analysis is hence divided into two parts respectively.

PRIMARY DATA ANALYSIS

The primary data is collected by distributing a questionnaire to the wedding planners across India. The objective is to know the recent trends in the wedding planning industry.

Total number of wedding planners in India exceeds 150. Therefore the population size is more than 150. However, the total respondents of the questionnaire were 29.

Hence, sample size $n = 29$.

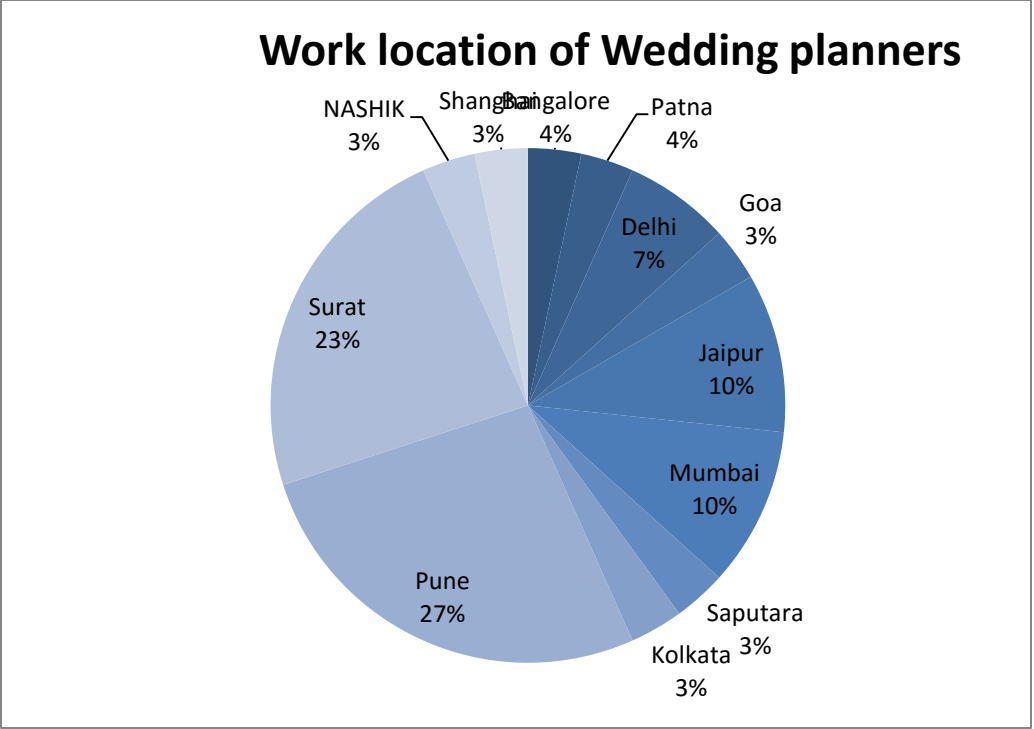
Question: In which city do you mainly run your business from?

Hypothesis:

H_0 : The wedding planners run their business in tier 1 cities.

H_A : The wedding planners run their business in tier 2 cities.

Response:



Interpretation:

Out of the total tier 1 cities in India, wedding planners run their business in Bangalore, Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Pune. The total share of respondents working in these cities in my data is 54%. Rest of the cities voted by the respondents are all the tier 2 cities. Hence, tier 1 cities are more than the tier 2 cities.

Also, the wedding planner’s work locations are spread across various cities. Not all of these cities are popular locations for destination weddings. To name a few, Nashik, Bangalore, surat, etc. are not so popular as wedding destinations. Hence, it can be interpreted that the wedding planners can arrange a destination wedding in a city apart from their work location as well. It is obvious that internet and globalization has made this possible for the planners.

Conclusion: Null hypothesis is accepted. Alternate hypothesis is rejected.

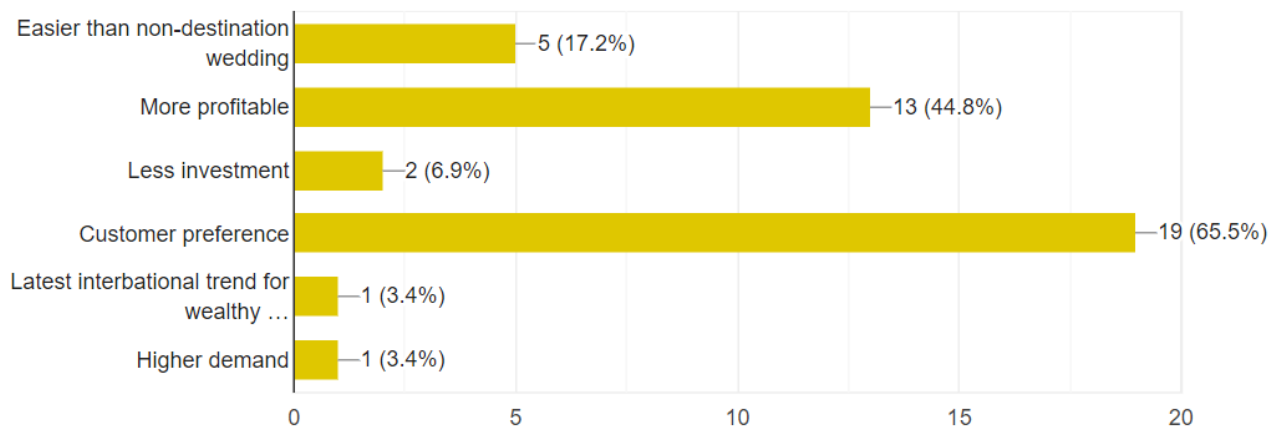
Question: What makes you do business in the destination wedding industry?

Hypothesis:

H₀: Destination wedding planning business is a profitable business.

H_A: Destination wedding planning business is not a profitable business.

Response:



Interpretation:

The wedding planners were asked to give out the reason why they opted to do a business in this wedding planning industry. It was found that customer preference has received the maximum number of votes which is 65%. The second reason which received the highest votes after customer preference was that the business is more profitable. Out of 29 respondents, 13 have voted for the business to be profitable. After this, 17% respondents voted that planning a destination wedding is easier than the non-destination wedding. And lastly, other reasons like destination wedding requires less investment, it is a latest international wedding trend or it is high in demand have received the least number of votes.

Conclusion: The major reason for doing this business is customer preference. Null hypothesis is rejected. Alternate hypothesis is accepted.

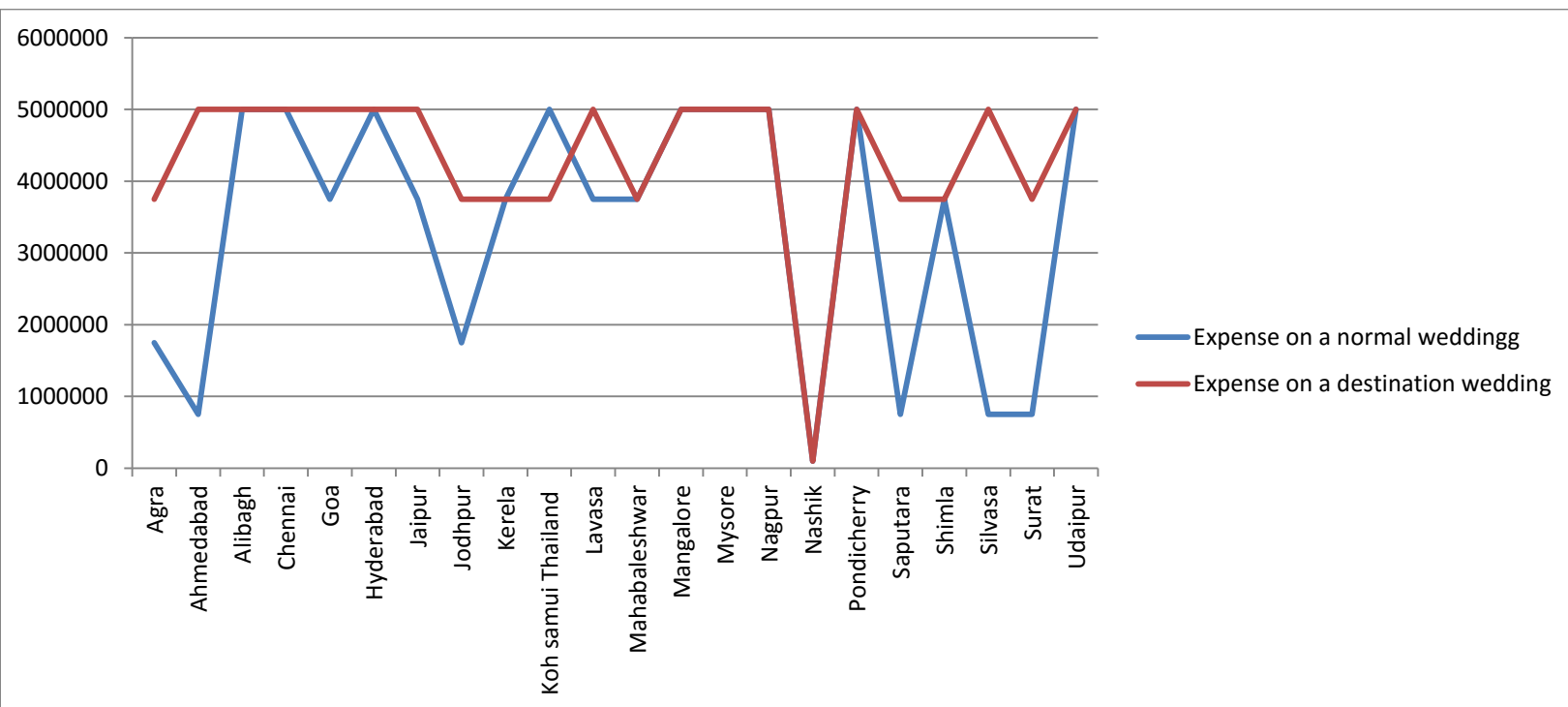
Question: The next question was about the places where the planners have successfully organized a destination wedding followed by two questions asking about the amount spent on a normal wedding and on specifically on destination weddings at those locations.

Hypothesis:

H₀: Amount spent on destination wedding is higher than the amount spent on a normal wedding.

H_A: Amount spent on destination wedding is lower than the amount spent on a normal wedding.

Response:



Interpretation:

Above is a chart showing the amount spent on a normal wedding and specifically on a destination wedding in the cities where the respondents have successfully organized a destination wedding. The X-axis shows the cities. The Y-axis shows the amount spent. The blue line depicts the amount spent on a normal wedding whereas the red line portrays the amount spent on a destination wedding. It can be clearly seen from the graph that the amount spent on destination wedding has been always higher than the amount spent on a normal wedding in any given city.

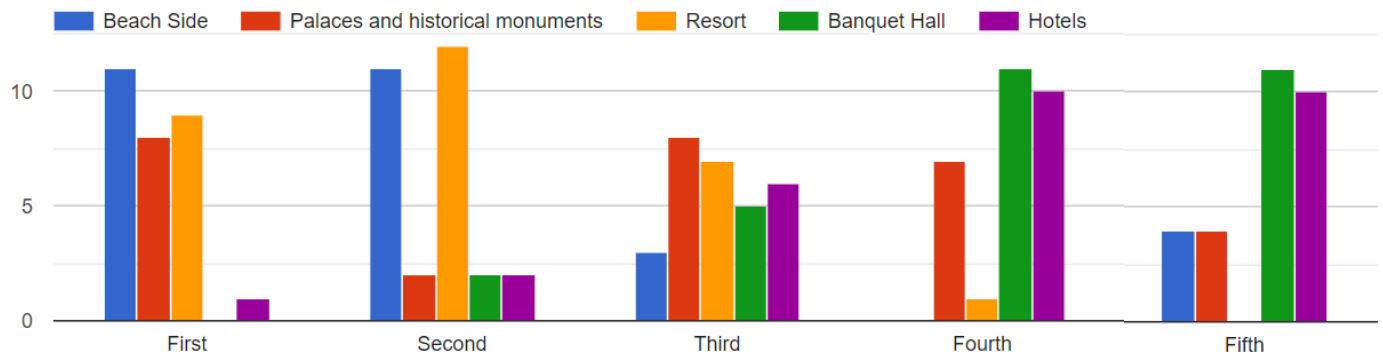
The reason is very simple that when it's a destination wedding, the expense of travel and accommodation is additional which is not present in a normal wedding.

Conclusion: Null hypothesis is accepted. Alternate hypothesis is rejected.

Question: In the next question, the respondents were asked to rank the kinds of location a new couple prefer.

For this question, the respondents were given five options which are Beach sides, palaces and historical monuments, resorts, banquet halls and hotels.

Response:



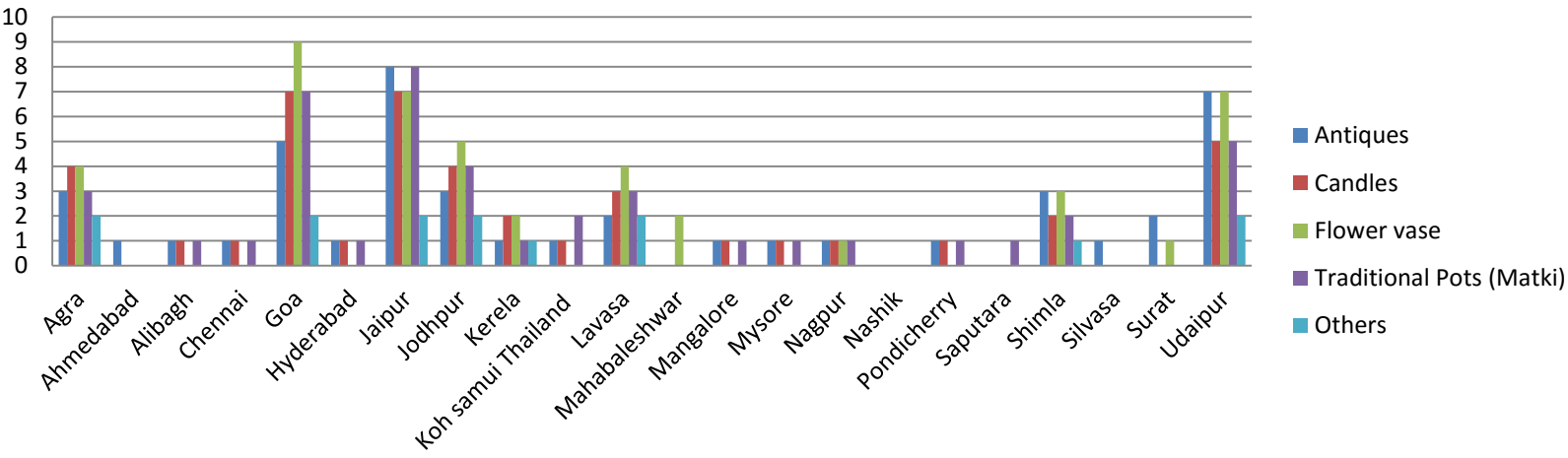
Interpretation:

The above bar diagram shows that the first preference for a couple has generally been a beach side wedding. For the second preference, the maximum votes are received by Resorts. There was a neutral voting for the third preference. However, Palaces and historical monuments are slightly higher than the other locations. Banquet halls have received the maximum votes for the fourth preference as well as for the fifth preference. This shows that hotels are chosen the least for a destination wedding. Hence, the wedding halls or hotels are out of fashion now.

Question: Which articles are most used for decoration?

Response:

Votes for different decoration articles

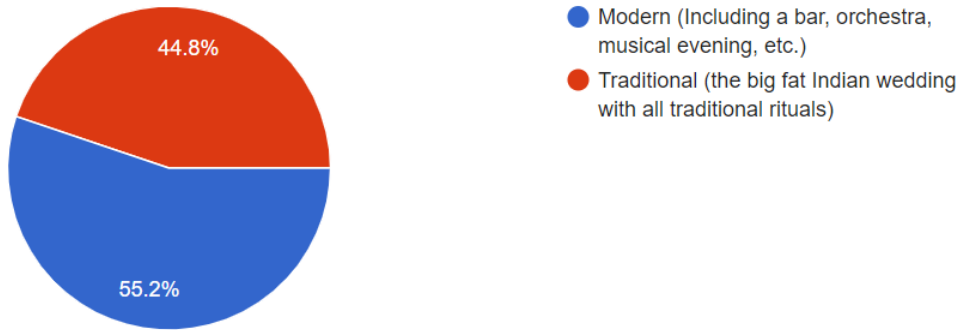


Interpretation: It can be seen that cities which are popular for the beach side weddings like Albagh, Goa, Kerela, Koh samui, Managlore, and Pondicherry have received the maximum votes for the use of flower vase as a decorative articles. Cities like Agra, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Mysore and Udaipur which are famous for the historical monuments and palaces have shown a preference for traditional pots and antiques to be used for decoration. And lastly the cities which are widespread hill stations have a favor for the flower vases. Hence, the most preferred and trending decorative article is the flower vase.

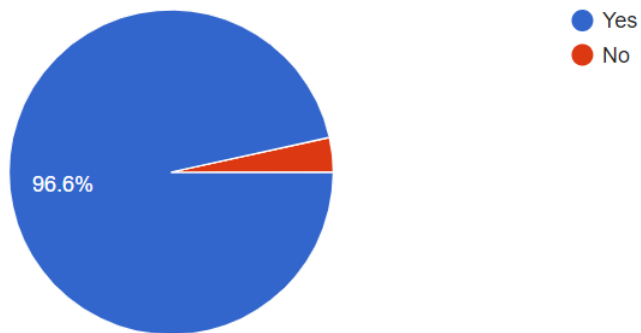
Findings from the questionnaire:

To know more about the recent trends in the destination wedding, the wedding planners were asked some questions regarding the same. Following are the charts showing the responses of the wedding planners:

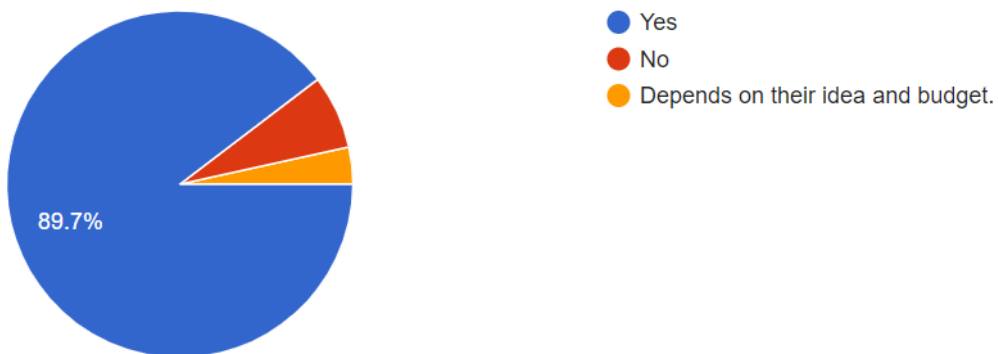
1. Preference for the kind of marriage- modern or traditional:



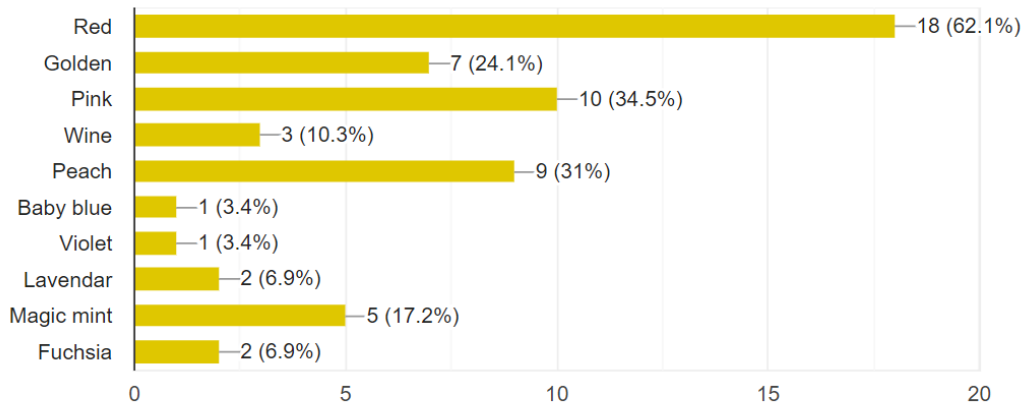
2. Increasing use of flowers for jewelry and decorations:



3. Are the millennial opting for an outdoor wedding:



4. Trending color for the bridal outfit:



It is clear that the new couples are going above and beyond to keep up their wedding day with the latest trends. Modern style of wedding where western influences like a bar, an orchestra or a musical night are preferred is more in vogue. These weddings are generally preferred outdoor. Outdoor wedding have pastel color palate for decorations and theme. Hence more flowers decoration can be seen in such weddings. Nowadays, it has been a trend to wear floral jewelry for the haldi or mehendi function amongst the new brides. But still, when it will come to their big day, they are still not moving on from the prevalent red lehenga for the ultimate bridal outfit. This shows a tint of traditional culture amidst the modern weddings.

SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

When the wedding planners' website was opened to get their contact information, one very important thing to be noticed was that their entire website was in pastel colors. The fonts used were all cursive and it overall looked no less than a beautiful wedding invitation.

To know more about the reason behind the hyping up of destination weddings, the social media platforms of the wedding planners was analyzed. This was to assess the marketing approaches used by them. The social media platform used was Instagram.

Weddinz.in is an Instagram account of a destination wedding planner who has 1.5 million followers on Instagram. They post everything about a wedding they plan. Their total posts are more than 7000. They will post the video of the bride's entry, the pre wedding photo shoots of their customers, bridal outfit and jewelry trends, mandapa decoration ideas, and even the best sangeet performances. The best thing about their posts is that they will start the caption with an interesting quote and then provide all the necessary details about the post. This makes them stand out as compared to the other wedding planners.

Another top wedding planner of India is *wedmegood*. They have got 1 million followers and have posted 8567 posts on Instagram. They have tried to make their Instagram account interactive with the customers. Amidst the covid-19 outbreak, they have been posting memes on their page to keep their customers joyous. Something innovative about their posts was that they have written the direct words of the bride or the couple as the caption to their posts which gives a personal touch to the followers.

It is clear from the above discussion that the wedding planners have hired a very professional photographer who will click each and every minute details of the wedding varying from an article's decoration to the bride's entry. These pictures then become a tool for them to advertise on all the social media available. There are numerous other wedding planners on the social media who are trying to attract customers in various innovative ways. They have been posting all about their facilities and what not. One more very interesting thing noticed was that they make immense use of hashtags to seek out more new clients. Images and posts with a specific hashtag get searched together. For sure it can be said that social media has been a big platform for the wedding planners to advertise and attract new customers.

CONCLUSION

Hiring a wedding planner is something very recent. The wedding planning business comes under the event management and hospitality industry. According to the statistics, the business has a growth rate of approximately 30% every year. More number of hotels is being established because of destination weddings in the cities which are a popular destination wedding hub for example Jaipur. Some of the very popular destinations are Udaipur, Goa, Kerela, Masoorie, etc. The old palaces and forts of Rajasthan are all turned into destination wedding venues by big hotel chain owners. Their revenue is contributing by almost 20% to the Rajasthan government. India has seen a mixed preference in the sense that both the traditional and the modern weddings are in vogue. A royal wedding in the city palace of Udaipur or a super cool wedding at the Grand Hyatt in Goa, both are in demand. There are numerous wedding planners in India who do the business of planning the entire wedding right from selection of the venue, coordination various vendors, sangeet preparation, photo shoots to decoration of the entire wedding like a fairy tale where the dreams come true. Because of the advancement of technology, it has been possible for them to arrange wedding in a city other than their work location. This business has been an advantage to numerous small scale industries like invitation card making, florists, confectionaries, and packaging. There are housewives in the state of Rajasthan and Gujarat who are very skilled in packing the small articles used in wedding. Their collaboration with the giant wedding planners has been a boom to them. Also, the destination wedding industry has contributed to the tourism of that state as well because many foreign tourists are now coming to India to do a destination wedding in the royal Indian style. The wedding planners have mentioned some interesting trends prevalent in the industry nowadays. They have mentioned that “People are more concerned about decor part more than catering part. Catering is also most important part but new bloods are more concerned about lavish decor and entertainment part.” Some unique kinds of wedding popular nowadays are an afternoon outdoor ceremony, cocktail weddings, sundowner weddings, Eco-friendly weddings, etc. Other ubiquitous trends are Exotic Pre-Wedding shoots, special candid videos by bridesmaids and best men, Flash mobs, designer Wedding Outfits (Celebrity inspired), recorded instrumental music, etc. The use of Chandeliers, Floral backdrops, Photo booths, etc. for decoration is also in fashion.

To sum up, I would like to say that the destination wedding industry is growing bigger and better day by day. This is something which will probably never go out of business because a wedding is such a big thing in India. People save and plan for this day for years. They always try to make their wedding the best by hook or by crook.

LIMITATION

The limitation of this research is that because of the corona virus outbreak, it was not possible to connect to the wedding planners in person. Even the small scale packaging ventures couldn't be contacted. E-mail was sent to the wedding planners but because of the pandemic, only 25% of the total subjects had responded. Because of the situational limitation, firsthand information could not be collected from the customers to a greater level.

FUTURE

Further studies can be directed on each precise trend area in order to determine more explicit details about each future trend. More wedding planners should be contacted from abroad in order to get more number of respondents. In future studies, wedding planners should be communicated through interviews or phone calls, as to acquire more in depth responses.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix-A QUESTIONNAIRE

Destination Weddings: The New Vogue

Hi this is Bhumi Agrawal from TY BBA IB, BMCC. I would like to thank you for sparing your precious time to fill up this form. This form is for my graduation project on "Destination wedding: The New Vogue". Please help me to know the recent trends in the Destination wedding.

***Required**

In which city do you mainly run business from? *

Your answer _____

What makes you do business in the destination wedding industry?

Please choose all that applies.

Easier than non-destination wedding

More profitable

Less investment

Customer preference

Other: _____

In which cities/ states have you successfully organized a destination wedding? *

Please choose all that applies.

Udaipur

Agra

Jodhpur

Lavasa

Goa

Kerala

Shimla

Jaipur

Other: _____

How much money is spend on a wedding in your experience?

Less than ₹1,00,000

₹1,00,000 - ₹5,00,000

₹5,00,000 - ₹10,00,000

₹10,00,000 - ₹25,00,000

₹25,00,000 - ₹50,00,000

More than ₹50,00,000

How much money is spend specifically on a destination wedding in your experience?

- Less than ₹1,00,000
 - ₹1,00,000 - ₹5,00,000
 - ₹5,00,000 - ₹10,00,000
 - ₹10,00,000 - ₹25,00,000
 - ₹25,00,000 - ₹50,00,000
 - More than ₹50,00,000
-

How long have you been in this industry? *

- 0-1 year
 - 1-5 years
 - 5-10 years
 - More than 10 years
-

What kind of wedding do the new couples prefer?

- Modern (Including a bar, orchestra, musical evening, etc.)
- Traditional (the big fat Indian wedding with all traditional rituals)

Rank the location preference of the new couple *

	Beach Side	Palaces and historical monuments	Resort	Banquet Hall	Hotels
First	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Second	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Third	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fourth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fifth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you see an increasing use of flowers in terms of jewelries and decorations? *



Yes

No

Are the new couples choosing to go for an outdoor wedding? *

Yes

No

Other: _____

Select the trending colors for bridal outfit *



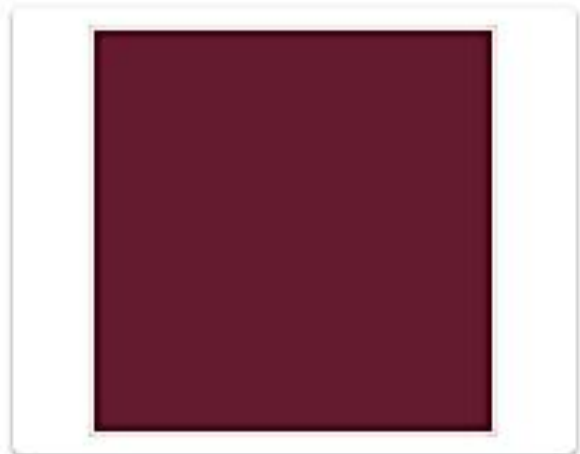
Red



Golden



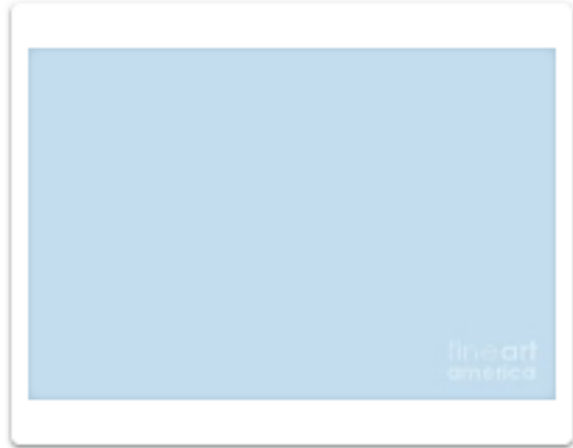
Pink



Wine



Peach



Baby blue



Violet



Lavendar



Magic mint



Fuchsia

Which articles are most used for decoration? *

Antiques

Candles

Flower vase

Traditional Pots (Matki)

Other: _____

What else do you see as an emerging trend in weddings?

Your answer _____

Thank You!

If you would like to share any other details about the destination weddings, you are most welcome.
Please shoot up your ideas on agrawalbhumi1610@gmail.com

Appendix-B

EMAIL SENT TO THE RESPONDENTS

Subject: Experts Inputs Needed: Why Destination Wedding?

Body:

Dear Sir/Madam,

Hope you are doing good & are best of your health.

I am Bhumi Agrawal, a student of International Business Management, BMCC, Pune.

I am currently working on an interesting subject which is a part of my Graduation Project and i seek your support and guidance to complete the study.

Topic: Destination Wedding: The new vogue

Please help me to know the recent trends in destination wedding by filling up a very small questionnaire attached in this email.

I am collating this information from best 100 wedding planners to get correct inputs and facts from the industry experts.

i will share the final analysis with you for your reference & usage. so requesting you to fill in the details in below form (google doc link).

Questionnaire Link:

<https://forms.gle/bcHZReAFhJTfXnpm9>

You can connect me if any more details needed from my side.

Thanks & Regards,

Bhumi Agrawal

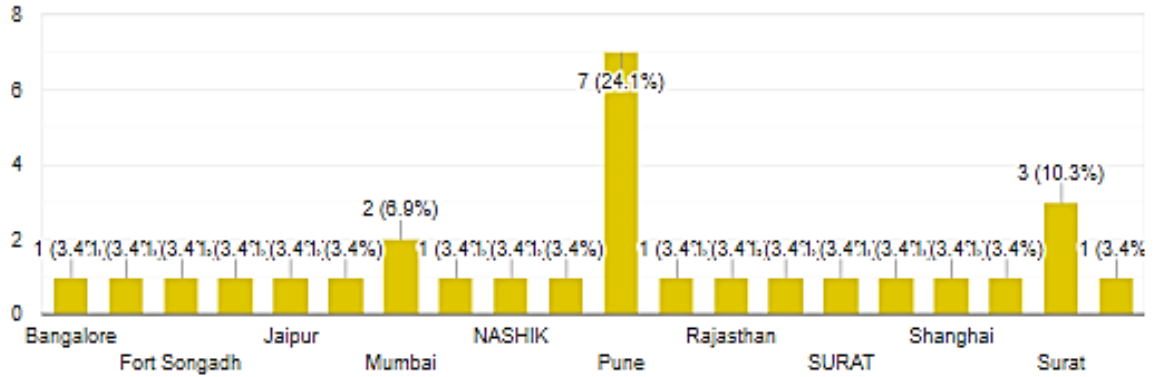
Student - BMCC Pune

Contact: 84888043795

Appendix-C RESPONDENSES

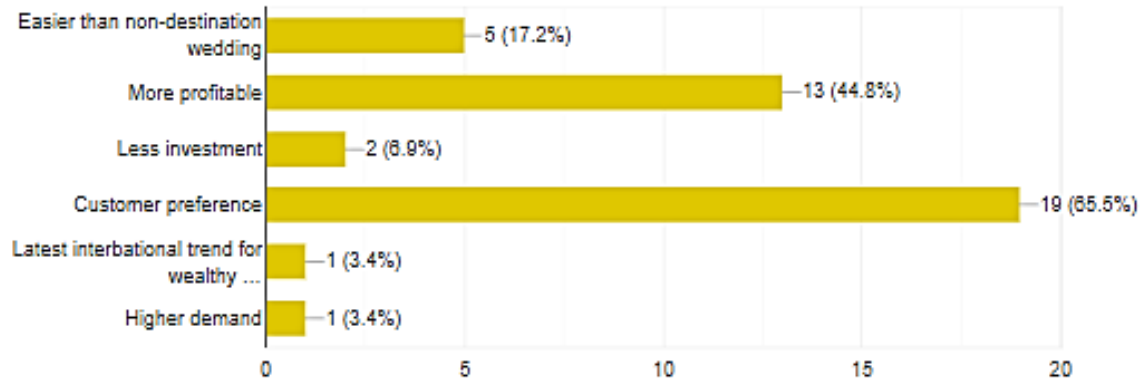
In which city do you mainly run business from?

29 responses



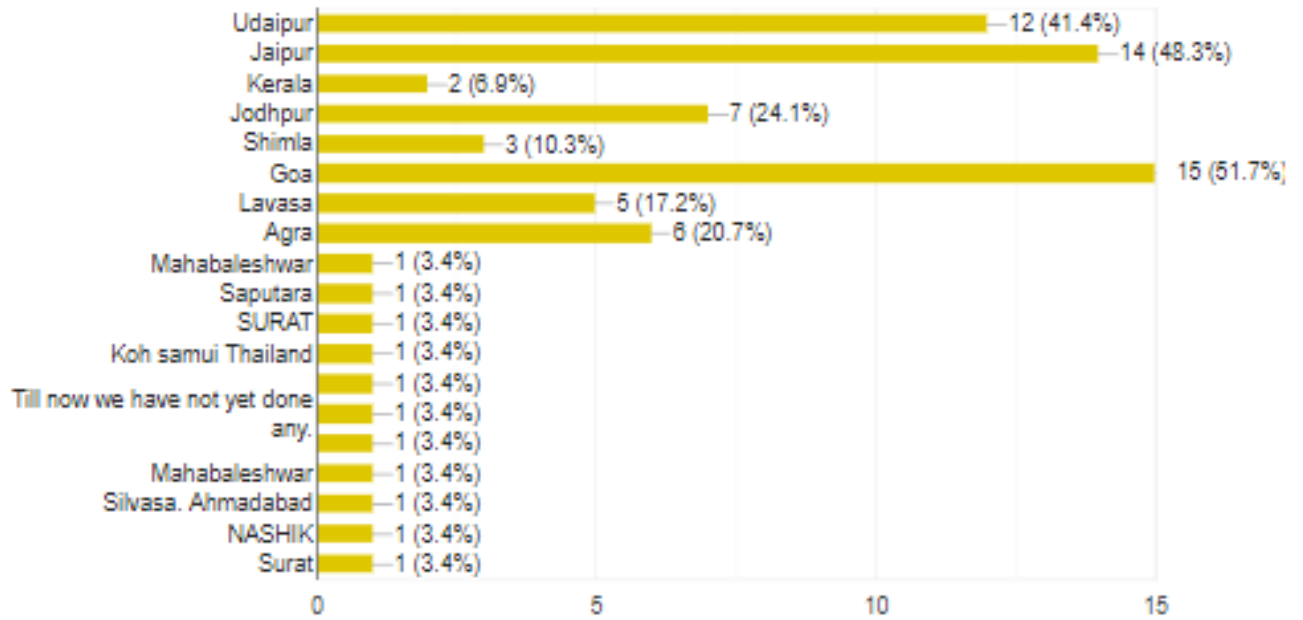
What makes you do business in the destination wedding industry?

29 responses



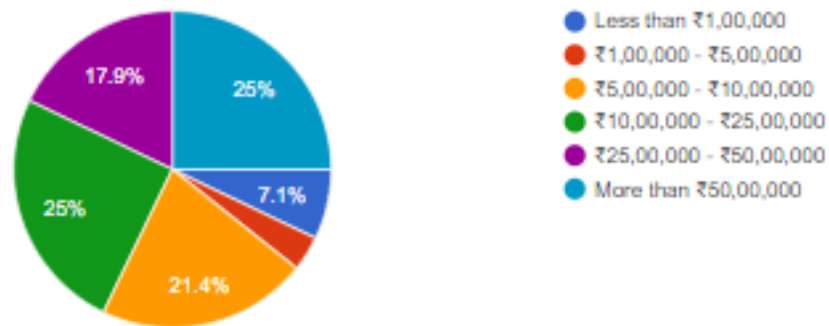
In which cities/ states have you successfully organized a destination wedding?

29 responses



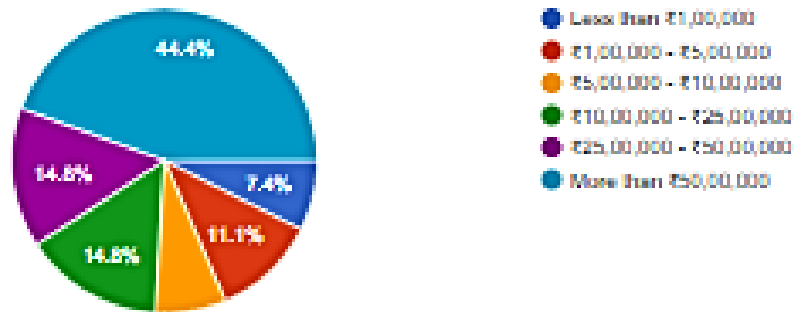
How much money is spend on a wedding in your experience?

28 responses



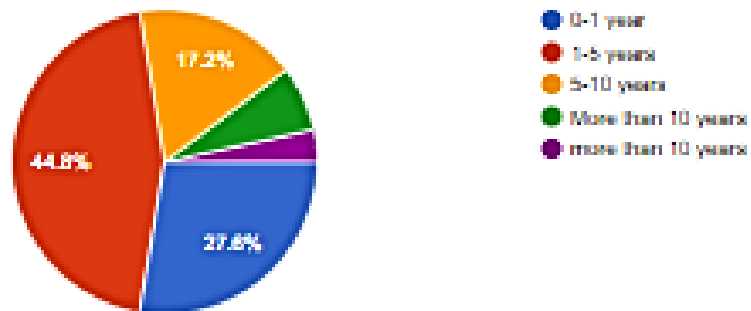
How much money is spend specifically on a destination wedding in your experience?

27 responses



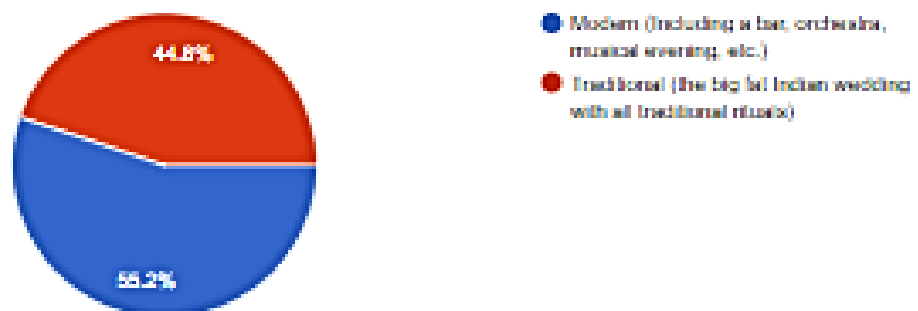
How long have you been in this industry?

27 responses

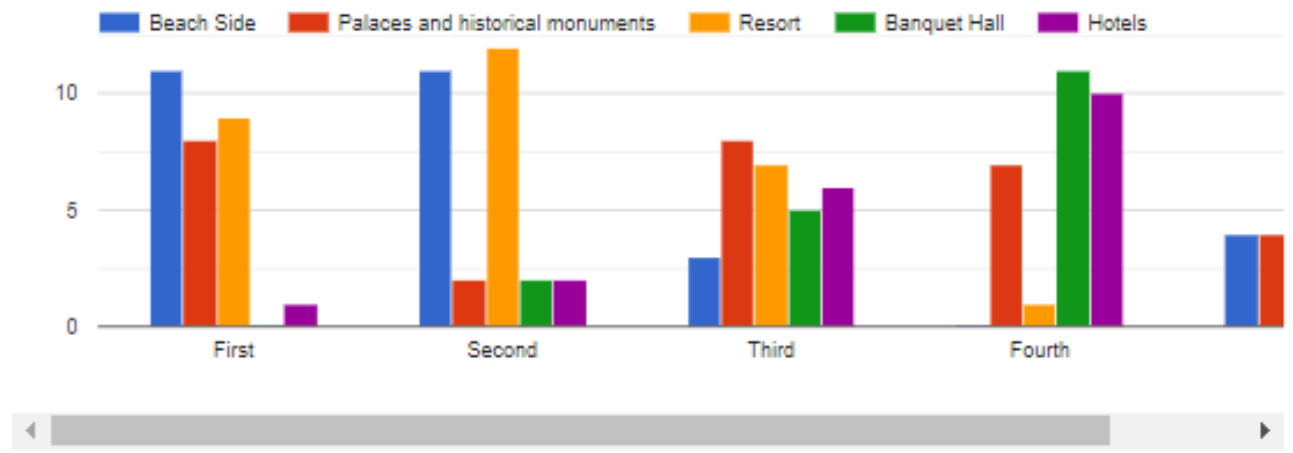


What kind of wedding do the new couples prefer?

27 responses

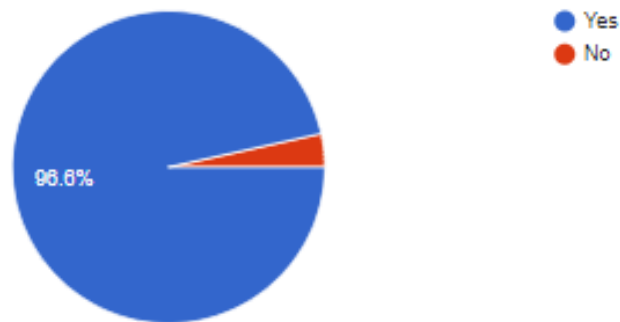


Rank the location preference of the new couple



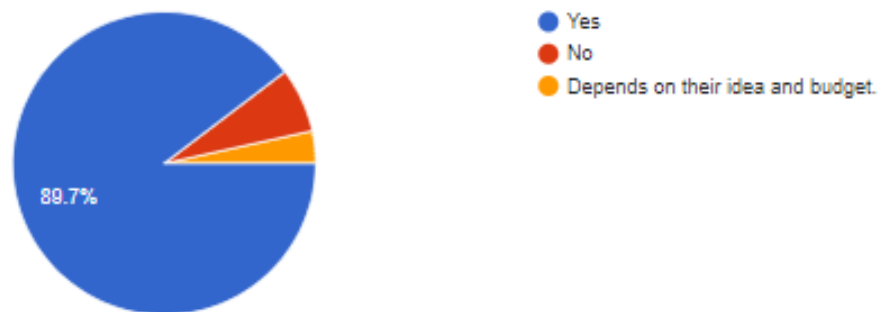
Do you see an increasing use of flowers in terms of jewelries and decorations?

29 responses



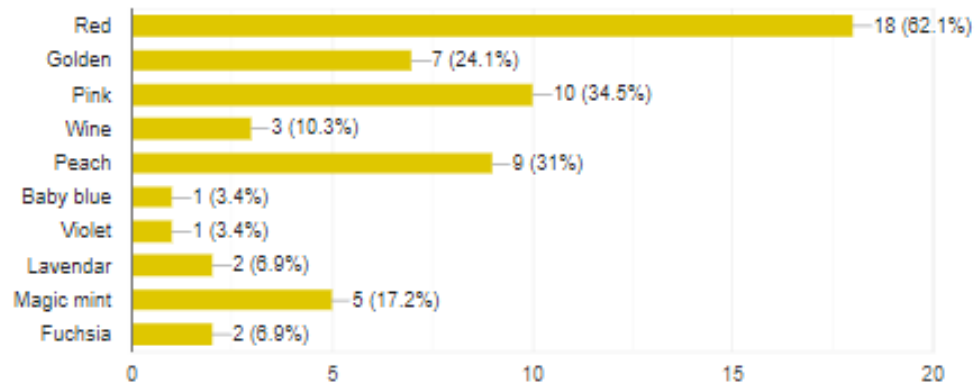
Are the new couples choosing to go for an outdoor wedding?

29 responses



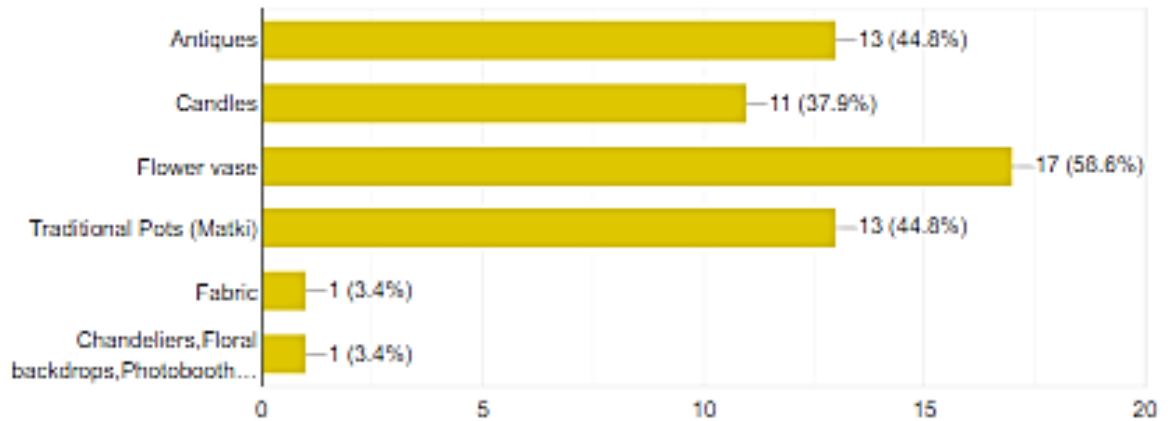
Select the trending colors for bridal outfit

29 responses



Which articles are most used for decoration?

29 responses



What else do you see as an emerging trend in weddings?

17 responses

Theme weddings

Orchestra

People are more concerned about decor part more than catering part . Catering is also most important part but new bloods are more concerned about lavish decor and entertainment part .concept and theme wedding is a new trend .

Afternoon outdoor party

SIMPLE

Something new

A remote place where people have not reached so far or international locations.

Sundwoner weddings

There is a combination of a Indian big fat wedding with some modern preference.

Eco-friendly weddings & small sized intimate weddings

My fab musician

Destination wedding, celebrating each n every tradition with perfect theme with separate days

Exotic Pre-Wedding shoots,Special candid videos by bridesmaids and best men,Flash mobs,Designer Wedding Outfits (Celebrity inspired),etc

RECORDED INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Wedding in 5 star hotels

Pre wedding photo shoot

Thank You!

5 responses

