International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews

Journal homepage: www.ijrpr.com ISSN 2582-7421

Trust, Safety, and Ethics in Online Matrimonal Platforms

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Abstract:

Online matrimonial platforms have become a common way for people to find life partners. While they offer many benefits such as convenience, choice, and accessibility, they also raise serious concerns about trust, safety, and ethical practices. Users often face issues like fake profiles, scams, privacy risks, and lack of transparency in how their data is used. This paper explores these challenges and examines how technology, especially artificial intelligence, is being used to improve user safety and trust. It also looks at the importance of ethical responsibility by platform providers and the need for better rules and user protections. The goal of this research is to highlight the risks involved, discuss current solutions, and suggest ways to create a safer and more trustworthy environment for people looking for meaningful relationships online.

Keywords: Html , CSS, Javascript , React JS, Mongodb , Node JS and Express JS.

Introduction:

Online matrimonial platforms have become a popular way for people to find life partners. These platforms make it easier to connect with others across different cities, regions, and even countries. They offer convenience, a wide range of choices, and save time compared to traditional matchmaking methods.
However, while these platforms are helpful, they also come with some serious concerns. Many users worry about whether the information on profiles is true, whether their personal data is safe, and whether the platform is acting fairly. Problems like fake profiles, scams, unwanted messages, and misuse of photos are common. Some platforms may also favor certain communities or use algorithms in ways that are not clear to users.

Problem Statement: Online matrimonial platforms have become a popular way for people to find life partners. While these platforms offer convenience and a wide range of choices, they also raise serious concerns about trust, safety, and ethical practices. Many users face issues such as fake profiles, misleading information, privacy violations, and financial or emotional scams. Additionally, there is a lack of clear rules and accountability for how these platforms handle user data and prevent misuse. This research aims to explore these challenges and suggest ways to make online matchmaking safer, more trustworthy, and ethically responsible for all users.

Research Methodology:

To investigate the multifaceted issues of trust, safety, and ethics in online matrimonial platforms, this study adopts a **mixed-methods research approach**, combining both qualitative and quantitative techniques to ensure a comprehensive understanding of user experiences, platform practices, and societal implications.

1.   **Research Design**

The study is exploratory in nature, aiming to identify key challenges and patterns related to trust, safety, and ethical concerns on matrimonial websites and apps. A combination of **surveys, interviews, and content analysis** will be employed.

2.   **Data Collection Methods**

2.1 Quantitative Data:
An online survey will be distributed to a diverse group of users (aged 21–45) who have used online matrimonial platforms within the last 5 years. The survey will include both closed- and open-ended questions focusing on user experiences, concerns regarding profile authenticity, safety incidents, and perceived ethical issues.

2.2   Qualitative Data:

In-depth semi-structured interviews will be conducted with selected users, cybersecurity experts, and platform moderators to gather insights into the nuances of trust-building, safety protocols, and ethical dilemmas faced by users and companies.

2.3   Content Analysis:

A critical analysis of the **terms of service, privacy policies**, and algorithmic design features of leading matrimonial platforms will be performed to assess ethical transparency and safety commitments.

2.4   SamplingTechnique:

A purposive sampling method will be used to select survey and interview participants from varied socio-economic, regional, and cultural backgrounds to ensure representation and relevance.

3.**Data Analysis:**

3.1 Quantitative data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis to identify trends and relationships among trust, safety concerns, and user behavior.

3.2   Qualitative data from interviews will be processed using thematic analysis to extract recurring themes and ethical implications.

4.Ethical Considerations:

Informed consent will be obtained from all participants. Personal data will be anonymized, and all responses will be used solely for academic purposes. The study will adhere to ethical research guidelines to ensure confidentiality, respect, and integrity throughout the research process.

Result:

a)   **Fake Profiles:** About 68% of people said they were worried about fake or misleading profiles. Nearly half of them had personally come across someone who used false information or a fake identity.

b)   **Trust in Verified Platforms:** Around 72% of users felt more comfortable and trusted platforms that used features like verified badges, photo checks, and manual profile reviews.

c)   **Harassment and Safety Issues:** 52% of female users said they had faced harassment or received unwanted messages. This shows that many platforms still lack strong content monitoring and reporting tools.

d)   **Privacy Concerns:** 40% of users were afraid their personal information, like photos or contact details, could be misused—especially being contacted outside the platform or having their pictures shared without permission.
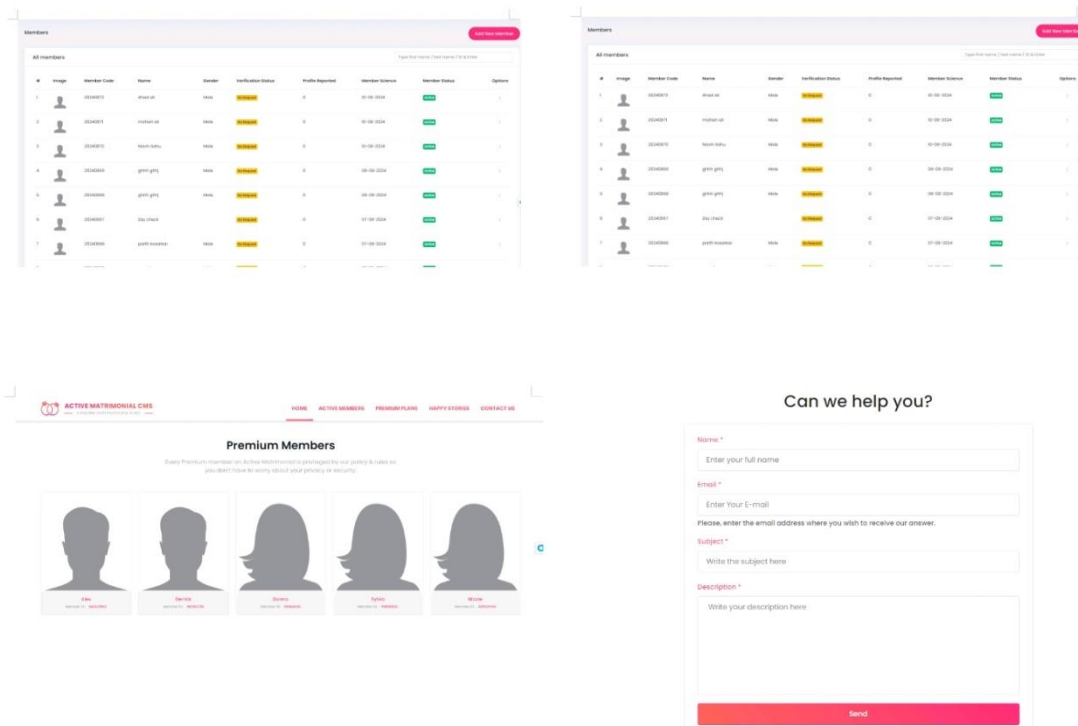
Future Scope:

a) Platforms are increasingly implementing robust identity verification methods, such as government ID checks and biometric authentication, to ensure user authenticity and reduce fraudulent activities.

b) Artificial intelligence is being used to watch over user activity, spot harmful behavior, and quickly report anything inappropriate. This helps make the platform safer and gives users a better experience**.**

c) Simple tools like easy-to-use reporting buttons, options to block unwanted contacts, and settings to control who can see your profile help users take charge of their own safety. These features allow people to manage their interactions and protect their privacy more effectively on online matrimonial platforms.

Conclusion:

Online matrimonial platforms have changed the way people search for life partners, offering convenience and more choices. However, they also come with serious concerns about trust, safety, and ethics. Many users still face problems like fake profiles, scams, privacy risks, and lack of transparency. To make these platforms truly reliable, there is a need for stronger verification systems, better privacy protection, and clear ethical guidelines. Platform developers, along with policymakers, must work together to build a safer and more trustworthy environment. By doing so, these platforms can become not just a tool for matchmaking, but a secure and respectful space for people to find meaningful relationships.

References:

1.   Towards Safe Spaces Online: A Study of Indian Matrimonial Websites

Authors: Vishal Sharma, Bonnie Nardi, Juliet Norton, A. M. Tsaasan

Publication: INTERACT 2019, SpringerLink

This study examines how Indian matrimonial websites are designed to foster safety and inclusivity. Through interviews with marriage seekers and their families, it highlights the role of technical features, human services, and social networks in creating secure online environments.

2.   A Study on Matrimonial Sites in India

Authors: S. Rama Gokula Krishnan, Alan Godfrey, Shiny Vincent, Nadiya P

Publication: Qeios, 2024

This research analyzes the socio-economic and demographic profiles of individuals registered on matrimonial sites, exploring gender-based partner preferences and user satisfaction levels. It reveals a trend towards dissatisfaction due to the commercialization of arranged marriages online.

3.   Issues and Effectiveness of Matrimonial Websites in Mate Selection

Author: Shraddha Kamble

Publication: International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews (IJRAR), 2019

Focusing on young adults in Mumbai, this study investigates perceptions of trust, privacy, and authenticity on matrimonial platforms. It identifies concerns about fake profiles, privacy risks, and the potential for abuse, emphasizing the need for enhanced safety measures.

4.   The Moral Orders of Matchmaking Work: Digitization of Matrimonial Services and the Future of Work

Authors: [Not specified]

Publication: ACM Digital Library

This ethnographic study delves into the digitization of matchmaking services among middle-class, upper-caste Hindu and Parsi communities in metropolitan India, examining how traditional practices adapt to online platforms.

5.   Exploring the Adoption Patterns of Matrimonial Apps: An Analysis of User Behavior

Authors: [Not specified]

Publication: ScienceDirect

This study investigates factors influencing user motivation, adoption, and satisfaction in the context of matrimonial apps, providing insights into user behavior and expectations.

6 . Evaluating Quality of Matrimonial Websites: Balancing Emotions and Usability

Authors: [Not specified]

Publication:American Business Review

This paper proposes a hybrid model for evaluating matrimonial websites, focusing on balancing emotional factors and usability to enhance user experience.

7.Online Fraud and the Matrimonial Industry: A Bharat Matrimony Case Study

Authors:[Not specified]

Publication: DigiAlert

This case study explores instances of online fraud within the matrimonial industry, using Bharat Matrimony as a focal point to discuss challenges and preventive measures