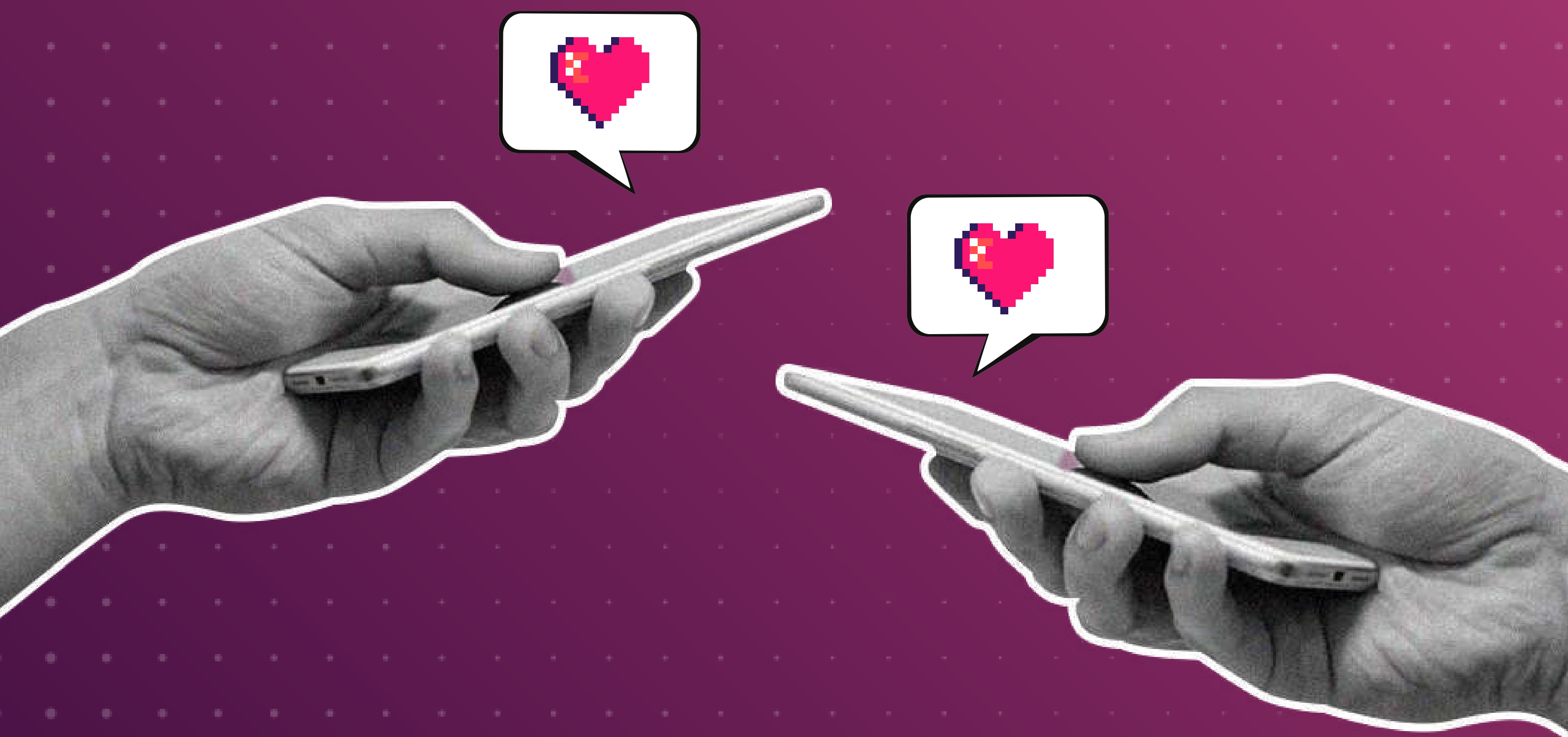


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An Aisle Report

THE COMMITMENT DECADE



Foreword

At the House of Aisle, we've always believed that love isn't just about chemistry - it's also about compatibility. With over 30 million members and 3 million success stories, we're seeing patterns in how Indians worldwide approach serious dating.

In this report, we're bringing you real insights from our research - uncovering how urban singles in 2025 are rethinking love, partnership, and what truly matters in their romantic lives.



This first-of-its-kind industry report captures the evolving behaviour of Indian singles in the dating landscape. To deepen the psychological understanding of these insights, we collaborated with Arouba Kabir, our relationship expert and one of India's leading counselling psychologists, Founder of Enso Wellness.

The findings highlight a clear cultural shift - Indians are moving away from casual connections towards intentional, emotionally intelligent relationships built on shared values and long-term compatibility.

Chandni Gaglani
Head of Aisle Network



Research Methodology

GENERATIONAL BREAKDOWN

Millennials: **74%** | Gen Z: **25%**
Other : **1%**

TOP CITIES

Bengaluru: **19%** | Delhi/NCR: **16%**
Mumbai: **17%** | Pune: **10%**
Hyderabad: **5%** | Others: **33%**

OCCUPATION-WISE BREAKDOWN

Salaried: **74%** | Self-employed: **22%**
Student: **4%**

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN

Metro Tier 1: **76%**
Tier 2 & 3: **24%**

Objective - To analyse where meaningful dating in India is headed, based on insights from **3,400** (sample size surveyed) **urban Indian singles across generations**, exploring how they define commitment, exclusivity and emotional connection in the digital age.

The Future of Serious Dating in India

Key Insights

The Big Picture: 6 Shifts Redefining Love in Modern India



The Commitment Renaissance

Casual dating fatigue is real and measurable. Nearly **9 in 10 urban Indians** now prioritise **meaningful relationships over casual flings**. Among millennials, **1 in 3 want to marry within a year**, signalling a generational pivot towards stability.

Mental Health: The New Love Language?

Emotional maturity is now the ultimate green flag. **67% of Gen Z women would end a relationship over mental health concerns** and **50%** of all respondents believe **therapy talk** belongs in dating conversations.

Economic Equality Rising

Financial independence is shaping modern romance. **53% of women prefer splitting the bill**, while **42% of men still believe they should pay** - reflecting a society in transition.

AI and Humans Together Walk The Way

Indians want innovation with a human touch. **68.6% of Gen Z women reject AI-only matchmaking**, while **50% of Millennials prefer AI-assisted connections verified by real people**.

Modern Matrimony Begins On Dating Apps

55.5% of respondents have seen couples in their circle marry after meeting online, proving that digital dating can indeed lead to lifelong commitment.

Metros. Mindsets. Modern Love.

Kolkata prioritises sincerity and long-term compatibility. **Mumbai** demonstrates a preference for emotional intelligence and maturity. **Delhi NCR** seeks to balance personal autonomy with family integration. **Bengaluru** gravitates towards meaningful, intentional connections.



Commitment is Cool Again



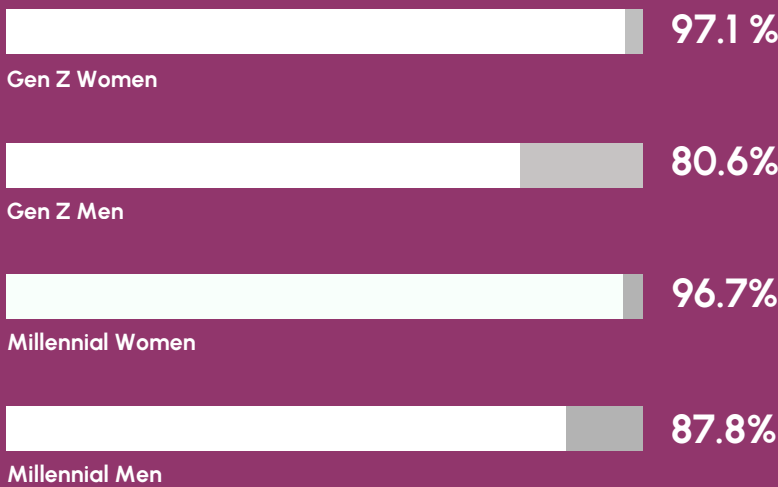
Marriage Urgency

Millennials



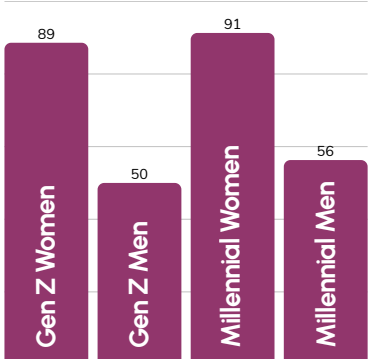
1 in 3 Millennials want to be married within the next year

Commitment as a Priority



The commitment certainty gap is real. Female commitment rates are rock-solid across generations (97.1% vs 96.7%). Male rates climb with age and maturity (80.6% to 87.8%).

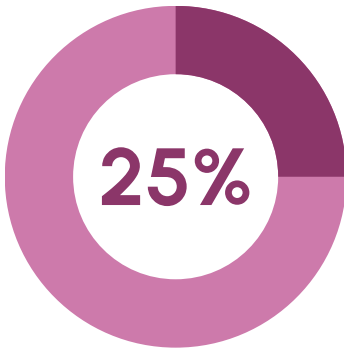
9 in 10 Women Reject Casual Dating



All values are in %

This divide highlights a critical truth: women overwhelmingly reject casual dating, while men are only moderately disillusioned - making exclusivity and emotional depth the true differentiators in modern relationships.

The End of Casual Dating?



1 in 4 have actively reduced casual dating in the past year



Why Women are Leading the Casual Dating Exit

Emotional Labour Inequality

Women often manage men's emotions in casual dating without receiving support in return.

Emotional Vulnerability

Hookup culture heightens physical and emotional vulnerability without offering security.

Priority Balance

Career-focused women weigh dating's time and energy costs against professional, personal, and emotional goals.

Cultural Dissonance

Having grown up with value systems where casual dating didn't exist, many women internalise guilt and shame. Society still judges women more harshly for casual relationships.



How First-Date Payments Are Dismantling Traditional Gender Roles

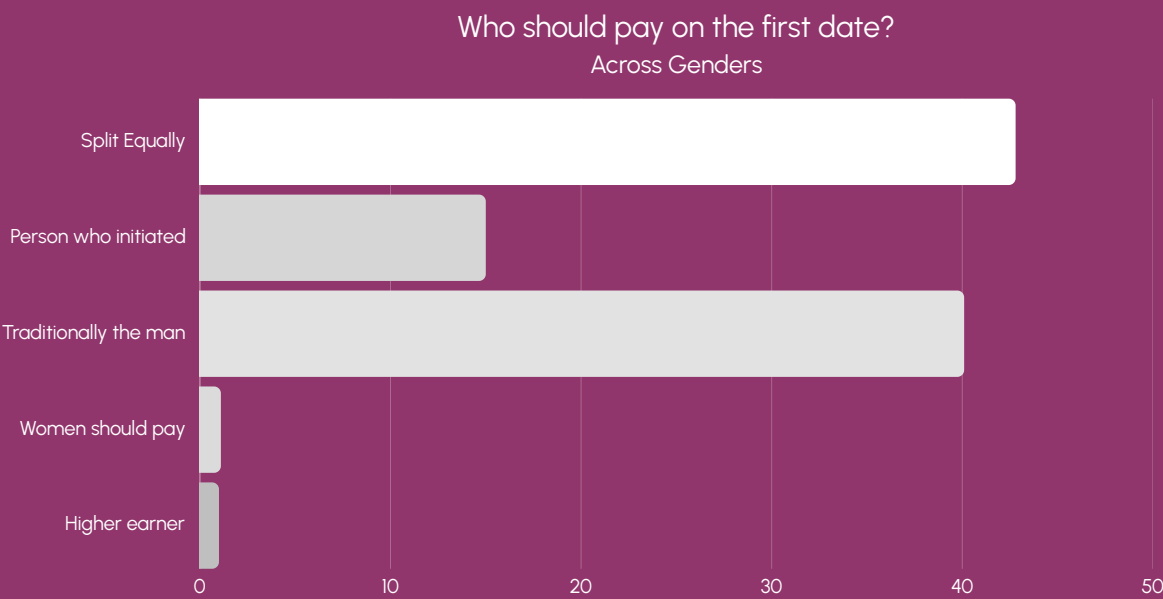


Who pays isn't just about money - it's about autonomy, identity, and equality. For Indian singles, the dinner bill has quietly become a mirror of shifting power dynamics in love. Many men still feel an unspoken pressure to pay on first dates - a lingering reflection of patriarchal social undercurrents and traditional gender roles in modern dating.



Indian daters are in the middle of a generational shift

- 42.8% believe the bill should be split equally.
- 40.1% still think the man should pay.



The Gender Divide Behind the First Date Bill

His Reason: Tradition

42% of Indian men still believe they should pay - but behind this number lies a cultural crossroad.

The Burden of Legacy

The drive to pay is rooted in a cultural inheritance - an ingrained reflex where being the financial "provider" has historically validated his value and masculine role.

Her Reason: Autonomy

53% of Indian women prefer splitting the bill - not to reject chivalry, but to reclaim autonomy.

The Assertion of Equality

To maintain an honest interaction, she contributes financially. Her act of paying is an attempt to establish equality and avoid feeling any obligation or debt to her date.

Progressive Conflict

He often sees paying as the clearest way to express interest, generosity, and capability.

Screening for Equality

She views the bill as a litmus test for his security. Her question is, "Can he handle my financial and personal independence without his ego feeling threatened?"

From Habit to Intent

The risk is that his act of care is misinterpreted as an attempt at dominance. He is trying to distinguish a genuine gesture from a conditioned, controlling reflex.

Breaking the Debt Dynamic

By ensuring she pays her share, she proactively removes any potential for an unspoken social or emotional debt. The goal is a clean start, free from any transactional undertones.

Effort is the New Currency

The modern challenge for him is learning that true value in a relationship is demonstrated through emotional presence and effort, not the simple action of reaching for the card first.

Equality is the Norm

She is seeking a partner who understands that the highest form of modern chivalry is mutual respect. She is not rejecting romance, but demanding it be built on a foundation of absolute equality.





Bill-splitting isn't numbers - it's a social negotiation

Power Balance: Equal pay dismantles implicit hierarchies and establishes mutual respect.

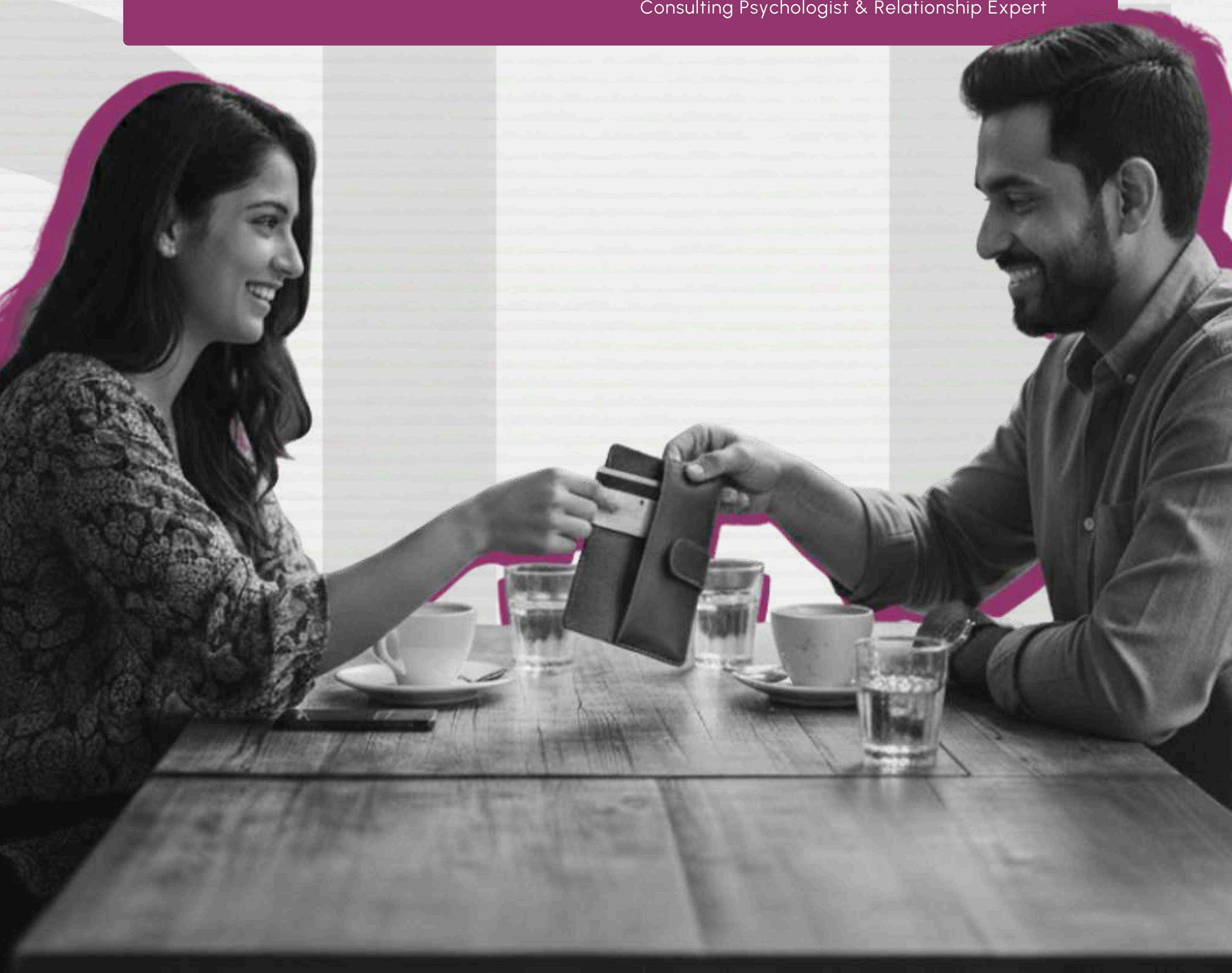
Screening Tool: Early equality acts as a litmus test for compatibility in shared values.

Future Planning: Financial transparency today builds trust for tomorrow's shared life.



“ When she splits the bill, she's asserting equality - not rejecting you. Your value lies in emotional presence and partnership, not provision. Discomfort with her independence now predicts problems with her autonomy later. At the same time occasionally pampering your partner and offering to pay is good practice.

-Arouba Kabir, in association with Aisle
Consulting Psychologist & Relationship Expert



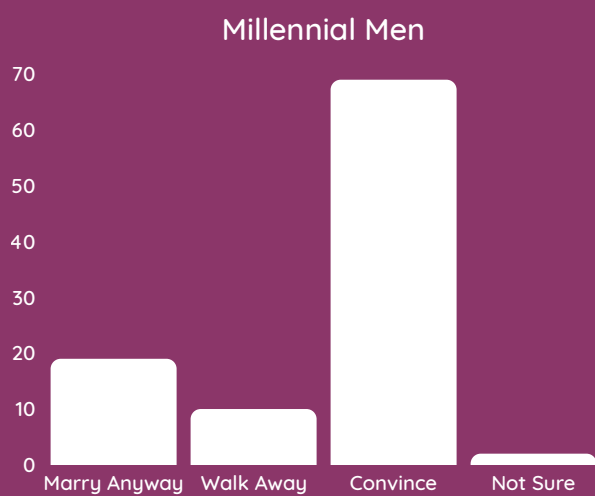
The Indian Paradox - Between Family Blessing and Personal Choice



In India, marriage has never been just about two people - it's about two families, two histories, two sets of expectations. But the script is evolving. The next generation is rewriting the rules - where serious relationships begin with personal agency but honour the importance of family blessings.



Millennial Men In Love: 1 in 10 Would Walk Away If Parents Say No



Across generations, Indians lean towards love that aligns with family (convince parents over everything else) - a reminder that here, marriage is not just two people, but a cultural consensus.



Why Families Still Hold Influence

- Marriage is still seen as a union of families, preserving shared traditions and values
- Parental approval remains the ultimate stamp of acceptance and social ease
- Families serve as experienced gatekeepers, ensuring compatibility and long-term stability

What's Changing?

- Singles now take full ownership of partner choice
- The modern format: "Arranged by self, blessed by family."
- A new hybrid that respects both individuality and heritage
- Emotional compatibility, shared vision, and mental well-being are now new deal-breakers



In modern India, love isn't rebelling against family - it's redefining what family approval means.

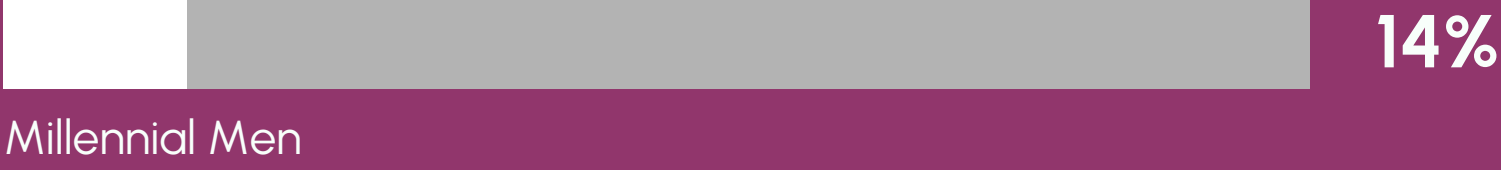


In India's Dating Playbook, Even The Planets Have Opinions



Stars Still Matter - Especially to Millennial Women

- **Millennial women** stand out as the most astrology-influenced daters in India - **30%** say astrology plays a major role in their relationship decisions
- In contrast, Millennial men (14%) and Gen Z (10%) place far less importance on zodiac signs



*Each chart shows 100% of responses within that demographic segment. All percentages reflect the proportion of that specific group (e.g., 14.3% of all Gen Z women surveyed selected 'yes' to the question)



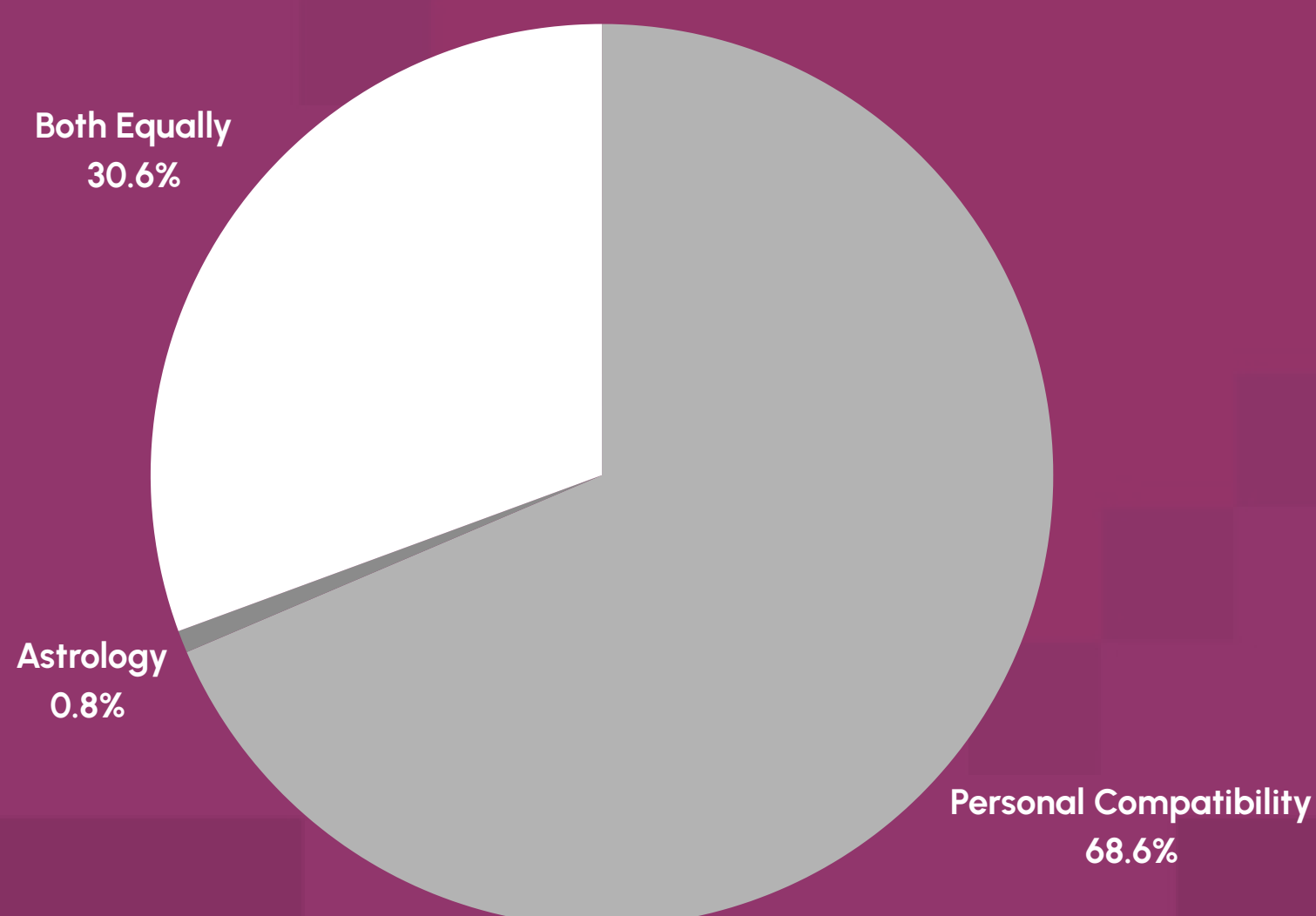


**So while people may still ask, "What's your sign?",
the real question shaping Indian dating is:**

Do our values and personalities align?

- **7 in 10** Indians rank personal compatibility over planetary alignment
- The continued reliance on astrological compatibility signals a **retro trend making a comeback** in today's tech -driven dating world

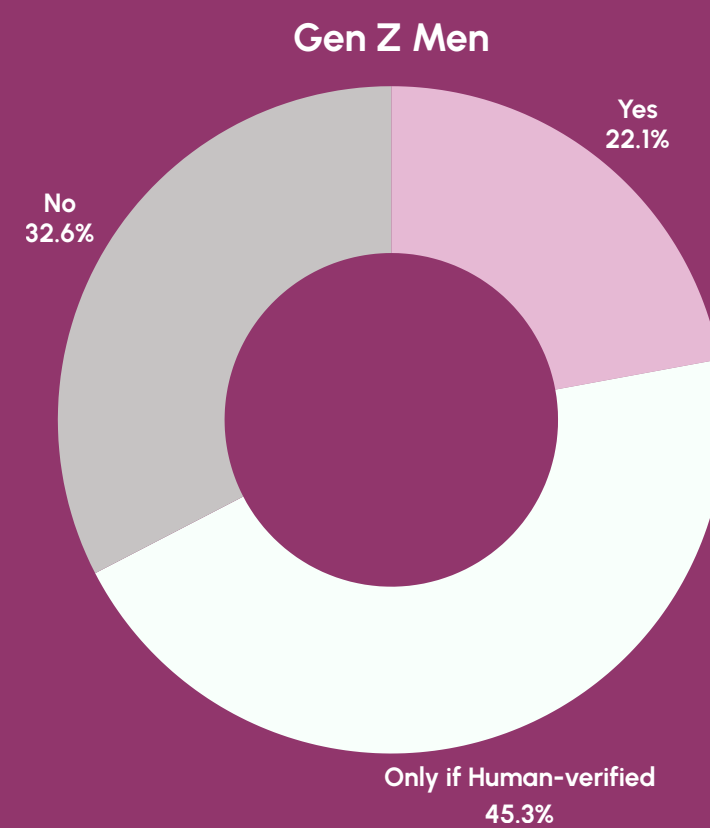
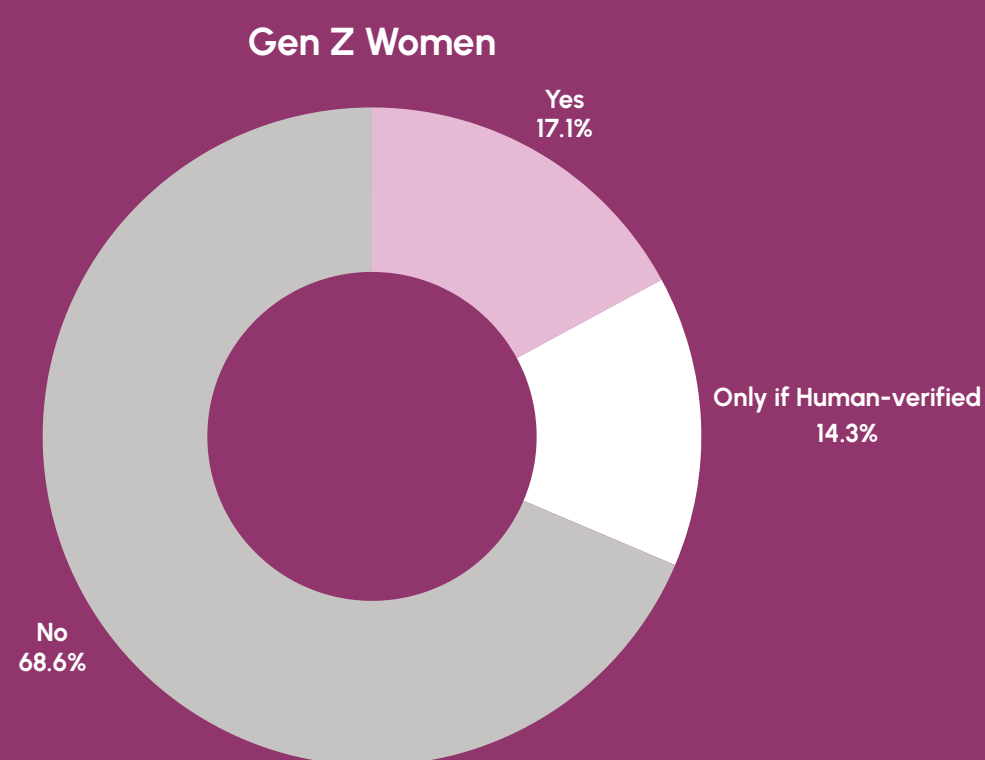
Astrology VS Personal Compatibility



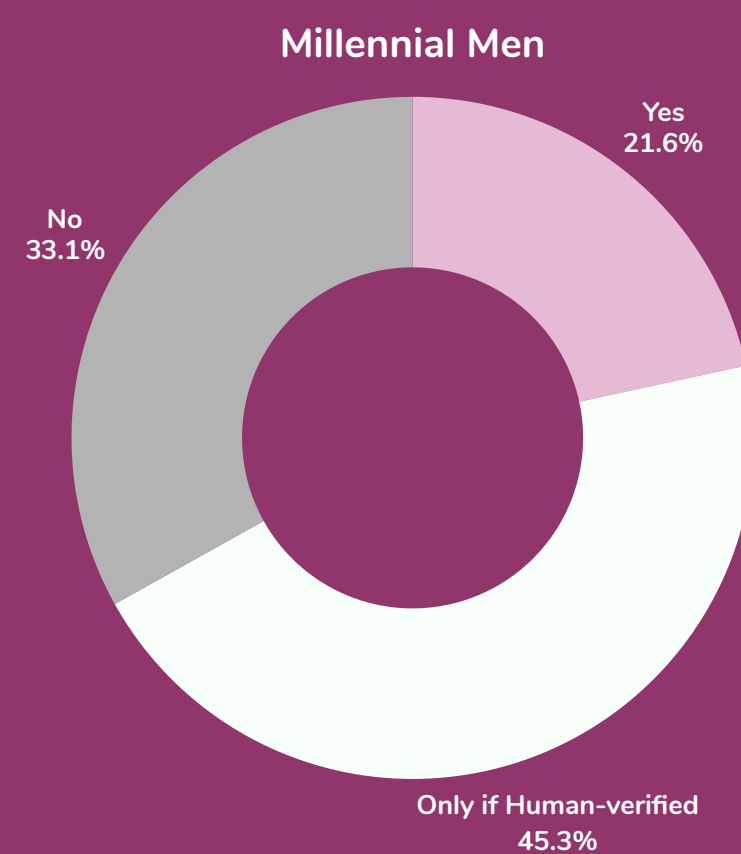
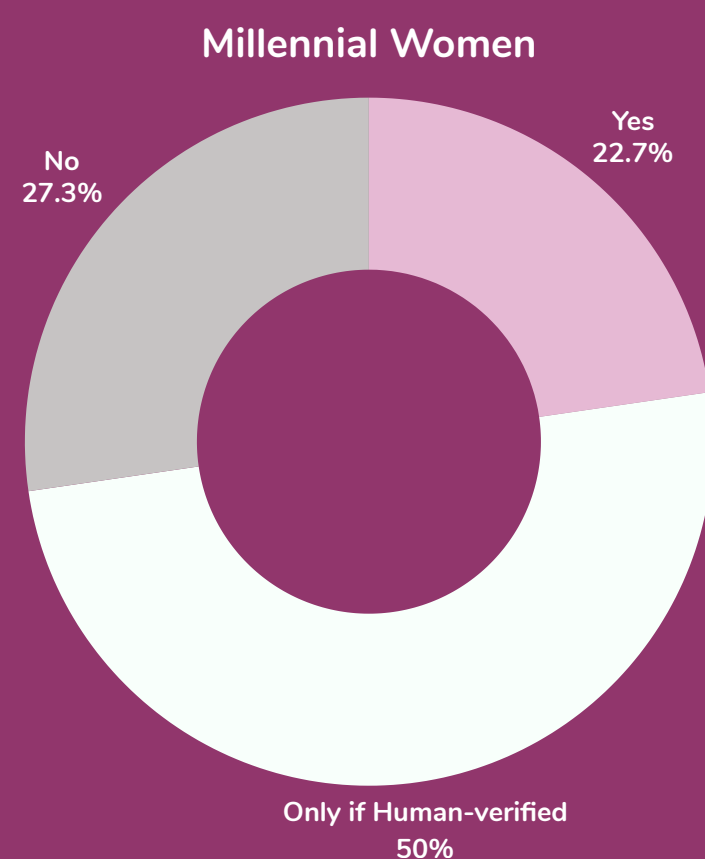
Why AI + Human Trust is the Future of Dating in India?



Indians aren't ready to outsource matters of the heart to algorithms alone. Direct **AI matchmaking? Rejected by most**. But add human verification to AI-powered recommendations and acceptance rises sharply.



Gen Z women reject AI in matchmaking (68.6% say no), while Gen Z men are more open - (45.3% agree to it) but only with a human touch guiding the tech.



For Millennials, AI alone isn't enough - half of women and nearly half of men want human oversight in digital matchmaking.



AI Can:

- Recommend compatible profiles
- Improve safety and accessibility
- Streamline first interactions

Humans Must:

- Interpret emotions and chemistry
- Navigate family and cultural dynamics
- Build trust and emotional depth



Finding the Right Balance

Assist, Don't Replace

AI should recommend - not decide. Real love still needs human intuition.

Transparency Builds Trust

Clear practices and limitations make people feel safer engaging authentically.

Context is Everything

In India, families, traditions, and emotions play an equal role. Technology that understands culture wins.



3 Major Red Flags:

What Actually Kills Romance in India?



Inconsistent Behaviour

1 in 3 consider hot-and-cold treatment the ultimate relationship poison.

Taking Partners for Granted

1 in 4 people refuse to invest in relationships where effort isn't reciprocated.

Emotional Unavailability

1 in 5 daters immediately exit when faced with partners who won't open up.



The New Dating Reality: Indians are willing to walk away from relationships that don't meet their emotional intelligence standards, signalling a fundamental shift from "any relationship" to "the right relationship."



33.33% Would End a Relationship

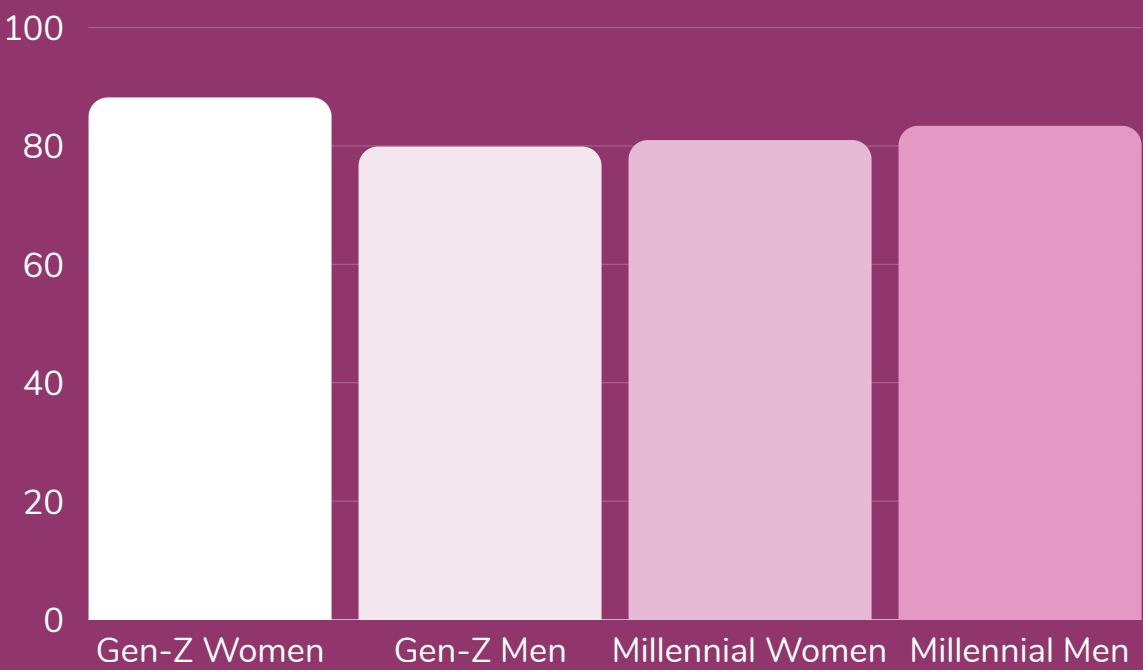
Due to Mental Health



Therapy Talk is the New Love Language

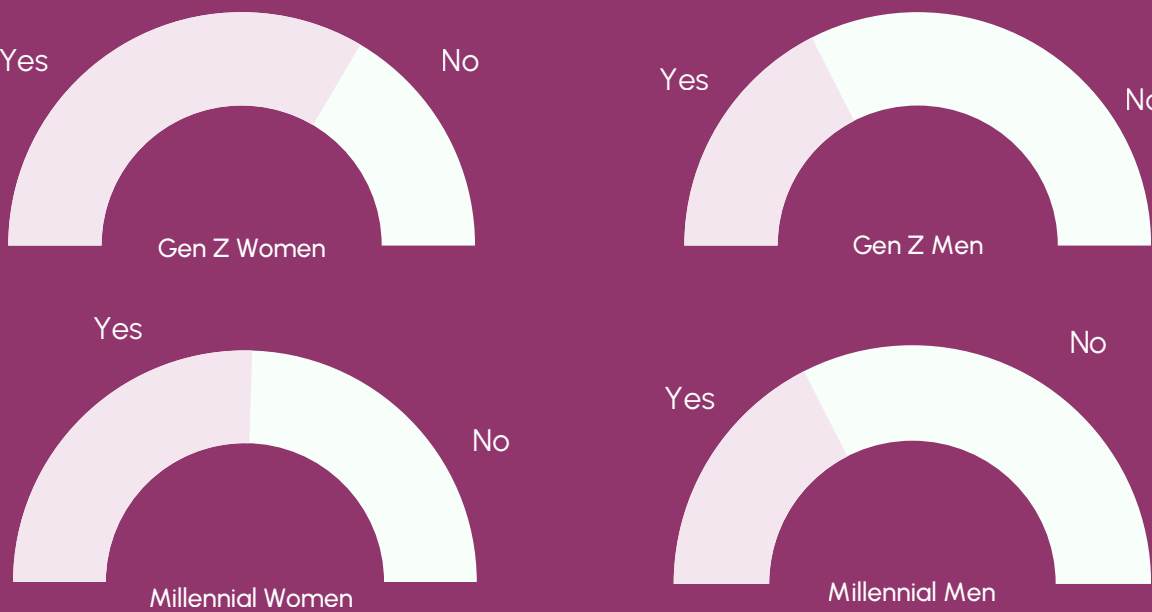
Therapy is no longer a taboo topic in dating. It's now seen as a marker of maturity, emotional intelligence, and relationship readiness.

High Comfort with Therapy Conversations

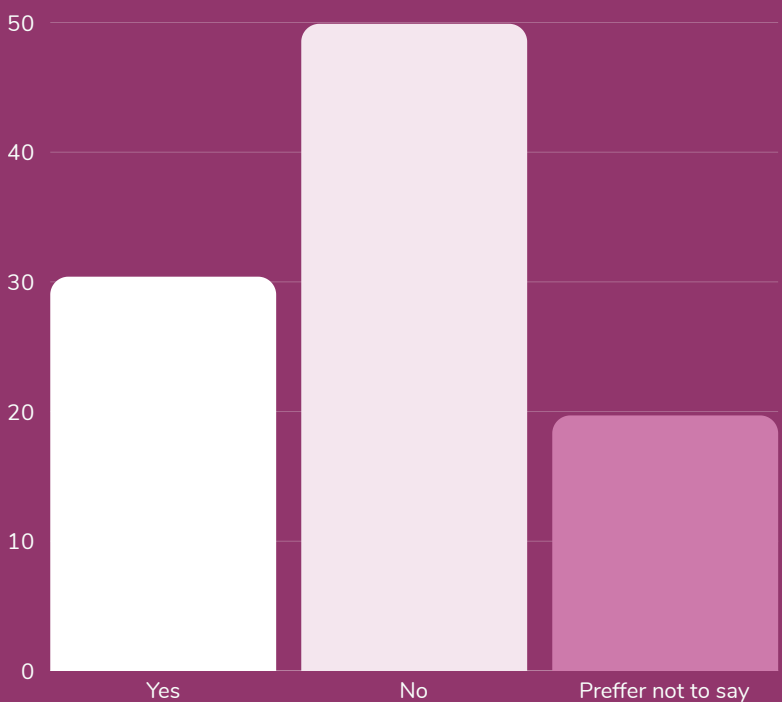


Would You Stay or Walk Away?

For nearly 1 in 3 Indians, a partner's mental health concern has been reason enough to end or avoid a relationship. Openness around mental health conversations has grown, but acceptance is still a work in progress in India's dating culture.



Have you ever ended/avoided a relationship due to mental health concerns?



Modern love isn't just about attraction - it's about emotional and mental wellbeing too. Relationships are increasingly seen as an extension of one's mental health. People seek partners who bring calm, not chaos. In high-pressure lives, dating someone who understands space, stress, and emotional needs feels like self-care.

- Arouba Kabir, in association with Aisle Consulting Psychologist & Relationship Expert

The data reveals a generational reset in relationship priorities, while mental health conversations have entered the dating discourse for all cohorts, Gen Z women in particular are defining it as a non-negotiable criterion.

Green Flags: What Actually Melts Indian Hearts?



Men love: Voice notes with personalised songs

Women love: Homemade food and cooking gestures

Universal winner: Remembering the small details that matter



Top 3 Things People Value Most in Relationships



1 Emotional Maturity

Non-negotiable across all demographics

Shared Values

Life goals, financial stability
and career prospects

2



3

Consistent Communication

Universal relationship foundation

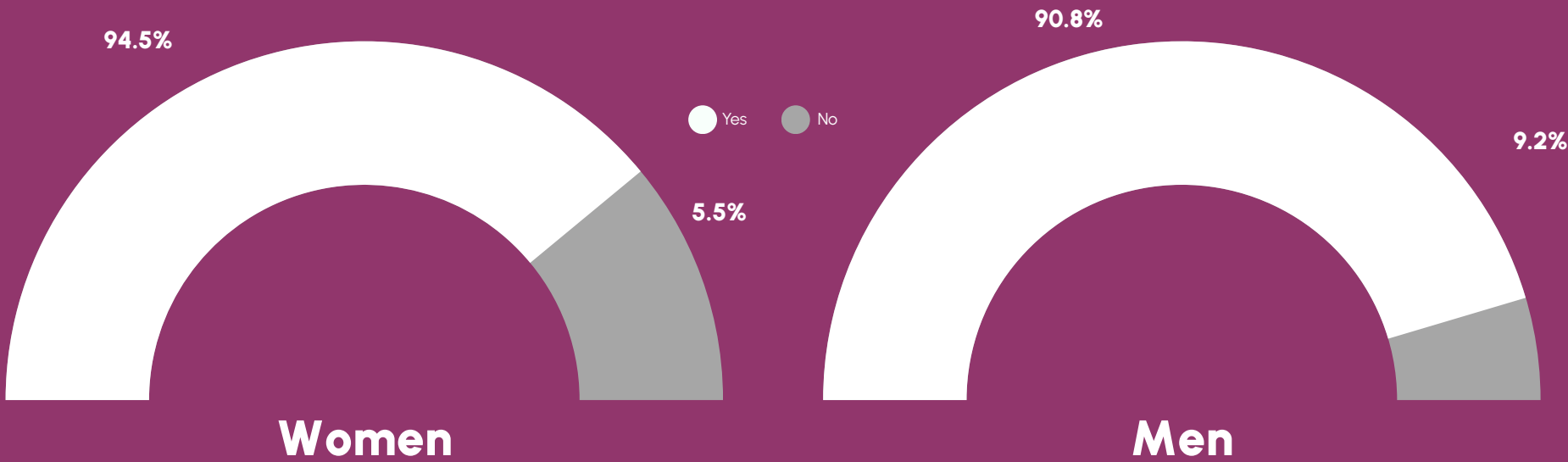


Work-Life Balance: The New Dealbreaker in Dating



The Work-Life Alignment Test

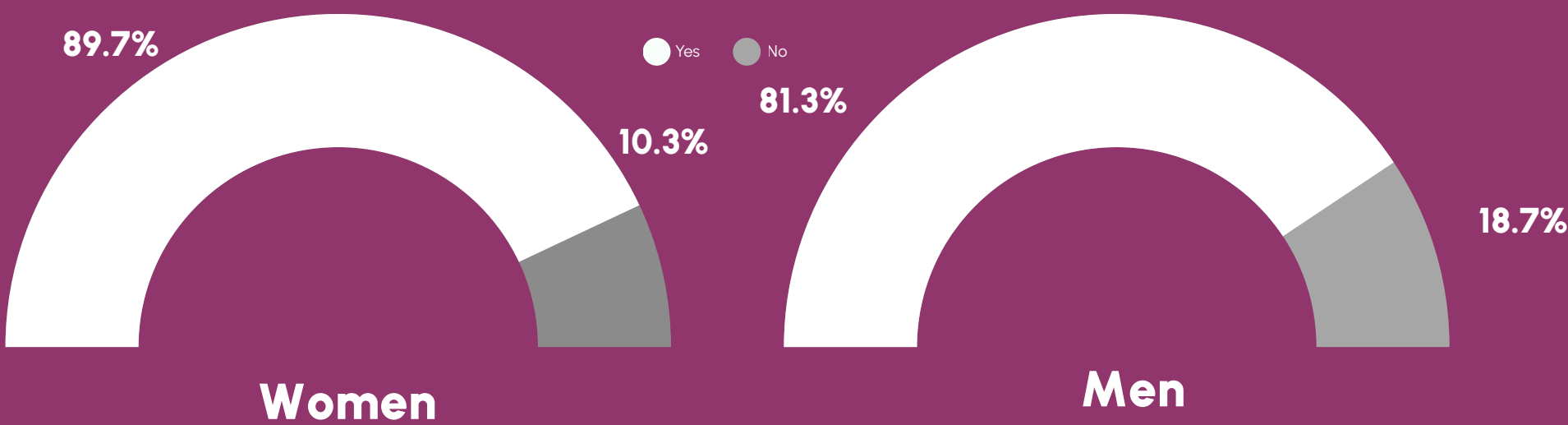
Singles Who Prioritise Work-Life Balance Alignment



Work isn't just about careers anymore - it's shaping relationships too. 9 in 10 won't date seriously without alignment, proving that sustainable love today depends on more than just chemistry - it depends on compatible lifestyles.

In Modern Dating, Sharing Stress = Sharing Intimacy

Singles Who Prioritise Conversations around Stress & Burnout



For women, mental load isn't left unsaid - nearly 89.7% speak about stress and burnout regularly in relationships. Men, on the other hand, lag behind: 81.3% engage in such frequent check-ins, with most preferring "occasional" conversations. The gap signals that emotional labour still falls more heavily on women, even as awareness grows.

Each chart shows 100% of responses within that demographic segment. All percentages reflect the proportion of that specific group who selected each response category.

Mapping India's Emotional DNA: How Six Cities Love Differently

Delhi NCR - The Expressive Pragmatist

Most likely to date outside religion or culture, yet 4 in 5 still value family blessings. Astrology continues to play a light but present role - used as a 'fun filter,' not a life rule. Direct, expressive and ambitious, yet seeks emotional steadiness underneath confidence. Frustrated with casual.

"Feels to me like today, people confuse chemistry with compatibility."

- Respondent from Delhi

Kolkata - The Romantic Traditionalist

Deeply emotional and family-aligned - one of the few metros where parental approval still matters. Least experimental with casual dating apps. Prefers trust and shared values over algorithms. 2 in 3 are very comfortable with vulnerability. Believes love should stand the test of time, not trends.

"Don't seek for the perfect one. Physical appearance fades, emotional connection lasts."

- Respondent from Kolkata

Mumbai - The Measured Romantic

India's most emotionally aware city approaches relationships with deliberate maturity - high openness to therapy and self-work while dating. 1 in 2 see seeking therapy as a positive thing. Trusts AI-assisted matching, seeing it as efficient rather than mechanical. Believes in effort-driven, privacy-conscious love where control stays with the user. Actively moving towards commitment.

"Casual dating is fun, but it never lasts. The kind that stays takes real effort."

- Respondent from Mumbai

Mapping India's Emotional DNA: How Six Cities Love Differently

Pune - The Reflective Realist

Tech-positive but emotionally cautious. Pune is comfortable using dating apps but wants authenticity, not automation. Family views matter, but not as deal-breakers, relationships are self-decided. 2 in 3 seek serious relationships. They see dating as a mirror of personal growth.

"Real love isn't about finding someone perfect, it's about two people willing to grow together."

- Respondent from Pune

Bengaluru - The Balanced Idealist

India's most self-aware city in dating - values mental health alignment and emotional compatibility. Least driven by astrology (3 in 5 don't check it); prefers rational compatibility over cosmic alignment. Strong belief that love should add calm, not chaos - a reflection of India's new mindful daters.

"People are getting burnt out because of the casual nature of modern dating, everyone wants depth but don't have the energy for it."

- Respondent from Bengaluru

Hyderabad - The Traditional Progressive

Deeply cultural and emotionally sincere - values parental approval and shared faith. Cautious with AI dating tools - believes trust must feel human, not mechanical. 1 in 2 see marriage as the natural evolution of love, but expect emotional safety before commitment.

"Love that feels right at home - that's what I am looking for."

- Respondent from Hyderabad

Different Cities, One Common Thread: The Search for Meaningful Love

Values astrological compatibility

▲ **20%**
Kolkata

Kolkata holds onto traditional belief systems, while

▼ **12%**
Bengaluru

Bengaluru reflects a shift away from it.

Trusts AI in Matchmaking

▲ **66%**
Bengaluru

Bengaluru's tech-forward outlook embraces AI assisted matchmaking, while

▼ **17%**
Delhi

Delhi's skepticism shows a preference for human intervention.

Seeks commitment within a year

▲ **63%**
Delhi

Delhi prioritises stability and clarity early on, while Hyderabad prefers a slower emotional pace.

▼ **49%**
Hyderabad

Values financial stability

▲ **27%**
Mumbai

Financial stability of partner is emerging as a subtle deal-breaker - especially in Mumbai where possibly higher cost of living dictates the rules.

▼ **15%**
Hyderabad

“ No matter which city they're from - Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad or Bengaluru, Indian daters today want the same three things: their family's blessing (and they will convince their parents for the same), emotional stability, and a relationship that's for the long-haul.

We're seeing a generation that's self-aware enough to talk about therapy, yet still anchored in belonging and commitment. Certain preferences and details may change from city to city, but the emotional blueprint of modern love in India is similar.

-Arouba Kabir, in association with Aisle
Consulting Psychologist & Relationship Expert

Love & Relationship Trends: North & South India Comparison

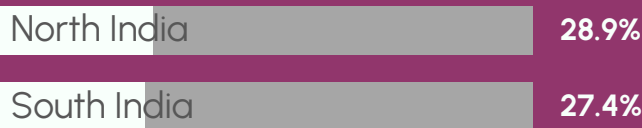


Intent and Mindset

Wants to get married in the next year



Have reduced casual dating in the last year



Both regions are almost equally ready to commit within a year, proving that love in India today is intentional, not impulsive. The South edges slightly ahead, hinting at a quiet but growing shift towards deeper, more meaningful relationships.

Emotional Well-Being

Comfortable discussing mental health concerns



Comfortable with partners being in Therapy



Both regions are making emotional vulnerability the new normal in relationships. The stigma around therapy is fading fast - over 9 in 10 people across both regions are open to discussing their mental health journeys.

Values and Equality

Open to inter-faith marriage



Won't marry without family approval



The South shows slightly more openness to cultural diversity. But overall, inclusivity defines modern Indian dating. Family still matters, but it's no longer the final word - with Southern respondents showing a bit more independence in choosing love over family approval.

Traditional Belief Systems

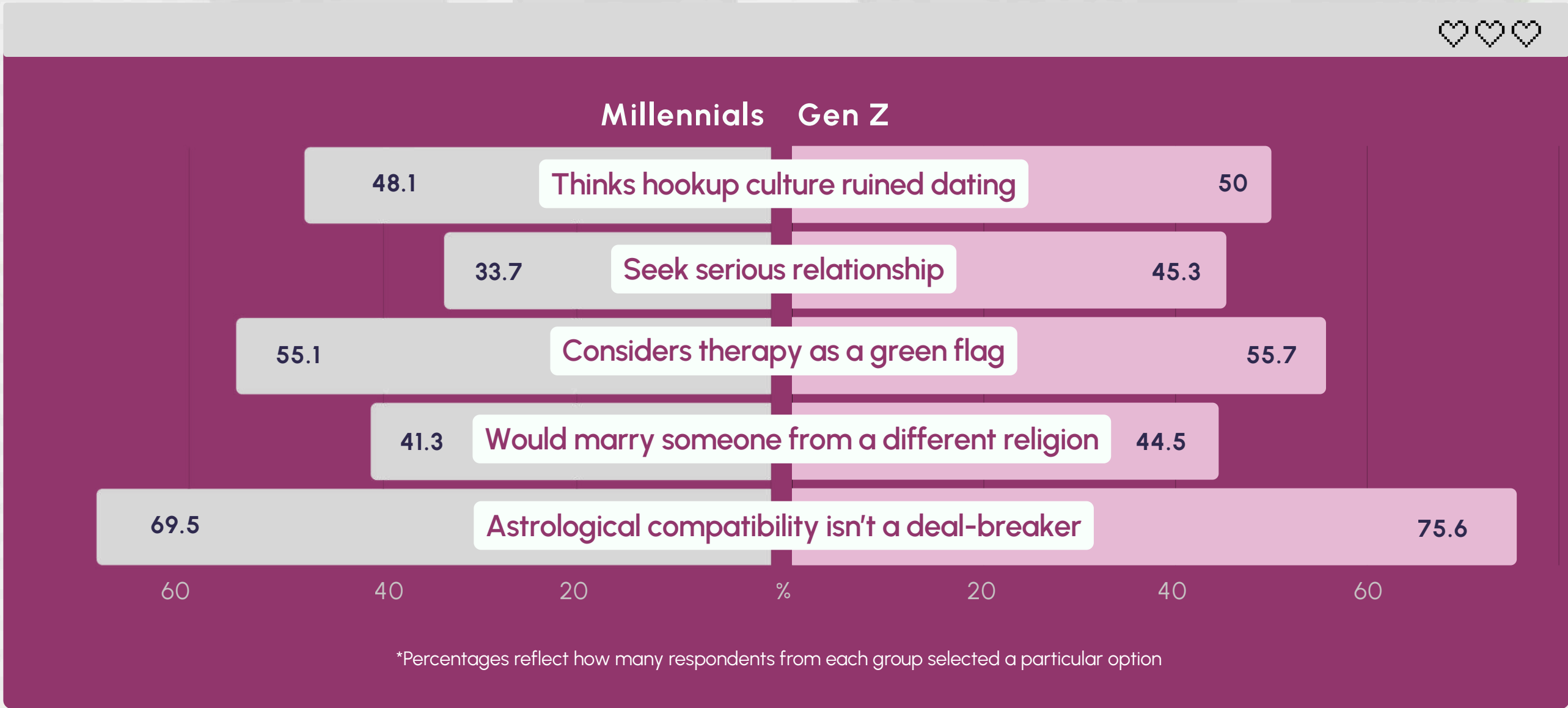
Astrological compatibility is a deal-breaker



Only a small minority let astrology dictate dating decisions. Influence seems slightly more prevalent in the North, though astrology remains a fun filter for many.

All figures in the above table are derived using a weighted 50-50 methodology to remove sample-size bias. Each region contributes equally to every percentage, ensuring that differences reflect attitudes, not the number of respondents. By "North" we refer to the Hindi-belt states (including Delhi-NCR, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar). By "South" we refer to Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Kerala. Percentages are rounded to one decimal for media readability.

The Generational Split: What Love Looks Like



- 50% respondents now believe **hookup culture has stripped dating of meaning in India** and they're steering love back towards depth and intention
- 50% respondents want **serious relationships**, with 33.33% Millennials ready to marry in a year
- Gen Z defines commitment as clarity, emotional honesty and long-term intent
- Across generations, the message is clear - **casual is out, commitment is in**. And it's not old-fashioned anymore. It's the new aspiration



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