Educated Society vs. Dowry Custom in Meena Tribes of Rajasthan: A Case Study

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This study focused on education and dowry demand in Meena tribe of Rajasthan and dowry amount which is demanded according grade pay in jobs. Main objectives of this study were increasing education level change the mentality of people and reduce the demand of dowry in Meena tribes which is highly engage in organised sector. According to objectives it is hypothesised that education level change the mentality towards dowry demand and as grade pay increases the dowry amount decreases, to fulfil this purpose the data collected through structured questionnaire and sampling purposive sampling technique and data analysed by coding and classified and simple correlation used for relationship between two variables. 60 people selected for this study and information about their education level and dowry amount according to grade pay in government sector. The information collected from zamidar and chokidar Meena in Jaipur city from Jaipur district of Rajasthan state. In Meena tribe zamidar Meena are more traditional as compare to chokidar Meena, zamidar Meena dowry amount also pre-decided according to job grade pay, and it also find out that zamidar Meena did not adopt modernisation while the chokidar Meena adopted modernisation, zamidar and chokidar Minas education level upgraded among 60 people only 5 people found whose education is below graduation level. 54 people among 60 people who accepted that they demanded or they will demand at the time of their marriage which is 90% of the total number of selected. researcher also asked the information from young people either they newly get jobs or preparation for jobs, they also accepted that they will demand for dowry because in their society it shows the standard of the people high grade pay job high dowry amount, dowry become a competition among the young generation. The people who did not want to demand dowry but their parents forced them to do this for their reputation society, some parents forced their sons to get high grade pay jobs to receive huge dowry amount, it became a find set of new generation that high grade pay high amount dowry thus, it become social custom which could not avoid. It will create many problems in society like- parents who provide education their daughters which all would be affected they would reduce the expenditure on education of their daughters, and would be save that money for their marriage to pay dowry amount. Secondly, it will create fear in society that if girl will born then they have to pay large amount of dowry at the time of their marriage and girl feticide would be increased in society. Gender inequality will be also increased. Government should pay attention on this serious issue and there should change in dowry prohibition act. Researcher also suffering from this problem to marry her sisters, it is also a personal experience about dowry problem.

JEL Code- Tribe, Meena, Dowry, Education Level, Job Grade Pay

1. Introduction

In present time the dowry become burning issue in Indian society, its level continuously increases at the unforeseen levels, among the Hindus of India. Mostly, in northern India and Dowry became a tradition in India. Dowry means to give the gifts to bride at the time of marriage. In recent years it become commonplace and widely spread out in educated society and it increases as education level upgrade and jobs increases in among people. Dowry is groom price at which it can be purchased according their qualifications by bride parents. In Indian society working
men prices fixed for their marriage. Young generation men also demand dowry to marry because it became mentality of people that huge salary job will make them to demand huge dowry. Indian society is a male dominant society and female are depend on them for whole life before marriage female depends on their father and brothers and after marriage depends on husband due to this dependence they could not oppose the home violence because after marriage women's home is husband's not father home; there is commonly known words that “a women enter in husband's home in ‘doll’ and goes out from his home at sanati’”. In other words, a woman left husband’s home when she died not before and it custom very well followed still in Indian society.

In Rajasthan state dowry is also a social custom to do marry. It is also known for its traditional culture & customs. Dowry cases also increased continuously, according to Indian penal code (IPC), the homicide for dowry and dowry for deaths or their attempts come under section- (302/304-B) and cruelty by husband, and relatives come under section- 498-A( IPC) recorded that in 2012, 8,233 and 1,06527 cases respectively during this year over all India. Torture( cruelty by husband or his relatives crime rate recorded 18.2% at the national level whether Tripura reported highest crime rate 47.8% and Rajasthan reported 12.5% crime rate and 13312 cases. Dowry increased the divorce problem in society which disturbed social system.

In Rajasthan total population’s 13.5% population is schedule tribes, Meena caste’s population is highest among all tribal castes. Education level in Meena tribes is higher than in compare to other tribes of Rajasthan. In Rajasthan economy 50% share have service sector whether 80% people engaged in organised sector would be belonged from Meena castes. Meena people occupy in organised sector lowest to highest post like peon to IAS officer. In spite of this the dowry system a social custom in Meenas. This community divided in two parts - 1) zamidar Meena, 2) chokidar Meena

The zamidar Meena are traditionally engaged in agriculture sector for their livelihood and they claim themselves as Kshatriya equivalent to that of rajputs. In the local socio-ritual hierarchy they enjoy a clean caste status.

Chokidar Meena who during the middle edge adopted fighting in armies, Britishers enforced them to report on choukis regularly to ensure that do not indulge in any criminal activities. Therefore, they knew as chokidar Meena. Chokidar Meena mostly inhabitant in Shekhawati region of Rajasthan state.

In Rajasthan Meena tribes constitute in Jaipur, Dausa , Bandikui, Sawai Madhopur, Kota and Bundi, Bharatpur, Alwar, Karauli, pratapgarh, Sikar, Churu and Jhunjhunu. The problem arise that the education level and salary orientated jobs in Meena tribes increases the problem of dowry, and mind set towards dowry changed by education level.

Objectives:-
To determine education level change mentality of Meenas towards dowry custom.
To find out dowry amount demanded according to salary grade pay in Meena society.

Hypothesis:-
1) Higher education level reduced the dowry demand.
2) Increasing grade pay in jobs reduced the dowry demand.
2. Literature Review:

A another study also highlighted that there is a link between domestic violence and dowry demands; wife abuse has been found to be higher when a husband and /or his family believes dowry payments are inadequate( Banerjee 1999 ; Bloch and Rao 2002). Some studies highlight that 'dowry prohibition act' failed because in this act there are provisions that allows gifts to be given at the time of wedding thus providing a looping where by the parties to a marriage can claim that transfers are gifts and not dowry. Moreover , according to act since both giving and taking of dowry are illegal so, the family of a bride who is being harassed or abused over insufficient dowry and will implicate themselves by complaining ( Basu 2001; Diwan and Diwan 1995, Shenk 2007). Study of Caldwell, Reddy, and Caldwell also highlighted that educational & work opportunities for men increased, parents preferred that their daughters marry educated men with urban jobs, such men have higher & certain incomes that are not subject to seasonal variations and paid monthly; wives of such men will be free from drudgery of rural work (Caldwell; Reddy and Caldwell 1983). According to Gangrade and Chander the dowry system as it is practised today has become an instrument of oppression and torture for the bride, her parents (Gangrade and Chander 1991).Ghansham focused on 'Dowry Prohibition Act ' in 1961 and this act was future amended in 1985 to control to this menace . Despite this Act, the “give and take” phenomenon of dowry is practised widely throughout India, irrespective of caste and class (Ghansham 2002).

Haveripeth explained in his study that persons participating in dowry related violence are mostly mother-in-law and siblings of the husband. He also focus on study of Gautam & Trivedi in which they found that in a majority of cases the husband and mother-in-law of the victim played a leading role in planning & execution of violence against the bride. These crime taken place in society due to socially structured expectations about dowry giving the inferior status of women and consequently the low bargaining power of the women and her parents, and the growing urban consumerism among lower & middle class sections of the society as well as the lack of effective legal sanctions against such crimes and dowry related violence, bride burning are not peculiar to India and beside husband and his kin also join together in abusing the bride as dowry and related customs provide a good excuse to them for disgracing , insulting and even beating up women (Haveripeth 2013). The qualities of bride also significantly affect the size of dowry in Bangladesh for example the dowry increases in tandem with age at marriage, and placing pressure on parents to marry their daughters early. This may be especially true if the bride suffers from other disadvantages in the marriage market such as lower social status or darker skin tones (Huq and Amin 2001; Islam and Mahmud 1996).

Lindenbaum explained in his study that the switch from bride price to dowry in Bangladesh was necessarily a result of the shortage of men per se but rather increased high quality of grooms (Lindenbaum 1981). Narsimhan explained in his research study that sometimes the dowry provided by the parents of the bride is seen insufficient, and demands for supplement items continue long after the couple is married (Narsimhan 1994).

According to Negi study, the dowry is a transfer of property from bride’s family to that of the bridgroom at time of marriage (Negi 1997). In modern time dowry taken new form and according to this form, it has come to include cash, jewellery and household items, and appliances vehicles & it is often open-ended in nature (Puri 1999; Van Willigen & Channa 1991). Paul explained in his study that dowry is a
practice of giving to material gifts, cash to bridegroom and his kin continues such after marriage (Paul 1993). According to Sachdeva the dowry, system has to given to increase to various socio-economic conflicts with serious consequences. There are various incidents of bride burning and harassment, physical torture of newly – wed women, and various kinds of pressure tactics being adopted by the husbands/ in- laws pressurizing for more dowry have obligated the social reformers and the intelligentsia to many aspects associated with the institution of dowry (Sachdeva 1998). There is another reason of dowry demand, and feeling among mother-in-law is that when she herself brought dowry from her marriage then why she shouldn’t take dowry for her son. Therefore, this may be the reason of so many mothers- in-law resorting to violence on their daughter- in-law and they do not feel shy of indulging in it (Sarvanan 2002). Singh explained in his study that the bride is helpless in her new home and physically so powerless. consequently, she cannot revenge against the pain tactics or actions of other, and not many women the courage to divorce their husbands on the ground of quickly mental or physical torture since they have nothing to fall back upon in a traditionally and poorly developed country like India (Singh 2005). People rarely adhere to the legal provisions of making lists of gifts exchanged and thus may not have basis for reclaiming property when faced with the situation. Suran (et al), study ‘Does dowry improve life for brides’ in that study found that in Bangladesh married females who paid dowry at marriage’, and it have a higher likelihood of reporting local violence compared to those who did not. in fast paying no dowry is just protective and if not more so, in terms of controlling abuse as the largest dowry payments (Suran et al 2004).

2. Methodology

Primary data would be collected to determine education level and mind set of people towards dowry custom, job grade pay of people and dowry amount demanded in Meena tribes. Data collected with help of structured questionnaire and the sampling collected technique purposive sampling. The collected data would be coded, classified and tabulated, analysed with help of simple statistical tools. Result would be presented through graph & pictograph technique. Hypothesis would test at 99% level of significance by two tailed distribution. The secondary data would be collected from government reports, research papers, articles, news paper etc.

Information would be collected from 60 people at the basis of their education level and job grade pay. This information collected from Jaipur city where Meena castes highly constitute.

4. Findings/ discussion

Information of 60 people are collected and classified according to education level and grade pay and dowry demanded amount in below tables. Use simple correlation to find relation between education level and responses who accepted dowry or demanded dowry, relation between job grade pay and dowry amount demanded.
Table 1: Education level & Dowry demands Response of the People

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education level</th>
<th>12th</th>
<th>Graduation</th>
<th>Post graduation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source- primary data

Spear’s man rank correlation measure to develop relationship between education level and dowry demand in education group given ranking and measure the difference between actual and predicted ranking of dowry demanded by the education group respondents, that is denoted by $d_i$, $n$ is number of units or number of ranking. So, education level ranking in ascending order giving ranking post graduation level 1$^{st}$ ranking and graduation level 2$^{nd}$ rank and 12th level given to 3$^{rd}$ ranking. Graduated people are highest in Meena tribes because in government jobs mostly required graduated candidate so, according to the response of these people is highest, it given to 1$^{st}$ ranking and 2$^{nd}$ ranking is given to post graduated people, 3$^{rd}$ ranking given to 12th standard people. Formula applied get +.5 correlation between both variables.

Figure 1: People demand Dowry in Meena tribes

Source- primary data

It indicates that as education level increases of people the demand of dowry also increased in same ratio, master degree holder people highest replied ‘yes’ that they demanded dowry only 1 among 20 refused that he/she not demanded. It is 5% of master degree holder while 95% accepted that they demand dowry. It also finds that most of the people have graduation degree and 12th standard education level people are almost less than other people are.
### Table 2: Grade Pay and Dowry Amount in Meena Tribes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade pay (Rs.)</th>
<th>Dowry amount (Rs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>8,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>10,50000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2800</td>
<td>1500000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4200</td>
<td>24,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4600</td>
<td>40,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4800</td>
<td>50,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5400</td>
<td>1,00,00,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6600</td>
<td>2,00,00,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: primary data

**Figure 2: Grade pay and dowry amount in Meena people**

Source: primary data
This dowry amount is fixed by zamidar Meena while in chokidar Meena dowry amount is not fixed. As grade pay increase dowry amount which demanded also increased. According correlation calculation find that there is a highly positive relationship between grade pay and dowry amount, (+.99) correlation found. According to findings the hypothesis tested at the 99% significance level of mean, one tailed test used- mean of sample- 18, sample standard deviation 14.53, and population –size and mean are 60 and 20 respectively. T score test value finds= -1.06694, p value=0.1430 which is less than the significance level 99, p value should be 0.1990. Therefore, null hypothesis rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted that means there is no change in mentality of people to demand dowry while it shows that as education level increased the number of people demand dowry also increased.

During the data collection, the people told that they face various problems to marry their daughters due a high level of dowry amount. A widow women of chokidar Meena told that she facing problem to marry her daughters to government employed boy. There is a big competition to demand dowry because boys and their parents feel it their status and standard in society that their son got huge dowry. Therefore, it has become a first deal between two parties to marry their children. In zamidar Meena marriage is decided but parents without asking the choice of girl and boys on the basis of dowry amount while in chokidar Meena first of all the choice asked both girl and boys is they like to marry, if they said yes then parents decide how much dowry amount would be given in marriage. Consequently, chokidar Meena are modern in compare to zamidar Meena. There is also big difference in chokidar and zamidar Meena is dowry demand, zamidar Meena demand cash and vehicle, jewellery etc. whether chokidar Meena demand vehicle in dowry; chokidar Meena see qualifications of girls a to get marry for their sons. Although, chokidar society also men dominated but not as zamidar Meena, in some cases love marriage also accepted if both girl and boy love each other. Parents of girl’s wants that their daughter’s marriage should be city and boy should have government jobs, increasing continuously demand of government servant for marriage indirectly increase the dowry amount in marriage market.

Girls education also increased but after all the dowry amount is not reduced because boys do preparation government job to get huge dowry amount, so it became a style to upgrade their reputation in relatives and society .education level could not help to reduce the difference between boys and girls.

This study also similar to other studies which focus on dowry demanded as men job standard increases and parents want to marry their daughters to high salaried and certain payment job. Therefore, government servant demand increases to marry girls or it have direct relationship demand of government jobs and dowry amount. Traditions and customs are constant. Therefore, in developing country education did not help to change mentality of the people.

5. Conclusion and Implications
It is concluded that dowry is a social custom and it became very difficult to change customs all sudden, practicing customs generates the strengthen unity, and cohesiveness among people. Many people give and take dowry only because their parents and forefathers had been practicing it. Until the time the younger generation
collect courage to stop this practice and girls resist social pressure to take it, people will stick to this custom. Meena tribes followed dowry customs significantly and demanded huge dowry. Everything is fixed according to job grade pay that to marry 1800 grade pay men their parents have to pay rs.80000 dowry.

In this custom higher to lower offices of governments are involved. It is critical situation in zamidar Meena because young generation did marriage to a girl who is not having qualifications, which he wants but did marriage with her. He did it due to family pressure or for dowry, some cases found during study that either the men did marry to another girl or file divorce in court due to disable to create mutual understanding in husband and wife. After all it is loss of woman, and divorce destroyed the life of children.

Education is not effective factor in Meena tribe to change their mentality or left social evils consequently it would create fears to give birth girl child. It would induce people to do feticide of girls. Because this amount will be increased continuously in future. Really it is a big issue for society and state. Dowry would affect the education of girls because will save money for their marriage to pay dowry amount because in India marriage a necessary task for girls to live in society, people taunt the parents if they did not do marry they daughters at the early age. If girls did not do marry then it became a big issue in society. During this 21-century Indian society, also men centred society, No caste far from this custom whether government have taken various step to stop dowry but still failed. There should be changed in dowry prohibition act's provisions, which allowed giving gifts to bride at time of marriage. Gift value should be considered in money value and this value should be fixed, because it became inevitable customs in society without strict laws it could not be controlled. Court also should interfere in this custom and court marriage should be compulsory for each and every society and there should be maintain a menu of materials with their bills which given to bride at time of marriage. It would be helpful to handle dowry cases to court and claiming dowry amount. It also helps to judge court is this dowry case legal or illegal. Court marriage reduced the child marriage problem. Government employed also should be banned giving and taking dowry, if he/she indulge in this then he/she should be terminated at time. It will create fear among people to lose their jobs. This step would be help to reduce this problem at a significantly level. There should be a committee to check the women status at her husband's home who newly married from their marriage to 10 years because after that intensity of dowry became almost none. After marriage there should be compulsory to appear in court year there should signature both that, there is no conflicts in their married life and everything is running smoothly.

6. References
Ghansham, D. M 2002, Female Foeticide and The Dowry System In India, Townsville International Women’s Conference, James Cook Univ. Australia.