

Causes and Remedies of Dowry System in India

Mahendra Singh

Department of Humanities

Teerthanker Mahaveer University, Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh, India

Abstract: Dowry is the wealth or properties that when the wife and husband marry, the family of a bride or wife gives her spouse in certain cultures. In India, the dowry system can be seen as the cause for this question if one speaks of gender discrimination. It is a common belief that a woman is a burden and is to be married off someday, according to the infrastructure of the social country, with a dowry burden at disposal. Well, the birth of a girl is an initiation to long-term plans for the crowds to pay off the dowry along with the child. Seemingly, this protection project hampers the capacity of the girl and limits her to the true equality of the male boy. The present paper is an attempt to investigate the dowry law in general as a social issue. It was stressed that the most successful solution is to bring knowledge through community and educational awareness against this evil scheme. In order to fight against the dowry scheme, there is also the need to expand women's education.

Keywords: Dowry, India, Marriage, Social problem, Social evils, Custom, Tradition, Laws, Bride.

INTRODUCTION

In ancient times, the father of the bride supported the newly married couple with an amount of money along with the other important things that a new family wants. All these items are known as the gift and blessing of the father side of the girl. After some occasions, the groom's family takes this custom otherwise and this ritual of gift and blessing slowly becomes obligatory and takes a notorious fame of Dowry[1]. Therefore dowry can be defined as the amount of the commodity and a sum of the money considered as the dowry. In other words, in some races, it is consider as the bride prices and cover the money, asset and even the property.

In some of the region of India known as the Meher, one more of the blessings or reverence has some prevalence. As in the dowry scheme, the custom of the meher is slightly different from the custom of the dowry; the father of the girl has to give the groom and his family some asset, property or the sum of the amount of money, but in the case of the meher, the groom has to give some money to the family of the bride as a token of respect or appreciation towards the family of the bride. Earlier, dowry was taken as the social security to the bride in the situation of the post marry crisis as in exiled life because of the separation with the husband or unnatural death or some other conflicts [2].

As the fundamental and key practice of marriage, the custom of bride prices has remained prevalent in many local tribes. Both the traditions are prevalent in the marriages of the Muslim, mehar and dowry as the meher is the practices as the custom of the Muslim marriage whereas the social duty is dowry. In fact, dowry, as a custom or merely a notorious practice, is prevalent in various forms around the world. Dowry is mainly linked to gender as well as asset ownership and

eventually established as wealth ownership as well as distribution of gender. The distribution of wealth by gender varies across different countries and cultures. Pre-marriage, women's ownership of property and assets differs widely across distinct countries and cultures-such wealth distribution is primarily mediated by social trend and dowry scheme inheritance law.

AN INDIAN SCENARIO OF DOWRY CUSTOM

In Southeast Asia, considering the population, geographical area, and cultural diversity, India is the largest country after China. Dowry is done in India's social culture. Due to the socio-cultural, linguistic and regional diversity in India, an interregional analysis of dowry practice with a socio-economic and legal perspective may provide an enhanced insight into the dowry issue and its relationship to gender equality. At the global level, this more in-depth understanding of the Indian dowry custom scenario can be generalized.

In India, dowry is classified as a commodity in the form of money, goods, and movable or immovable property that is given as a condition of marriage by the bride's family to the groom's family. This tradition in India has continued for many decades[3]. The concept of 'dowry' is not limited to the provision or obligation for the payment of dowry before and during marriage, but also includes claims for post-marriage. The term 'dowry' should, however, be any property or valuable material given or agreed to be provided in connection with marriage. Customary payments in conjunction with the birth of a child or other ceremonies are not included in the area of dowry. The roots of dowry can be traced back to the custom of offering gifts in the form of jeweler, electrical appliances, furniture, bedding, crockery, utensils, or other household materials needed for newly married couples to begin their married life[4]. However, there are numerous remarks by authors concerning the existence of dowry culture in ancient and mediaeval India that conflict with each other and are unable to produce any clear fact.

Regional and Community Variation of Dowry in India:

In the modern era of India, dowry was a prevalent practice. There are variations on dowry prevalence, depending on geography and class. The states in the north are more likely to engage in the dowry scheme of all classes, and dowry is more likely to be in the form of materials and movable goods. In the south, the bride price system is more common, and is more often in the form of land or other products of inheritance[5]. This scheme relates to the social system of marriage, which keeps marriage within or close to family relations.

In most cultures, religions, castes, and regions of India, the tradition of dowry is prevalent. However, because of direct monetary benefits, cultural and group variations Bihar don't prevent this activity. The tradition of dowry is highly prevalent in the Indian states of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Odisha; these states also report high rates of dowry-related deaths. The custom of dowry is practiced in both northern and southern regions, even among

Muslim and Christian societies; but dowry is practiced among both high and lower classes in the northern region, but it is mainly among high-class people in southern regions.

CAUSES OF THE DOWRY

Various reasons have been suggested as cause of dowry practice in India. Among these factors, economic and social factors are more responsible. Causes of dowry are as follows:

Economic Factors:

There are many economic factors contributing to the dowry scheme. Some of these include systems of inheritance and the economic status of the bride. Some claim that inheritance points to economics and poor legal institutions put women at a disadvantage, with inheritances left only to sons. It leaves women dependent on their spouses and in-laws, who maintain the dowry when she gets married[6]. Before 1956, also during the British Raj, daughters had no right to inherit the riches of their family. In 1956, under the Hindu Succession Act, India gave daughters and sons equal legal status among Hindu, Sikh and Jain families.

Despite the new rule of succession, dowry has persisted as a mechanism through which a daughter is allocated parental property through a social process at her marriage, rather than after the parent's death through a slow court-controlled process under the Hindu Succession Act (1956)[7]. In their marriage, Dowry provided women with economic and financial security in the form of movable properties, at least in theory. This helped prevent the break-up of family wealth and offered security at the same time for the bride. This scheme can also be seen as a pre-mortem inheritance, as she can be cut off from the family estate until a woman is presented with movable gifts.

Social Factors:

In parts of India, the arrangement and kinship of marriage relate to dowry. Matrimony typically follows a patrilocal structure in the north, where the groom is a non-related family member. Perhaps because of the exclusion of the bride's family after marriage as a form of pre-mortem inheritance for the bride, this scheme promotes dowry[4]. Marriage is most frequently done within the bride's family in the south, for instance with close relatives or cross-cousins, and at a closer physical distance to her family. Furthermore, brides will be able to inherit property, which makes her more attractive in marriage, reducing the probability of dowry over the price system of the bride.

Religious Factors:

With relation to the practices of dowry, the Shastras, the reservoir of Indian culture and heritage, are complete. Such examples are the marriage hymns of Rigveda and Atharvaveda. Eight ways of marriage is accepted by the Smritis. It was only in the marriage with Brahama. It was only in

gifts and gifts as he was able to afford a man of superior character[8]. The gift to be offered in dowry was thus left fully at the discretion of the father of the brides. A peculiar development, the marriage of girls who had not achieved land, was experienced in Medieval India. Every father wanted to marry his daughter before puberty to a man on religious as well as social grounds, even with an offer of money demanded by grooms' father that urgency on the part of the father of the bride stripped of the elements of will from the act that was the part of practice earlier. Dowry, which was a part of the Kanyadan rite, has been turned into practice.

Illiteracy:

With India's low literacy rate, it is very true to regard it as the primary cause of various social evils. They face many atrocities owing to dowry exchange practices from the section that is not informed about the rules and laws. They are left with little or no choice and have to follow the demands of the family of the groom, which, if not fulfilled, leads to women being abused.

Low Status of Women:

It is very clear that the role of women in society is not equal. Here, the plight does not end. Rather, society owes the build-up of infrastructure to the fruitful participation of both sexes[9]. It is, however, significantly overlooked, and the women in such a setup are the ultimate sufferers. The institution of dowry is the brainchild of such a mindset and is the primary reason behind the nation's women's plight.

CONCLUSION

A deep-seated cultural phenomenon is the custom of dowry in Indian marriages. The exceptionally high degree of gender disparity and female deprivation are India's biggest social failures. In reducing the frequency of its occurrence, the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961, which prohibited the practice, was remarkably unsuccessful. This Act did not remove the dowry demand that is still openly practiced in India by giving it another name, such as the bride's share. Dowry is an ancient tradition that existed at the time of Kanyadana in India and other nations as a symbol of a gift, which means giving the bride to the family of the bridegroom as a gift. Dowry is presently known at the time of matrimony as a transfer of property from the woman's parents to the groom's family. Property and various gifts are passed to the family of the groom at this time. Originally, dowry was used as a way both to sanctify material wealth and also to boost marital social status. In India, marriages are usually arranged by the potential spouses' families.

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