

ATTITUDE ON INTER-CASTE MARRIAGE AMONG THE NEWARS  
A CASE STUDY OF BHAKTAPUR MUNICIPALITY

A Thesis

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Master's Degree of Arts in Sociology

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**TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY**  
**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**  
**KIRTIPUR, NEPAL**

**LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **Attitude on Inter-Caste Marriage Among the Newars: A Case Study of Bhaktapur Municipality** has been completed by Ms. Kahani Bhatta under my guidance and supervision. I recommend this dissertation for final approval and acceptance.

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**LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE**

A dissertation entitled **Attitude on Inter-caste Marriage Among the Newars: A Case Study of Bhaktapur Municipality** was submitted by Ms. Kahani Bhatta. This dissertation has been accepted to be a partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in Sociology.

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## DECLARATION

To the best of my knowledge and belief I declare that the thesis entitled “**Attitude on Inter-Caste Marriage Among the Newars: A Case Study of Bhaktapur Municipality**” is the result of my own research and contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgement has been made. This thesis contains no material, which has been accepted for the award of any other degree in any university.

.....

Kahani Bhatta

Date: January, 2017

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# CHAPTER-I: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of Study

Rudolph (1984) defines caste as a form of social stratification characterized by endogamy, hereditary transmission of a lifestyle which often includes an occupation, status in a hierarchy, and customary social interaction and exclusion. It includes a group of families who share a common name and common descent from the same ancestor and a common identity and who practice same traditional occupation. These homogenous units interact socially/ ritually with their caste groups more than with members of other castes. It stratifies the society preventing impurity of the caste group and often, intermixing with other castes is punishable by excommunication from the caste.

Occupational theory suggests people were grouped under a particular caste based on their occupation. People followed their traditional hereditary occupation because they were not allowed to change their occupation. So because of ease and help in traditional occupation, people married within the same caste. But with passage of time modernization had a huge influence on social, economic and cultural and other every aspect of people's spheres of life. Nowadays, people don't totally rely on their hereditary occupation and so they opt for other jobs altering their traditional occupations onto modern jobs like teaching, government services, technical professions etc. that require higher educational qualifications. The present generation has access to higher education which provides a platform for their interaction with people of other ethnic groups, culture and caste. Advancement in science and technology has developed various modes of transportation and communication that the whole world has constricted into a global village. The new ideas and views have engulfed young minds that they don't strictly comply with old values and norms.

A progressive change towards endogamy can be observed in people of today's generation. They prefer to enjoy the right to selection of mate according to their personal choice on the ground of education or emotional attachment with the boy/ or girl. However we can see that there's still a void between the parents and their children's views regarding marriage and the purpose marriage fulfills in their lives. As a result parents don't admire the decision of inter caste marriage of their children. The decision to marry outside one's caste passes through serious objection among the

family members and relatives in the beginning. Older generation still prefer the traditional endogamy marriage over modern marriage system as they pay due importance to their traditional forms of rituals and norms and they are reluctant to witness any modification. They consider love marriage outside one's own caste can change norms and values of traditional marriage and joint family system. The fear exogamy poses to the purity of their lineages, rituals and norms, ostracization from relatives and the members of their own caste people and society may also discourage people to support marriage outside one's caste.

Nepali Code (2021) has legally ended discrimination against caste inequality and all people are theoretically made equal before the law irrespective of their caste, race or sex. But socially there hierarchically ranked groups who are categorized according to hereditary occupation and maintain their social identity by strict rules of endogamy. It fixes the social status of the individual at birth and prevents movement from one group to another. This shows that cast consciousness still exists in our society.

### **1.1.1 Caste Hierarchy and Status of the Newars**

Nepal is a mosaic of people belonging to different ethnic groups, race, language, religion and culture. Nepalese society is made up a number of ethnic groups distinguished not only by occupation and habits, but also by language and to some extent by racial features (Haimendroff 1956). Ethnologically it is divided into 3 divisions viz. terai or the lowlands, the valley of Nepal Proper and mountainous region on Tibetan side. This study is however concerned on the people, Newars inhabiting the second of these areas. Even today, within the multinational state of Nepal, the Newars of Kathmandu Valley form a microcosmic society with their own culture and a caste system which is regarded by other Nepali as being extremely orthodox (Boker 1988).

Scholars argues that Newars caste system in Kathmandu Valley is held to be one the most complicated in whole of South Asia. Different scholars have put forwarded different theories about the origin of Newars. Levi (1905) put forward the theory that Newars migrated to Nepal from regions north of Himalayas. Similarly, Gopal Singh Nepali (1965) suggested that the Newars may have originated in South India on the Malabar coast called Nair or Nayar based on the similarity of the terms that describes them because of some coincident of customs. Furen-Haimendorf (1956) concludes that bulk of the Newar people had been settled in Nepal Valley

since pre-historic times. According to Regmi (1952) Newars may have an ancestry connected within both Kiranti and Lichhavis, one-time rulers of Nepal Valley.

According to Chattopadhyay (1980) earlier groups of Newars comprised majority of Bauddhamargis who worshipped Buddha and minority of Shivamargis who worshipped Shiva. Chronicles state that Newar King Jayasthiti Malla (1332-1395) divided up the population of Kathmandu Valley into 64 castes, each caste was given a certain occupation. It was only during the Malla reign the influence of a Hindu socio-religious base to an otherwise non-caste country was seen and introduced the fashion of the Hindu Caste Hierarchy followed by the Indian immigrants to Nepal. The Newars themselves are divided into a Buddhist and a Hindu section, each of which consists of several strata arranged in hierarchic order. The Newars were divided into a fairly complex group ranging from the lowest to the highest, from sweeper to priest. He also determined which priest, the Buddhist Gubhaju or the Hindu Brahmin was responsible for the spiritual welfare of each caste. However Haimendroff (1957:244) argues that ethnic solidarity outweighs religious differences and a Hindu Newar feels more closely akin to Buddhist Newars than to Hindus of different language and ethnic background.

Casteism in Newars according to Gopal Singh Nepali (1965)

S.N	Caste	Hindu Newar	Buddhist Newar
I.	Priestly Castes	Deva Brahmin	Gubhajuor Bajracharya
II.	High Castes	ChhathariaShrestha PaanchthariaShreatha	Vanra or Bare or Udas
III.	Upper Lower	{Pahari-Jyapoo Hule(or Gualo)}	
IV.	Lower Castes	Gathu-Nau-Khoose- chitrakar-Chipa-Manandhar- Kow Mali Pun	Ranjitkar Salmi
V.	Unclean Castes	Du(n)yee(n) Balami Songa Bha Kasai	

The highest position is occupied by the Brahmins, who had originally come from Kanauj, and serve as a spiritual guide of the upper caste. Next in rank are the high caste Kshatriya Shresthas. They are said to be the descendants of Hindu Newar Kings. According to Bista (2000), Shrestha community is divided into Chhathare, Paanchthare Shrestha and Chathare Shrestha. The highest rank being occupied by the Chhathare or six grade Shrestha who use family names like Pradhan, Malla, Joshi, Rajbhandari etc.

According to Oldfield (1880: 183) The Jyapoos are mainly cultivators and constitute at least half the population of Nepal. Jyapoos also run domestic errands for wages for other caste people but culturally and religiously they are interdependent with Gubhaju, Bare and Uray or Udas (Bista 2000). He further states that lower caste group comprises of the skilled craftsmen castes who run the Newar community smoothly. According to Chhatopadhyaya (1980), occupation in Newar community are hereditary and members of one caste should not encroach upon the technical duties and rights of another. The lowest ranks are occupied by sweepers, Kulu, Pore, Chame and Halahulu who belong to the untouchable castes.

### **1.1.2 Marriage Pattern in the Newars**

Marriage, the basic institution of society is the oldest and universal institutions found in all societies. According to Hurton and Hunt (1968) marriage is the approved social pattern whereby two or more persons establish a family. It is a socially sanctioned union of male and female or a secondary institution devised by society to sanction the union and mating of male and female for the purpose of a) establishing a household b) entering sex relation c) procreation d) providing care for the offspring. Thus marriage is socially recognized institution for having legitimate sexual relationship between a man and a woman for procreation, upbringing, maintenance and socialization of children through establishing a family.

Newari society recognizes the following 3 ways of obtaining a spouse.

#### **Traditional Marriage**

The traditional marriage is endogamous and monogamous. The marriage for son and daughter is arranged by parents. At first the father of the boy locates a girl whom he considers to be a suitable bride for his son. Then a mediator is appointed to carry on the negotiation back and forth. The horoscopes of the boy and the girl are analyzed for their compatibility and then are decided whether they make a good match or not. Then a date

for their marriage is fixed which is followed by wedding ceremonies which is comprised of several stages of formalities.

The first ceremony that takes place is “gue-chho-ye-gu (giving the betel nuts) ceremony when the horoscopes are matched, formally binding both the parties for the marriage. If any problem arises and the marriage cannot take place, a system of “gue-li-ta-bi-ye-gu”(returning the betel nuts) take place. After the “gue-chho-ye-gu” ceremony the bridegroom’s side sends “lakhamari” (traditional sweets) to bride’s home. The bride’s parents distribute this sweet to their close relatives. Both the parties decide upon the marriage date. Usually the wedding reception is given by the bride’s party two to three days before the marriage procession of the groom’s takes place. This is called “la-sa-wai-gu”. One day previously or on the same day “Kaliyan- nhya-kegu” ceremony takes place. It involves slipping an ornament known as “kaliyan” over the bride’s wrist. This kaliya is sent from the bridegroom’s house. “la-sa-wa-ne-gu” means the taking out of a marriage procession. The procession goes to the bride’s home from the bridegroom’s home.

After reaching the bridegroom’s home, the “gue-sa-ye-ke-gu” ritual takes place. At that time the bride will be introduced to all the relatives and friends who are participating in the ritual, through the exchange of betel nuts. Then the “hokegu” ritual takes place. After that “ni-chhya-bhu” ritual takes place which means that the bride is accepted into the bridegroom’s family clan as a complete member. Then the “san-pya-ke-gu” ritual takes place in which the bridegroom combs the bride’s hair and help in the makeup of the bride. After this ritual, the bridegroom has to perform “sincho-chhaye-ke-gu”, the ritual of applying vermilion on the bride’s forehead. On the same evening, “Khwa-swe-gu” (seeing the face) ritual and “du-chaye-ke-gu” ritual takes place. The bridegroom’s party throws a wedding reception on a suitable day after they bring home the bride. For the “khwa-swe-gu” ritual, the bride’s party arranges a place where her father, brothers, sisters and other close relatives come to see her face by offering a present in cash or goods. After seeing the face, the bride is immediately taken to her parent’s home along with the bridegroom for the “du-chaye-ke-gu” ritual. In this ritual all the family members and participating relatives are introduced by performing the “gue-bi-ye-gu” ritual (giving betel nuts). Then the bridegroom returns with his bride to his home. Only on that night they will

be given a bed to share for the honey-moon and not before that. The next day, the new bride is sent to her parent's home which is called "lila-du-chhoye-gu"

In this way traditional marriage comes to an end which completes within Three to Four days.

### **Swoyambar Marriage**

Swoyambar marriage is short cut marriage. In swoyambar marriage other marriage procession rituals may or may not be performed. It is performed according to their convenience on the swoyambar day. The bridegroom and the bride and their relatives go to a temple with their family priest and perform the swoyambar. They arrange feast rather at near the temple or at any place according to their convenience.

### **Elopement**

It is a means of obtaining a spouse for a boy and girl falling in love irrespective of their caste, religion, social and economic status when they have no support from their family, relatives and society. The boy runs away with a girl and hides for four days. Then he can bring the girl out (Nepali: 1965). If the family members of the can find the girl within four days of elopement the marriage is not valid. And in case the boy and the girl could not be found, the girl and the boy can enter into the house of the boy with the permission of parents. Then the boy's parents offer sagun to both the boy and girl. The boy's parents should arrange a bibhabhoy within a year for their close relatives and hinuphuki. The bibhabhoy ritual should be performed in this bhoy too. In this bhoy, the girl offers betal nuts to his close relatives and hinuphuki. This type of marriage is not a barrier for status of woman and will receive the same social privilege. The marriage becomes socially and legally recognized as the arranged marriage.

## **1.2 Statement of Research Question**

Our society has been following age long tradition which became our culture of caste. Although discrimination based on caste is already a crime and punishable by law, people still take an important decision of life such as marriage on the basis of caste .It is likely that most of the people who follow caste ideology search a mate belonging their own caste for their children but it's a chaotic situation when the son/ daughter chooses his/ her partner from different caste. Children who belong to family which is strict on caste cannot think of inter-caste marriage only because of fear of their family. This constricts their choice when everyone has the right to choose his/her spouse. In our society the caste of girl/ boy becomes the first and foremost criteria for the hunt of the bride/groom and rest of others inherent qualities are secondary.

This research aimed to find out the influence of caste in marriage in Kamal Vinayak ward no. 4. The study addressed the following research questions.

- a. What the views of people are toward inter caste marriage?
- b. What are the factors that have changed the pattern of marriage?

## **1.3 Objectives of Study**

The presented study generally intended to learn about the attitude towards inter caste marriage among the Newars in Kamalvinayak-4 which were addressed by the following general objectives.

- I. To explore views of the Newar people towards inter-caste marriage
- II. To find out the effects of factors such as education, family structure, age, modern jobs, age at marriage on inter-caste marriage

## **1.4 Rationale of Study**

Although there are many studies on Hindu caste system, marriages, touchability not enough studies are conducted about the rituals, cultures and traditions that forbids inter-caste marriage and considers it as a taboo. This study helped in determining the factors of change towards different aspects of marriage pattern among various age groups in Newars community. This

study also would prove useful for similar research covering more geographical region and other caste and ethnic groups.

### **1.5 Organization of the Study**

This dissertation report is divided into five chapters. Chapter number 1 introduces the background, statement, objective, rationale of the study. Second chapter consists of three sub chapters. The first and second chapters review available literatures and writings of renowned scholars who have had their books and articles published on related topic of my study. The third sub chapter is conceptual framework of my study using tree diagram. The third chapter is about research methodology which includes rationale of site selection, research design, nature and source of data, universe and sampling procedure, data collection and analysis method and limitation of the study. In chapter IV the data collected from research have been presented and analyzed. Finally a summary and a conclusion have been presented in fifth chapter.



## **CHAPTER-II LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

#### **Modernization, Cultural Change and Persistence of Traditional Values**

Modernization basically means to remold a cultural system into a new mode while westernization means that a certain indigenous cultural element of the traditional society is replaced by the western elements and the functional role of the former is taken over by the latter. Examples of westernization includes western clothes, food hair styles and houses while modernization means introduction of telephones, televisions, mass communication, bureaucratic institution. Modernization makes life more affluent, convenient and comfortable. It alters ways of thinking, pattern of behavior and world views, thus enlarging the spheres of life and broadening one's outlook. Education is the major factor that gives positive attitude towards accepting foreign culture. So people don't necessarily preserve the traditional world views.

Economic development is linked with coherent and predictable change in culture and social and political life. Evidence indicates that economic development tends to propel societies in a roughly predictable direction. Occupational specialization, rising educational levels, rising income levels brings unforeseen changes- changes in gender role, attitudes authority and sexual norms: declining fertility rates, broader political participation etc. (Inglehart and Baker 2000: 21) . However reconciliation between modernity and tradition is made difficult by factors rooted in the history and society like the caste system (Borsa 2000: 154)

#### **Hindu Caste System and Marriage**

Caste is defined as a group of families bearing a common name, claiming descent from the same ancestors, following same traditional occupation and forming a homogenous identity. Society is divided up into these clearly defined groups whose relations toward each other are arranged within strict hierarchy (Boker 1988). These homogenous units interact socially, ritually with their own caste group more than with members of other caste. Clearly defined modes of interaction are expected of the various castes. Caste system affects all areas of an individual's life and determines his or her social status. It is a rigid social stratification that regulates the relationships

of caste members to each other and to other castes, prevents impurity of caste group. Intermixing with other castes was punished by excommunication.

Haimendroff(1957:252) states that extreme rigidity of the Hindu Caste-system is a development of medieval times and that ancient Hindu society was in many respects more flexible. There was then in ancient times no absolute bar against marital unions between members of different castes. Caste system in traditional Nepali society was rigidly enforced. Nepali Code (2021) has ended caste discrimination on legal ground. Nepalese law theoretically made everyone equal irrespective of their caste, sex, religion and race. However socially there are hierarchically ranked groups who are categorized according to traditional hereditary occupation and maintain their social identity by strict rules of endogamy. Caste fixes the social status of the individual at birth and prevents his/her movement from one group to another. Marriage and religion are two systems that create water tight compartment between communities and bring division, hatred and tension among various social groups.

Hurton and Hunt (1968) have defined marriage as the approved social pattern whereby two or more persons establish a family. Marriage sanctions the union of male and female. Marriage fulfills the purpose of establishing a family, entering into a sex relation, procreation and upbringing. Marriage within the same caste (endogamy) and same religion is the norm of the Indian society. To think of marriages between different castes and different religions is a difficult and socially unacceptable proposition. Caste is a social reality which determines one's social status and the limits of social relation and also opportunities for advancement in the life of an individual. Kharel (2010:113) argues that Nepal is undergoing a deep structural shift: away from predetermined and largely unchanging caste/ethnic identity as the primary basis for social status and economic and political power, towards a more open, class-structured society where status is based on attributes like education, wealth and political influence which (at least theoretically) can be attained through individual effort.

Caste system, the social scientists agree has two main roots; the ban on inter-dining and intermarrying. Social intermingling through meals and marriages are experiences of purest proximity and kinship. Even more powerful than inter-dining is a tool that reformatting and affirming social sentiments is the instrument of intermarriage. If a woman belonging to higher caste marries to a man belonging to lower caste and a woman belonging to a lower caste marries to a man of higher caste, then it is considered as inter-caste marriage. In other words if a women

marries to a man other than her own caste is considered as an inter-caste. Marriages are arranged by elders in the family and the choice of spouse is limited by family elders (Ross 1961; Kapadia 1962; Mandelbaun 1970; Desai 1993). Thus marriage is considered not simply as an alliance between the two individuals but as an alliance between two families. The family background factors of the boy and girl are thoroughly examined by parents before finalizing the alliance, as marriage alliance is thought to be of great importance to family relation. Marriage is a foremost institution of intimate acceptance. It has the potential to dismantle all wars of division and alienation. A disapproved marriage on the other hand brings multifaceted distance alienation or social, cultural and mental distance. The age of the women at the time of her marriage, the freedom given to her to choose her partner, the range of female education are some of the important factors influencing the inter-caste marriages in Bombay (Kannan 1963). Also post graduates are most liberal for inter-caste marriages compared to under graduates and graduates (Sarkar 1970). Prosperity, job status and place of residence do not change the membership of a certain caste. According to Subedi (2014) the relationship between caste and hereditary occupations has been less significant and there has occurred a significant shift in the bases of power. There is an increase in class consciousness and a decrease in caste consciousness; wealth is replacing birth as the basis of social power and prestige. However, Caste plays a very important role in the selection of mates in marriages.

Another study on inter-caste marriage shows that the scheduled caste has exhibited the highest tendency for inter-caste marriages than the other castes. The urban residence, education, employment in modern occupation and middle class economic background have tended to be a set of attributes affecting the incidence of inter-caste marriages. They further observe that inter-caste marriage takes place at fairly advanced age rather than at the young age.

According to Subedi (2014) Nepal is going through a transformative process in which many existing social norms and patterns are being challenged and many are being reformed. There is evidence of changes in caste, gender and power relations at varying degrees at local levels.

The most important change can be seen in the caste domain, where there has been significant reduction in discriminatory practices, more evident in public than private sphere. Chintamani (1973) however argues that according to a study conducted in rural areas of Andhra Pradesh found that as many as 936 people in the sample favored marriage of their sons and daughters

only within their caste, while only 29 people were not very particular about marriage within the caste. His study showed that rigidity or conservatism with regard to inter-caste matrimonial alliance was not confined to the few influential castes groups alone. It was uniformly prevalent among all caste and among the different level of society. Castes both at the top and at the bottom as well as those who try to improve their social status are keen on confining their marital relations only to their own caste, excepting for few people who are insignificant in their numbers. Another study on inter-caste marriage shows that the scheduled caste has exhibited the highest tendency for inter-caste marriages than the other castes.

The urban residence, education, employment in modern occupation and middle class economic background have tended to be a set of attributes affecting the incidence of inter-caste marriages. He further observes that inter-caste marriage takes place at fairly advanced age rather than at the young age. Urbanization and industrialization have certain effect in braking down the barriers of caste (Prasad 1957; Banerjee et.al, 1978). It is expected that with modernization, development and increase in educational level etc., the impact of various divisive social forces like caste, religion, various taboos etc. would become weaker. The society is expected to become more broad minded, forward looking and tolerant. Normally it is perceived that education has positive effect on inter-caste marriages. But in our study it is found that women with higher education are more interested in same caste marriage. This is also true for the husband's education. It appears that education does not influence much the incidence of inter-caste marriages in India. Women having inter-caste marriage are more working than non-working women. Economic condition has effect on inter-caste marriage. With the increase in wealth, inter-caste marriage also increases. It is quite interesting to find that women having full mass media exposure are experiencing less inter-caste marriage than those having partial or no mass media exposure.

Haimendroff (1956:250) argues that Newars no less than Brahmins and Chhetris are extremely pollution-conscious and are strict in their compliance with the rules of interdining. The acceptance of food from anyone except members of the same sub-caste is subject to rigid restrictions. Severe sanction including in some cases excommunication, are imposed on those offending against the taboo on inter-dining with the members of other and particularly lower

castes. Accepting cooked food from the hands of the person lower status has the effect of depriving the recipient of his own high status, sexual intercourse doesn't have this effect and is a neutral action in so far as caste purity is considered ( Haimendroff 1956: 251).

Whatever may be the mode of marriage, the husband is out casted if he eats the cooked rice from his wife who is lower in cast than himself. Being outcasted means failure of one's right to participate in the worship of Dewali. He is further debarred from participating in the ceremonial feasts in which the fukee members take part. If a wife belongs to a cast higher than that of her husband, she and her children are socially recognized for all purposes. But a woman of non newar caste is acceptable only if she belongs to no other caste than Brahmin (Nepali 1965).Deshpande ( 2010) says there are strict barriers when it comes to the mixing of a superior caste with an inferior caste.

Changing ideologies have impact on views and practices of Newars in the society. And change in ideologies is attributed to the forces of modernization .A man/ woman, who are potential of tiding nuptial bonds, irrespective of his/ her caste are more or less influenced by his/ her caste factor. In our society, where it is equally important to gain support from families for starting conjugate life, the decision of choosing a marriage partner is not solely done by individual. So, the families who support traditional views on caste system strongly disapprove of inter-caste marriage. As a result ,the couple has to struggle to gain acceptance and blessings from the family while those are lucky enough whose family are flexible and will to change with time& don't strictly align with the norms of caste.

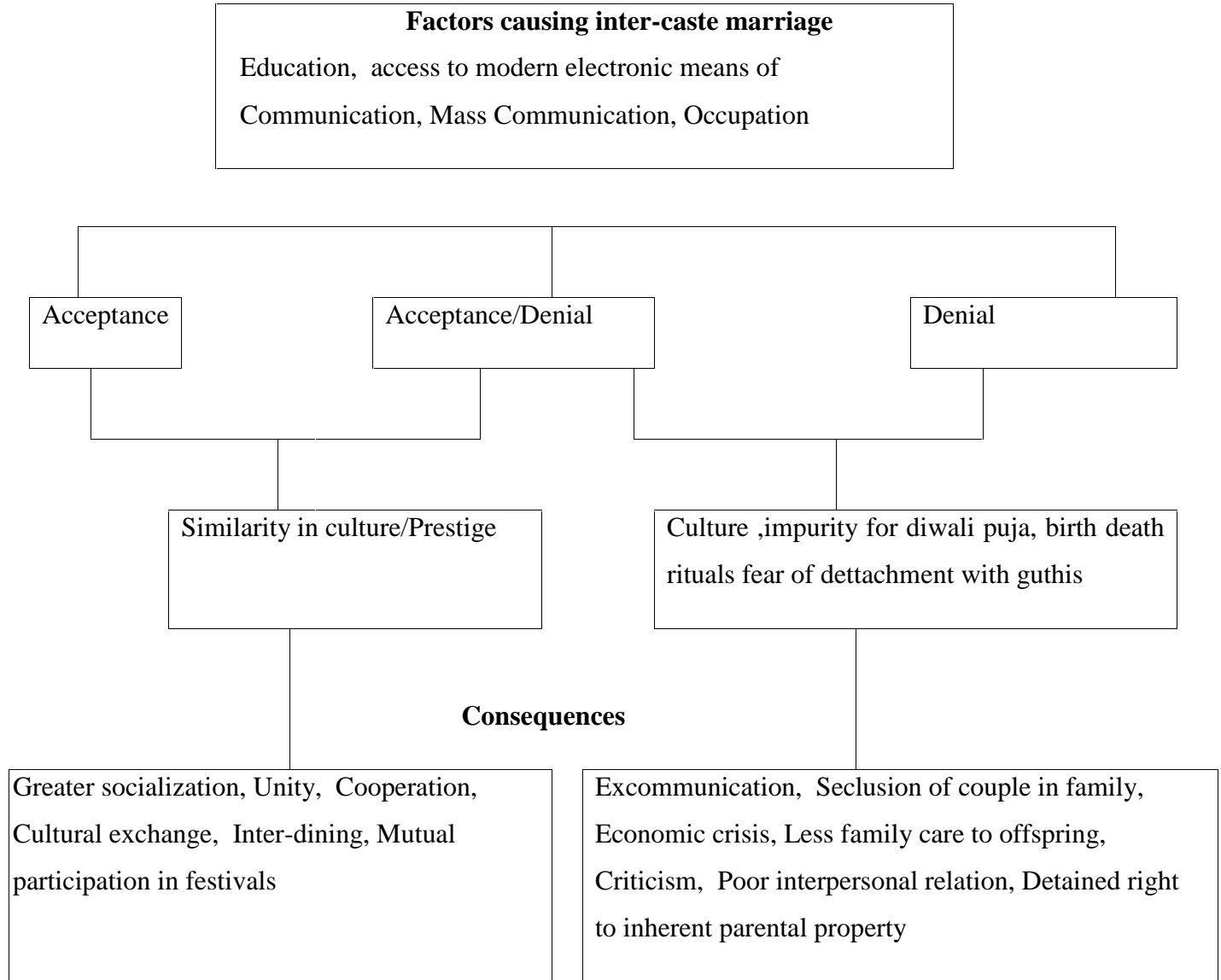
## 2.2 Conceptual Framework

Social structure is subjected to change. Change takes place in the form of modification or complete eradication of existing norms and doctrines over time. Change is a law of nature. In this context, people's opinions and values change through process of modernization, urbanization and sanskritization. The Newars, too, are susceptible to changes induced by education, communication, occupation, etc. influences their attitudes towards established age old social institutions like marriage. Liberal attitude towards traditional conservative norms of marriage has led to break down the endogamy practices especially among the young generation. Exogamy marriages cause greater socialization, unity, cooperation, peace and prosperity in society. Matrimonial relation established with the one with higher caste, high social and economic background may also be linked to prestige.

However older generation still follow the traditional conservative norms and get less influenced from the changes. In their view, birth, death and marriage rituals serve religious and spiritual functions unlike in western country. Any impurity in these functions may disturb the ancestral spirits in heaven which bring curse to the family on earth. Marriage, in Hindu society, is not only the union of two individuals but also of two families of bride and bridegroom. So the relation established by the marriage between such unmatched caste is likely to get rejected by the family due to the fear of getting ousted from Diwali Guthi, criticism, poor interpersonal relation with other relatives of the family, detention from parental property and excommunication. In case of Newars, they themselves are divided into a number of sub-castes with whom eating cooked rice is not acceptable from all of them. They may accept cooked rice from non-Newar, Brahmins and Chhetris than from the lower or impure Newars. So they are unlikely getting bonded with lower caste and impure caste Newars than non-Newar Brahmins and Chhetris.

# Conceptual Framework of Inter-Caste Marriage in Newars

## Newar Castes



## **Chapter-III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Rationale of Site Selection**

Bhaktapur was selected as the study area. Located only 12 km east to Kathmandu, the capital city of the country, it is well facilitated with transportation, education, electricity, health services, communication and also there's peace and tranquility. People of different cultural background are migrating every year here. The farming caste of Bhaktapur have till now better preserved the centuries old tradition than other Newars of the valley. Because of its rich culture and traditions thousands of tourists come and visit Bhaktapur to see its ancient culture art and architects. Being the gate to Nagarkot, it is the hub for many tourists that visit every year. Nonetheless it is also not untouched with the wave of change in fashion, music, modern education. People are slowly giving away their traditional occupation, getting modern education and have access to internet and means of mass communication. The Newars here are touched by westernization and modernization. New settlement of people of all castes and religion is growing in this place. Thus the researcher found interesting to study if there had been changes in individuals' choice to marry outside one's caste in a more conservative society where majority of Newars belong to farming caste in Bhaktapur.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Exploratory as well as descriptive research design was used for the study. Exploratory research design was initially conducted to see new sights, to ask questions and to assess inter-caste marriage in a new light to clarify my own understanding of research problems.

Then descriptive research design was used to find the opinions, behaviors or characteristics of the Newars of the research are regarding inter-caste marriage. It thus helped me to generate and accumulate the data and facts to give a clear picture on the social and cultural relation of the group with other castes people. By this descriptive research design recent situation on rigidity of the group for cultural exchange was explicated

### **3.3 Nature and Source of Data**



The nature of data was both quantitative and qualitative. The source of data was primary as well as secondary. The primary data was collected from interviews while the secondary data was collected from various literatures available in journals, articles, books, research report, newspapers and other reliable sources.

### **3.4 The Universe and Sampling Procedure**

The universe of the study was the total numbers of Newars residing over Bhaktapur Municipality, Kamal Vinayak ward no.4.

The actual number of Newars residing over the particular ward no.4 could not be found from ward office. So for the researcher's limited source and time, the research was conducted among 50 respondents of various age groups from 20 and above within Newar sub-castes. It was difficult to draw the sample which could represent the heterogeneous Newari community residing over the area. So, for the sake of convenience purposive sampling was used.

### **3.5 Techniques of Data Collection**

The data were collected using 3 techniques viz. Interview schedule, key informants interview and participant observation. The interview schedule (Appendix 1) was constructed with a view to obtain information on the socio- economic and cultural background of the members of the sample and their attitudes towards various dimensions of the inter-caste marriage.

The schedule was administered to one of the family member whose age was 20years and above. Interview method was used to collect data.

On the other hand Key Informant interview was done to understand the important socio cultural and economic aspects of the couple who were married outside their caste. The spontaneous and free responses provided an opportunity for careful examination, comparison and understanding of important aspects of their life. However, only limited number of couples was interviewed due to limited sample size.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

The data collected from the respondents were clearly tabulated. The tabulated data in this way was analyzed by using statistical tool like percentage.

### **3.7 Limitations**

The presented dissertation suffers from a number of limitations. As a student, the lack of time and economic resources could not cover all the sub castes and other areas of Bhaktapur. Thus the study is limited to only one area and few sub-castes of the area.

Besides, many aspects related to sex and economic status couldn't be revealed properly. There are so many variations in the educational attainment, economic background and socio-cultural status of the residents and in the lack of sophisticated statistical tools, 50 respondents may not truly represent the area.

Although they assured the genuineness of their response, it may also not truly represent their attitude and behavior because of biasness and individual's consciousness.

Also due to the lack of sociological studies on change in marriage pattern among the Newars, the change in trend couldn't be explained in better way.

This is a microlevel study, so the attitude and behavior of people of this area might differ from the Newars of other area of Bhaktapur

## **CHAPTER-IV: EFFECTS OF FACTORS ON INTER-CASTE MARRIAGE**

### **4.1 Age, Sex, Marital Status, Education, Family Type and Preference of Family Type of**

## Respondents

### Age and sex

Age is an important factor for the growth of one's physical and mental health. It in turn affects individual's psychology and consciousness. People's opinion and viewpoint may vary according to time and age which are subjected to change with experience in life.

In our society, a girl and a boy are brought up with different attitudes. These attitudes are likely to influence the perspective of male and female toward two most important social institutions like marriage and family. So before the analysis of other data, the researcher found it important to analyze the age and sex of the respondents in order to collect their opinions on inter-caste marriage.

**Table: 1 Age and Sex Composition of the Respondents**

Age group	Male		Female	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Below 30	12	24	16	32
31-40	6	12	1	2
41-50	3	6	4	8
51-60	2	4	4	8
61 and above	0	0	2	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>54</b>

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

The total respondents of 5 different age groups viz. below 30 , 31 to 40, 41 to 50, 51 to 60 and 60 above which can be categorized as young generation (up to 40 years), old generation (41-50 years) and 51 above ( as older generation). There were altogether 50 respondents. Total number of male respondents was 23 while female respondents were 27. Female respondent outnumbered the male respondents by 4. Most of the respondents (28) fell under the age group below 30 years of age.

Maximum number of respondents was intentionally taken from this age group because marriageable age of respondents fell under this group and their attitude towards various aspects of marriage would represent the trend of change, if any, in the study area.

## Marital Status

Perspectives of respondents toward various aspects of marriage would differ according to their marital status. Married men and women might hold varying opinions than their unmarried male and female counterparts. Hence forth, the researcher found it was essential to analyze the marital status of the sample population before analyzing their opinions towards inter-caste marriage.

**Table: 2 Marital Status of Respondents by Age and Sex**

Age Group	Married				Unmarried			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Below 30	4	8	7	14	8	16	9	18
31-40	5	10	1	2	1	2	0	0
41-50	3	6	4	8	0	0	0	0
51-60	2	4	4	8	0	0	0	0
61 and above	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18</b>

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

The above table shows the percentage of married and unmarried male and female respondents according to their age group. In the collected data, 28% of the male of all age groups were married and percentage of married women of all age group was 36. Although 18% of men and women were unmarried, 2% of men who were unmarried belonged to age group between 31 to 40 years. It shows that women tend to get married before the reach the age of 30 years.

The age at marriage of women has delayed. In the past girls used to marry at an early age of 16 to 18 years. However, at present especially in the city areas in the Newar community where there is access to education, the age of marriage of both male and female is delayed. Educated men and women mostly pursue for a decent job to kick start their career after completing their education.

## Education

Education widens one's knowledge. The outlook towards life, marriage and social practices of an educated and uneducated person varies. So an educated man or woman holds different view point towards cultures and traditions that are being practiced than the illiterate or the semi-

literate ones. Hence the researcher found to analyze their educational status which would affect their responses accordingly and following result was obtained.

**Table: 3 Educational Status of the Respondents by Age**

Age group	Education							
	Illiterate	%	Literate	%	up to SLC	%	SLC above	%
Below 30	0	0	3	6	2	4	23	46
31-40	1	2	2	4	1	2	3	6
41-50	1	2	3	6	0	0	3	6
51-60	1	2	3	6	1	2	1	2
61 and above	1	2	1	2	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>60</b>

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

It was enthusiastic to find out that 60 % of the total respondents attained their education above SLC. 68% of the young generation, from the sample was found to be literate.8% of respondents of all age group from the sample were illiterate. All the respondents below age group of 30 attended at least their lower secondary level education while at least one individual from 31 and above age groups never attended formal education. 24% of respondents from all age groups were just literate. Due to government's and municipality's effort to improve the literacy rate of the district most of the men and women have attained the school level education. Only 4 responded toward their being illiterate while 12 of them were literate.

### **Family Size**

Being an agricultural country traditional family system in Nepal is characterized by joint family system in which all the family members are tied with blood relations and marriage. The character of joint family is common residence, common kitchen and common property. The old people are respected and cared and each old and disabled member is supported, there are definite rights and obligations. The Newar family is also basically a joint family system where family members of 3

or more generations related by blood live together. Even if they live separately they still fall under a joint family system. Traditionally people live in joint family system because of economic partnership, social security and intimacy between among the family members. But slowly the trend of living in a joint family system is decreasing.

The researcher felt the importance of analyzing the type of family in which the respondents were living and the type of family they preferred to live. It was necessary because the respondents' answers would be more or less influenced by the type of family in which they lived. People in joint family would witness many emotional bonds which would affect their own choices of love, marriage and life. When the researcher asked about their preference of living in joint or nuclear family, the following was observed.

**Table: 4 Family Type of Respondents and Their Preference of Family Type**

Age group	Family		Preferable family type	
	Nuclear	Joint	Nuclear	Joint
below 30	20	8	21	7
31-40	5	2	7	
41-50	4	3	5	2
51-60	6	0	4	2
61 and above	2	0	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>11</b>

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

37 of the respondents of all age group belonged to nuclear family and same significant observation was obtained for their preference of nuclear family .i.e. 39. The number of respondents of all age group who belonged to a joint family was 13 who preferred joint family from the same age group is 11. Joint family system is slowly losing its significance in Newari society too. The respondents preferred nuclear/ small family over joint family for privacy, for better care of the young ones and independent households. It shows that people who a few generations back lived in a joint family have started to become individualistic and seek privacy in their life. Respondents in the joint family are better attached to the members of the family and members living in a joint family get more social security. Those respondents whose main occupation is agriculture still prefer a joint family due to the labor supply it gives. Not only the

young generation but also the older generations (4) prefer nuclear family over a joint family while 2 of the respondents aged 51 to 60 preferred joint family.

## **4.2 Occupation**

Occupation wise, the Newars are a world among themselves. It is because the caste division of the Newars was done on the basis of their hereditary occupation. Among the Newars, we can find people from priestly caste to sweepers, musician, butchers, barbers, etc. who are impure castes. They are dependent upon each other economically. However, with change in time, the people from lower caste have shifted to other jobs, business and professions. Although older

generation seems to be involved in their hereditary occupation, younger people opt for professional, clerical jobs, business which is associated with prestige.

**Table: 5 Occupations of Respondents by Age**

Age	Student	clerical	Housewives	Artisan	Business	Agriculture	Total
Below 30	10	13	1	1	2	1	<b>28</b>
31-40	0	4	0	0	3	0	<b>7</b>
41-50	0	3	3	0	0	1	<b>7</b>
51-60	0	1	3	0	1	1	<b>6</b>
61&above	0	0	2	0	0	0	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>50</b>

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

In my survey, too, it was found that people below the age of 30 were involved in various occupations. Majority were involved in various offices and banks working as clerks while a significant number of respondents were students who were still continuing their study. Some respondents had huge land as ancestral property but they preferred either business or clerical jobs because of the social prestige associated with office goers than being farmers. The number of respondents from all age groups, whose major occupation was agriculture, was only 3. Out of them, only one was below age 30 who wished to alter his occupation once he found other official works. Out of the total respondents, only one of them stayed as a housewife, who left her job because of her health issue but still planned to work in office after her recovery.

There has been major shift from traditional occupation to modern jobs. People are free to change the profession as per their will and caliber. The change in hereditary occupation is likely to contribute to weaken the effects of caste.

In the past, sons used to take over the hereditary occupations of their family, a farmer's son used to be a farmer, priest's son used to be a priest; a butcher's son would be a butcher. However, these days most of the sons' would pursue their own dream job as according to their education as modern jobs are often associated with one's prestige. The old generation is still involved in its hereditary occupation.

**Table: 6 Age wise Preference of Occupation for Sons**



Age group	Occupations				
	Business	Clerk	Artisan	Social work	Agriculture
Below 30	21	7	-	-	-
31 to 40	2	5	-	-	-
41 to 50	4	2	1	-	-
51 to 60	3	2	-	-	1
61 and above	-	1	-	1	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2016

The majority of respondents of all age group (30) prefer their son to do business more than any other occupation as it makes huge money. Significant number of respondents also preferred clerical jobs (office works) for their sons. They preferred office works more than their hereditary occupation. Only 2 of the respondents, age group 41 to 60 preferred their son to follow traditional jobs like agriculture and artistry, while only 1 respondent preferred his son to be involved in social work.

This showed that people's attitude towards their hereditary occupation have changed over time. People are more concerned over economic upliftment through jobs/ business that pay them more money than making their livelihood by giving continuity to their hereditary occupations. This change in attitude towards traditional job certainly changes their attitude towards traditional values and practices.

In case of daughters, who take care of family of their spouse family after marriage, were traditionally trained to be good housewives. They were taught cooking, washing, taking care of family and limited to household jobs. They were very less provided with higher education so their access to jobs outside home was constricted. However, with people being more and more aware about girl child education and increasing women literacy rate, they are also involved in income generating activities. Women are being more versatile and empowered for they take care of family as well as are employed. The desirable occupations for the daughters of the respondents were asked and the following were observed.

**Table: 7 Age wise Preference of Occupation for Daughters**

Age group	Occupations					
	Business	Clerk	Artisan	Social work	Agriculture	Housewife
Below 30	2	24		2		
31 to 40	1	3		3		
41 to 50	2	4				1
51 to 60	2	2		2		
61 and above		1		1		
Total	7	34	0	8	0	1

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

In my survey too, it is found that only one of the respondent of age group 41 to 50 preferred her daughter to be a housewife while all other respondents favored their daughter to be economically active profession. 34 of them chose clerical job while 7 of them chose business for their daughters. More respondents preferred their daughters to be involved in social service than business.

Our Society is a patriarchal society where a father is the head of the family. The difference in the choice of occupation for a daughter and son also explains it. Since a daughter has to take care of her family, she is preferred to do clerical jobs which are usually 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. It keeps her economically active and also she could fulfill her responsibility at her husband's house. This shows how the role of women is changing in a family and society. Being economically active makes her independent which also enhances her decisive power on marriage and family.

### **4.3 Necessity of Marriage**

Marriage and family are two universal social institutions. Marriage is a compulsory karma and dharma and nobody could deny or get excuse from it. The unmarried man/ woman were regarded unholy and unsuitable for religious and cultural activities. Not only the unmarried son or daughter but his/her family also went through social trauma for not getting their children married. It shows how important marriage is for the whole family to get their children start a family to maintain their social values too. The respondents were asked if they thought marriage was a compulsory in their life or not, the following was observed.

**Table: 8 Attitude Towards Necessity of Marriage by Age**

Age Group	Necessity of Marriage			
	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage
Below 30	23	46	5	10
31-40	7	14	-	-
41-50	7	14	-	-
51-60	6	12	-	-
61 and above	2	4	-	-
Total	45	90	5	10

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

Among 50 respondents 45 of them said that marriage is a necessary phenomenon while only 5 of the respondents below the age of 30 responded negatively. Respondents from all other age groups

from and above said that marriage is necessary in one's life. Some change in attitude towards the necessity of marriage has been observed among younger generation below age 30 but this doesn't mean that they wouldn't marry in their life. Marriage is still an important stage of an individual's life as a beginning of whole new life.

Differing attitude on the necessity of marriage shows the changing beliefs on the values of marriage among the younger generation. This young generation represents the population which defies the traditional conservative values.

#### **4.4 Objective of Marriage**

Marriage is a socially sanctioned union of a male and female, procreate children, their upbringing and socialization and through a family. Marriage gives legitimacy to "family of procreation" from society and also from the "family of orientation" of the couple's family. The Marriage not only fulfills one's responsibility towards the family but also his/her social and religious duty through procreation. Joint family system is the norm of the Newars where people live together for economic partnership. The objective of marriage varies individually from person to person. It also may differ between a male and female of various ages. When asked why marriage was necessary in the life of male and females in the sample following were observed.

**Table: 9 Objective of marriage by Sex**

Reasons	Male	Female	Total
Social norm	5	5	10
Religious duty		3	3
Family line continuation	3	4	7
Old age support	3	4	7
Economic partnership	1		1
Companionship	11	11	22
Sexual needs	-	-	-

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

Maximum number of respondents, i.e. 22 responded in favor of companionship as the objective of marriage in which equal number of males and females supported companionship i.e.11. 10 of the respondents said they should marry as it was a social norm. Significant number of respondents also gave the reason of marriage to continue family line and to support in one's old age. Only women were found to believe it as a religious duty to get married. The data shows that most of the people get married for life-long companionship and intimacy than social and religious obligation and old age security. Comparatively female respondents seem to be more traditional than their male counterparts in following their values and norms. It may be because women are given less freedom and laden up with more strict rules and regulations before their marriage. Girls are brought up with the belief that their in-laws in a way influence their attitude. The attitudes with which sons and daughters are raised up in a family are different. Daughters are meant to take care of their in-laws while sons remain at their parents' house that would support them at their old age.

#### **4.5 Age at Marriage**

Age is an important factor of marriage in traditional Hindu society. It is the responsibility of the parents to select the most suitable bride/ bride groom when they attain marriageable age. In the life of a Newari girl, she gets married 3 times, first with bell, second with god, sun, before she reaches her puberty and third time with a man. According to traditional views, a girl is supposed

to get married at an early age. The age of a girl is at least 2 to 3 years younger than a boy except in case of jyapoo community where reciprocal case is acceptable practically.

**Table: 10 Attitude Towards Minimum and Maximum Age of Marriage of Girls and Boys According to Age**

Age Group	Age of Boy		Age of Girl	
	Min	Max	Min	Max
Below 30	25	31	23	28
31-40	25	29	22	25
41-50	25	29	22	26
51-60	25	29	22	26
61 and above	28	33	23	26
<b>Average</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>30.2</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>26.2</b>

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

The minimum age of marriage of a boy from the view of all generations was 25.6 years and maximum age of marriage for a boy is 30.2 years while minimum age for a girl is 22.4 years and maximum age for a girl is 26.2 years. The above data also shows many changes have occurred on the attitude towards the right age of marriage for a girls and boys. All the respondents are of the view that the age of girl should be less than the boy. The marriageable age for both girl and boy has delayed because the respondents are of the opinion that both girl and boy should be physically as well as emotionally ready to get married. Besides this, the guardians and also the children first of all for the completion of higher education and pursuance of a career to economically stand on one's feet before getting married.

#### **4.6 Traditional Marriage and Modern Marriage**

Traditional marriage in its forms and patterns are different. Marriage is a spiritual obligation to perform the social and the religious duties toward ancestral communities. In traditional marriage, marriage was desired to obtain a partner for fulfillment of the religious duties rather than for physical sex. Traditional marriage was sacrament rather than civil contract. The traditional marriage of a Newar community is along process which takes about 3- 4 days. Some influence of foreign culture could be seen in some of the procession like band music, cakes etc. Extravagant expenses for feasts and gifts, nevertheless, the celebrations are even more vigor. It is due to the

economic upliftment and the social standard of the people. Newars are popular for their varieties and grandness of their feasts. Not only marriage, but all the small and large festivals are celebrated with grand feasts among family members, relatives and festivals.

**Table: 11 Attitude Towards Traditional Marriage or Modern Marriage by Age**

Age Group	Traditional Marriage	Percentage	ModernMarriage	Percentage
Below 30	15	30	13	26
31-40	6	12	1	2
41-50	5	10	2	4
51-60	2	4	4	8
61-above	2	4	0	0
Total	30	60	20	40

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

It was observed that male and female respondents below 30 years of age who preferred traditional marriage over modern type of marriage is 30% while 26 % of respondents from same age group preferred modern marriage. People from 31 years above however preferred traditional marriage. Few respondents (7) aged 31 and above preferred modern marriage. Those who preferred traditional marriages favored to follow the rituals and processions during marriage. They showed the affinity to follow all the rituals with some modern touch as it is a once in a life time ceremony in their lives.

#### **4.7 Selection of Bride and Bridegroom**

The selection of spouse is an important dimension of marriage. Since Nepalese society is patriarchal, it was the responsibility of the fathers (the head of family) to select the suitable bride of bridegroom. In the traditional Newari society when the selection of bride or bridegroom was prerogative of parents, lames were used to initiate the talks for the selection of the brides and bridegroom and the qualities searched on bride or bridegroom was traditional. The desirable qualities searched were caste, family background, economic status and education. With regard to a bridegroom he should have his own house and a good earning to run his family while for a bride qualities searched were those ideal for household matters like cooking, washing and cleaning as keeping a servant isn't popular in a Newari household which is equally true even in

case of a rich Newar family. When the respondents were asked about who should hold the authority to select bride or bridegroom the following was observed.

**Table: 12 Attitude Towards Authority to Select Bride & Bridegroom by Age**

Age Group	Boys & Girls		Parents		Parents and Children		Parents and relatives	
	Yes	%	Yes	%	Yes	Percentage	Yes	Percentage
Below 30	10	20	1	2	17	34	0	0
31-40	5	10	0	0	2	4	0	0
41-50	0	0	4	8	1	2	2	4
51-60	3	6	0	0	2	4	1	2
61 and above	0	0	1	2	1	2	0	0
Total	18	36	6	12	23	46	3	6

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

When the respondents were asked who they would prefer to select their spouse, majority of the respondents i.e. 46% of all age group replied that parents and children both should have the authority to select the bride and bridegroom followed by those by the believers (36%) that the decision ought to be taken by boys and girls themselves. 17 of the respondents below 30 years of age responded that they would also seek for their parents' approval for the marriage. They wouldn't marry without their parents' approval. The age group of 41 to 60 seems to be more conservative in matter of giving the authority to select the bride or bridegroom. Out of total respondents of 13 falling under that age group, 7 of them gave their opinion that the decision to select the life partner for their children should be undertaken by the senior members of the family, i.e. parents and other relatives. However two senior respondents' opinion somewhat differed from that of respondents between ages 41 to 60. They thought that selection of the bride and bridegroom should be done with general agreement of both children and the parents, not only children, other relative or parents.

Marriage is about choosing life partners. It is taken on different basis like education, caste, family background, economic status, occupation depending upon individual choice. When the

respondents were asked about the ground for the selection of bride or bride groom the following was observed.

**Table: 13 Opinions Towards Ground for the Selection of Bride or Bridegroom**

Age Group	Education		Caste		Family Background		Economic Status		Occupation	
	No	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Below 30	20	40	1	2	3	6	1	2	3	6
31-40	2	4	1	2	2	4	1	2	1	2
41-50	1	2	2	4	3	6	0	0	1	2
51-60	2	4	1	2	2	4	0	0	1	2
61 & above	0	0	1	2	1	2	0	0	0	0
Total	25	50	6	12	11	22	2	4	6	12

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

50% of the respondents of all age group value education as foremost requirement for the selection of their marriage partners. 40% of them belong to age group below 30 years of age. 22% of the total respondents held the view that the family background of the girl or boy made the suitable bride or bridegroom. 12% of each of them valued occupation and caste while only 4% of held the view that economic status of the girl or boys formed the basis for the selection of bride or bridegroom. In case of criteria for the selection of bride groom, the older generation and the females seems to be more conservative, giving more priority to the family background, caste and occupation, than the young generation who seek level of education in spouse

#### **4.8 Love Marriage**

Children in western countries live an independent life as they reach age of 18 years. It is common for them to enter into so many love affairs. Their parents don't panic and hurry for the marriage of the children. However in traditional society like ours love affair of one's young son and daughter is a matter of huge issue. It's a serious problem to a girl's family than a boy. Boys enjoy relatively more freedom than girls. In case of girls, as soon as the family knows about the love affair of their daughters they would hurry for her marriage. That is why young men and women try to hide their love affair until they get the right time and opportunity.

**Table: 14 Attitude Towards Love Marriage by Age**



Age Group	Attitude					
	Positive		Negative		Tolerable	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Below 30	27	54	1	2	0	0
31-40	7	14	0	0	0	0
41-50	1	2	3	6	3	6
51-60	5	10	1	2	0	0
61 and above	2	4	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

Love marriages seem to be more common than arranged marriages nowadays. Majority of respondents i.e. 74% responded positively towards love marriage. Young generation below age 30 significantly favored love marriage while only 1 respondent rejected love marriage. Respondents (4), aged 41 to 60, said love marriages are intolerable to them while for those 3 between 41 to 50, love marriage is tolerable until the couples are compatible to each other who responded negatively towards love marriage belonged to 40-50 group of age. Even those who were 61 and above supported love marriage.

Children seek more freedom in choosing their life partner than blindly agreeing on parents' choice for arranged marriages. Parents too are being more liberal towards the children's choice to decide who they choose their life partner. The major reason for love marriage being popular was found to be better understanding each other's likes, dislikes, interests and emotional attachment which they believe would make their life somewhat easy.

#### **4.9 Inter-caste Marriage**

Caste may be defined as group of families bearing a common name, claiming descent from the same ancestor, following the same traditional occupation and forming a single homogenous identity. These homogenous units interact socially and ritually with their caste groups more than with members of other castes. It is rigid social stratification to prevent impurity of caste group. Intermixing with other caste was punished by excommunication from caste.

When a matrimonial relationship is established between a girl and a boy of different castes, it is called an inter-caste marriage. A Hindu society is differentiated into hierarchical division

according to birth. For example, if a boy from Brahmin community marries a girl from another community than Brahmin community or vice-versa it is an inter-caste marriage or exogamous marriage. Marriage was a parental decision and was conducted within the same caste, so there was not much inter-caste marriage. Breach of caste endogamy was punished by excommunication from caste.

As individual was out-casted from his/ her caste, all his social relation and personal life became miserable. In traditional society, one is allowed to marry in one's caste only. The couple, who marries against this rule, goes through have to face the consequences such as excommunication from family, village, oust from society, deprivation from parental property. In case of Newar community, which itself is divided into a number of sub-castes, a strict rule of endogamy is maintained. Though the couple is accepted by the family, a lot of internal problems seem to arise due to the feeling of high caste and low caste. The daughters may not be accepted at her maternal home for years, not even invited at festivals where mostly the married daughters and sisters are invited.

However, instances of inter-caste marriage are increasing in urban and sub-urban areas. It must be attributed to the liberal attitudes of people regarding the values of marriages. Previously, marriage used to be more a public statement of family's and lineages social and ritual status than the union of individuals.

### Age

Attitude towards inter-caste marriage The respondents were grouped into various age groups who were asked if they favored inter-caste marriages or not, the following result was observed

**Table: 15 Attitude Towards Inter-Caste Marriage by Age**

Age group	Positive attitude		Negative attitude	
	No.	%	No.	%
Below 30	22	44	6	12
31-40	6	12	1	2

41-50	1	2	6	12
51-60	2	4	4	8
61 and above	1	2	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36</b>

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

Among the respondents, 64% of respondents of all age groups i.e. from below 30 years to people of age above 61 years, they had a positive response over inter-caste marriage while 36% of people from same age groups responded negatively towards inter-caste marriage. A total of 22 respondents, under age 30 were mostly among them who favored inter-caste. Similarly, a positive response was gathered from people of age group 31 to 40 as well. On the other hand it was also observed that men and women, aged from 41 to 60 years, were mostly against inter-caste marriage. Out of two respondents of 61 and above age groups one favored inter-caste marriage while next one was against of it.

It shows that it's the younger generation who has liberal attitudes towards casteism. Younger generation is highly influenced by the education through text books, mass media, movies etc. which has lessened the impact of strict rules of caste hierarchy. During their years at colleges and even in workplace they meet people of diverse socio-economic and cultural background that they may fall in love with anybody irrespective of their caste.

On the other hand, the old generation still holds the notion of caste and believes caste as an important dimension of marriage. They still believe that marriage defines their formal relation with other lineages. So must be arranged in strict rules of endogamy and exogamy.

## **Occupation**

Hereditary occupation was the main basis for assigning a particular caste to a particular person. A person inherited an occupation because he was born in that caste. However there has been a major shift in what people prefer to choose as one's occupation for livelihood.

The respondents were found to be involved in various occupations as given in table 5. When the attitude of the respondents towards inter-caste was observed against the occupations, then it was

found that among the respondents involved in various occupations, majority of them were working in various offices as clerks who preferred 10-5 job and out of which 16 of them favored inter-caste marriage while 5 of them didn't prefer inter caste marriage. Housewives, who favored inter-caste marriage was 8% while those who didn't favor was 10%. Among those who were involved in business, 50 % of them favored inter-caste marriage while 50% of them denied inter-caste marriage. Significant number of students i.e. 8 accepted inter-caste marriage while those in traditional occupations artisans and agriculturalists responded negatively towards inter-caste marriage.

**Table: 16 Attitude Towards Inter-Caste Marriage by Occupation**

Occupation	Attitude			
	Positive	Percent	Negative	Percent
Agriculture	1	2	2	4
Artisan	0	0	1	2
Business	3	6	3	6
Clerk	16	32	5	10
House wife	4	8	5	10
Student	8	16	2	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36</b>

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

It was observed that when people moved on to occupations other than their traditional hereditary occupations, it seemed that people possessed to some extent liberal attitude towards caste. Women especially those who were economically in-active and were housewives seem to oppose the very idea of inter-caste marriage. They seem to be more traditional and held conservative values of society. Students, who represent the younger generation, are less influenced by the traditional strict rules of caste hierarchy and so towards the norm of endogamy.

### **Education**

Education is now accessible in urban and semi urban areas than rest of the far flung areas in country. There are many schools, colleges and universities that impart formal education to the people. Government and various other NGOs and INGOs organize awareness programs that aim at raising awareness on the social, political, health, environmental issues. In the past education was confined among wealthy and high ranked people who belonged to higher caste. Brahman

Newars were among those who ever got the chance to obtain education that also gave them a prestigious position in society. Lack of education impoverished people's intellect and so they followed the caste blindly.

**Table: 17 Attitude Towards Inter-Caste Marriage by Educational Attainment**

Education	Attitude			
	Yes	%	No	%
Illiterate	3	6	1	2
Literate	5	10	7	14
Up to SLC	2	4	2	4
SLC above	22	44	8	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36</b>

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

Among those responding positively towards inter-caste marriage 44% of them were SLC above 16% of the same age group didn't favor inter-caste marriage. 14% of the respondents who were just literate didn't prefer inter-caste marriage and 10% of the respondents, who were just literate preferred inter-caste marriage. Out of 4 illiterate respondents, 3 favored inter-caste marriage while only 1 didn't favor inter-caste marriage.

Significant change in the attitude towards inter-caste marriage among the respondents with respect to their education status was not observed in the sample. There were some instances where highly educated respondents, holding masters degree, too felt the necessity of marrying within their own caste for their social prestige, preserving their hereditary occupations, traditional practices and norms.

### **Instances of Inter-Caste Marriage**

Despite their opinions towards the practice of inter-caste marriage, the rate of such practices is undoubtedly increasing in the semi-urban area and urban area. The Researcher asked the respondents if there were any inter-caste marriage in their family or not, the following was observed.

**Table: 18 Instances of Inter-Caste Marriage in Family of Respondents**

Age Group	Intercaste marriage in family			
	Yes	%	No	%
below 30	16	32	12	24
31-40	4	8	3	6
41-50	5	10	2	4
51-60	5	10	1	2
61 and above	2	4	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>36</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2016

When asked if there were such types of marriages in their own family or in their close relatives, it was found out that 64% of the respondents of all age groups had someone married in caste other than their own. There were both Newars and non-Newars. 16 respondents age below 30 had family members marriage inter-caste while 12 didn't have anyone in their family who had inter-caste marriage. In all age groups, there were instances of inter-caste marriage in the family.

Inter-caste marriages are increasing in the society. There were very less such examples. But these days, they have been common. However, it was also found out that such marriages were not initiated by the parents or any of their relatives. The decision were taken by the individuals involved in marriage through romantic love affair in colleges, workplace or through their common acquaintances. Few had their parental approval soon and easily while some other had to struggle to get their parents approval. There were marriages which were against their parents will and still seeking for their approval. Inter-caste marriages were both within Newar sub-castes and outside Newari society.

The following table showed the inter-caste marriage in their family

**Table: 19 Castes and Sub-Castes Details of Inter-Caste Marriages of Respondents**

Caste of Newar	Inter-Caste Marriages
Byanju	Brahmin, Chhetri and Gurung
Dangol	Brahmin Rai
Dhaubanjjar	Shilpakar, Tamakhu
Duwal	Shilpakar
Duwal	Shilpakar

Gaida	Chhetri
Karmacharya	Brahmin
Maka	Brahmin
Maka	Brahmin
Maskey	Suwal
Munankarmi	Brahmin,Nayabha, Jyapoo
Nakarmi	Lama
Napit	Ranjitkar
Ngakhusi	Brahmin
Phaju	Shretha, Tamang
Pradhan	Shakya
Prajapati	Limbu
Prajapati	Manandhar
Prajapati	Rai
Ranjitkar	Nakarmi, Rajbhandari
Ranjitkar	Brahmin, Lama, Shahi
Shakya	Chhetri
Shakya	Karmacharya
Shrestha	Brahmin
Shrestha	Jyapoo
Shrestha	Brahmin, Chhetri , Jyapoo
Shrestha	Brahmin, Chhetri , Jyapoo
Suwal	Chhetri
Tajale	Shilpakar
Vaidya	Chhetri

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

The study included 30 respondents, belonging to 21 various Newar sub-castes, who had at least one member in their family with inter-caste marriage. The above table presents the caste of the respondent and the caste of the member who belonged to different caste before they got married into the respondent's family caste. It was found that marriage within Newar sub-castes, (however, still considered inter-caste) was 19 and marriage outside the Newar community was 25. Only one

such instance of inter-caste marriage with impure caste was found in the study. One of the respondents brother who is a *Prajapatiboy* married a Shahi girl (butcher) who now are living abroad.

So inter-caste marriages were observed both in low caste as well as in high caste Newars and non Newars. These inter-caste marriages were concluded after love affair between the marrying individuals rather than by the parents themselves. Marriages outside Newars were more than in Newar community itself. This may cause traditional Newari society to experience non Newari culture. This modification isn't easy and rapid but it is obvious.

It is easier said than done. When it was asked whether they would like to get married outside their own caste or not, the result was different from their previous opinions regarding inter- caste marriage.

**Table: 20 Opinion Towards Preference of Self-Marriage in Other Castes by Age**

Age group	Attitude			
	In favor of		Against of	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Below 30	11	22	17	34
31-40	5	10	2	4
41-50	1	2	6	12
51-60	3	6	3	6
61 and above	1	2	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>58</b>

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

When asked if s/he would like to get married outside his or her caste, only 42% of people favored self-marrying outside one's caste. Half of the respondents who willed to get married were below the age 30. People responding positively liked the cultural amalgamation that would accompany with inter-caste marriages. Few also emphasized individual choices for inter-caste marriage while other attributed for the modern age and opined not to be sticking to caste for marriage.

Significant others i.e. 58 % of the respondents of all age group didn't show will to get married outside their caste. Surprisingly, the percentage of respondents, below the age of 30, who didn't favor themselves having inter-caste marriage was 34%. They denied not because they support



caste, but due to the fear of being disregarded by their parents. Some were found believing that inter-caste marriages brought modification in their own culture. Female mostly were found to be thoughtful regarding adjustment issues in the husband's family and unawareness to all the norms and traditions to which they are unknown. Some also expressed for their own unwillingness to get into another culture and traditions.

Joint family system is a norm of traditional Hindu society. In Newari society too, individuals share their kitchen with a number of other members linked up by blood or marriage, live under the same roof which makes up their family. Joint family provides social security, labor supply for agriculture and emotional support to all the members of society. In today's scenario, the large family system is disintegrating into small families. People in small family enjoy more individual freedom, economic independence than living in joint family. But however, these families are still much linked to the other members of the large family.

**Table: 21 Preference of Inter-caste Marriage by Type of Family of Respondents**

Attitude of inter-caste	Joint family		Nuclear family	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Yes	9	18	23	46
No	4	8	14	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>74</b>

*Source: Field Survey, 2016*

When the attitude of the people were observed against the type of family from where they belonged, it was found that 46% who responded positively belonged to nuclear family. Even, respondents, living in joint family who supported inter-caste marriage was 18 % while those who didn't support were 4% .Still as many as 14 individuals who lived in a nuclear family was against inter-caste marriage. It was found that significant number of individuals in spite of living in a nuclear family, preferred marriage in their own caste than inter-caste.

## **CHAPTER-V: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

### **5.1 Summary**

One of the basic functions of marriage is to create a family. In our study too, we found that a total of 37 respondents were living in a nuclear family and 39 of the total respondents desired to live in a small family. Majority of the younger generation is slowly leaving the norm of living in a joint family system. They preferred independent household. Women of age group above 30 years preferred nuclear family because they can better take care of their children. Those who preferred joint family they favored joint family because one gets emotional attachment and love from other members of family and for social security they receive from large family size.

Newars are traditionally a small world in themselves. Newars are dependent upon each other economically through different occupations. Many of them were either tradesmen or farmers. Males were economically active while women managed household chores. In our observation we found that respondents below 30 were involved in various occupations mainly majority of them working as clerks in various offices. While a significant number of the respondents was still studying. Occupation is now related with prestige of individuals and those once who were farmers have left their farming job for other businesses and professions. They were slowly leaving their hereditary occupations for modern occupations. When these respondents were asked the type of job they would prefer for their sons and daughters, they preferred business for their sons while clerical jobs for their daughters. There has been a great change in the role of women. It's due to women education that had led to women's empowerment and enhanced entrepreneurial skills that their role in economic partnership has increased. Very few of them are only confined to household chores. This is shown by the data that even the older generation respondents liked their daughters to be involved in some sort of income generating activities. Only one of the respondents preferred daughter to be a housewife.

Marriage and family are the oldest and most universal institutions found in human societies. Marriage fulfills many purposes in one's individual and social life. It is concerned with reproduction, socialization of the individuals, companionship and psychological satisfaction and providing legitimacy to the birth of an individual. Marriage is a compulsory karma and dharma and nobody could deny or get excuse from it. The unmarried man/ woman were regarded unholy and unsuitable for religious and cultural activities. With regard to necessity of marriage only 5 of the respondents who belonged to younger generation age below 30 denied the necessity of marriage. It shows that young generation is having a different view than what exists in society since time immemorial. While all other respondents of all age group said that marriage was necessary.

The younger individuals preferred companionship as the important purpose of marriage. Traditional aim of marriage do not seem to influence the male and females of young generation since they give more importance to companionship than social and religious obligation and old age security as the main purpose of marriage while few older generation had some traditional views regarding aim of marriage. Comparatively, female of 30 years above seem to have traditional views regarding marriage as they pointed out the social norms and support for old

age that are associated with marriage. It shows that women are more traditional than men. Conversely male have more liberal views toward traditional norms and values than their female counterparts.

Age is an important factor of marriage in traditional Hindu and Buddhist society. According to traditional views, a girl is supposed to get married at an early age. Nepali (1950:201) writes that among the Newars, the general view is that marriage should take place between the ages of 16 to 20 and the bride as far as possible should be 2 to 3 years younger than the groom. In our study the view seemed to persist. However the age of marriage for a boy and a girl has been increased. The minimum age of marriage for a boy from point of view of all generations was 25.6 years while maximum age was 30.2 years while minimum age for a girl was 22.4 years while maximum age for a girl was 26.2 years. Majority of older generation said that a boy should get married between the age of 25 to 29 while the younger generation said it was 25 to 31 which is much later. Even age of marriage for the girl was elongated by the younger generation than the older generation. It shows that age at marriage for a boy as well as girl has been extended because of various causes like education, occupation or pursuance of career. This definitely affects the traditional system of marriage.

Traditional type of marriage is a long process which takes about 3 to 4 days. It is interesting to find out that Newars of the study area still prefer traditional marriage over modern marriage. They prefer to follow the ritual practices during marriage. Thirty of them favored following the processions of traditional marriage because they have the affinity to follow the rituals and it is the once in a life ceremony. Even if we compared between old and new generation, those who liked traditional marriage over modern marriage is more. Feasts and other expenses accompanying marriage has become extravagant than before in traditional marriages. Extravagant expenses are often associated with one's status and prestige. So people spend a lot of money in marriage ceremonies. It is because people's economic status has been upgraded and due to influence from outside.

The selection of spouse is an important dimension of marriage. Since Nepalese society is patriarchal, it was the responsibility of the fathers (the head of family) to select the suitable bride of bridegroom. In the traditional Newari society when the selection of bride or bridegroom was prerogative of parents, lames were used to initiate the talks for the selection of the brides and bridegroom and the qualities searched on bride or bridegroom was traditional. The desirable

qualities searched were caste, family background, economic status and education. With regard to a bridegroom he should have his own house and a good earning to run his family while for a bride qualities searched were those ideal for household matters like cooking, washing and cleaning as keeping a servant isn't popular in a Newari household which is equally true even in case of a rich Newar family.

The data showed that not only parents but children also hold equal right for selecting a spouse. 23 of the total respondents favored that both parents and children should have their consent for the selection of bride or bridegroom while 10 of the respondents favored that children have the first and foremost authority to select their partner which mostly belonged to young generation because marriage is an important decision and they want to take the decision themselves. They feel that Females seem to seek consent from parents more than males. It shows that people are slowly but steadily enjoying the right to select their partners. Consent of parents and other relatives of the family is a secondary factor. Only 9 of them favored the traditional way of selecting a spouse through *lames*, who mostly belonged to older generation. They thought that parents can make the best decision for their children than children themselves. With regards to the ground for the selection of spouse, 50% of all aged and sex respondents gave the foremost priority to education. Education nowadays has become an integral part of life. It's due to education that modern way of life has been possible. Education has enabled the access to global world due to which the traditional and unconventional practices are slowly being replaced. Similarly family background of the bride or bridegroom still is an important criterion to be fulfilled by the bride or bridegroom as 22% of the respondents favored it. Mostly female respondents seek family background of their spouses than the male counterpart. This indicates that females are more traditional than males. The traditional qualities viz. caste which used to be emphasized for the selection of a bride or bridegroom is being given away to the preference of new qualities. Consistent with the urbanized structure of the society toward which the Newari society is moving, modern occupation is given primacy than the traditional ones by those who preferred occupation as the selection criteria of bridegroom

There's been a dramatic change towards the opinion regarding love marriages from people of all generations. The marriages of old generation used to be arranged by parents and relatives and they used to marry the girl or boy as selected by them. In my study 74% of respondents from all generations had positive attitude towards love marriages. The major cause for favoring love

marriage was found that the girl and boy would know each other's feelings, behavior, interests, likes and dislikes very well before marriage and they responded that they won't have adjustment issues. The marriage would be everlasting. They wouldn't have to hesitate with each other. As the aim of marriage has changed from religious duty to more for companionship love marriages have become more common and popular. Only 4 of the respondents were against it and that too belonged to older generation who hold the view that love marriages can infest their lineage due to chance of impurity it can bring. However, there's a tendency of progressiveness with regard to love marriage in our society.

Of the total respondents, 64% of them appear to be in favor of inter-caste marriage while 36% of them are against it. This shows that majority of the respondents favor it. When we compare the older and new generation 56% of younger generation do favor inter-caste while 22% of the older generation are against it. If we look at the data moving from older generation to younger generation there's a progressive increase in the proportion of respondents favoring inter-caste marriage. And there's a decreasing tendency in not favoring inter-caste marriage.

The data also showed that people following modern occupations like professions and clerical jobs seem to be more favoring inter-caste marriage. Besides, students who fall under marriageable age also seem to be more flexible regarding castes. But women who are housewives seem to be more conservative regarding inter-caste marriage than working women. They seem to be more ritualistic and traditional. We can conclude that young people adopting new occupations are less conservative and caste for them is secondary factor. The importance of caste factor for marriage seems to be decreasing with people adopting modern jobs. Rapid means of transportation, mass communication expose Nepalese to outer world changing the values, norms, behavior and patterns of society.

With regard to literacy rate and attitude of people towards inter-caste marriage, highly educated people showed flexibility towards caste. Out of 30 respondents who were literate above metric level, favored inter-caste marriage and clear majority responses were not observed from illiterate and semi-literate people.

With regard to the individuals living in a nuclear or joint family, it was found out that even majority of the people who belonged to a joint family had a positive attitude towards inter-caste marriage. Observation showed that 18% of the individuals belonging to a joint family favored

inter-caste marriage while only 8% of them were against it. Inter-caste system of marriage is popular among the nuclear families because of independent life, busy schedule and education.

But in practice there's a divergence from the expressed attitude. When asked if one would like to get married outside one's own caste only 42% of the respondents of all age group had positive attitude towards self-marriage in other castes than own while majority of the respondents i.e. 58% of the respondents were didn't favor self-marriage in other castes. This clearly shows that there seems to be a great divergence than expressed attitudes. It suggests that apart from individual choice favoring or not favoring inter-caste marriage, social structure and old age tradition still significantly exerts its own pressure on actual practices.

This attitude is also shown in the instances of inter-caste marriages in the respondents' family. Although 16 of the respondents aged below 30 have at least one example of inter-caste marriage in the family only 11 of them would also like to get married outside one's caste. If compared in totality 64% of the respondents had someone married off in other castes than one's but only 42% of the respondents would like to get inter-caste marriage.

Another aspect relating to inter-caste marriage is also notable. The number of marriages outside the Newar community was 25 and within the Newar sub-castes (still considered inter-caste by the respondents) was 19. Thus with regard to inter-caste marriage we may conclude that the attitude towards inter-caste marriage has changed in favor of it. Many inter-caste marriages are being witnessed not within the Newar sub-castes but also outside non-Newarcommunity..It shows that Newari society is being liberal in terms of its strict rule of endogamy. Nevertheless, inter-caste marriages are not easily accepted by the members of Newari community. However marriage of so called untouchables or impure castes people with higher caste people wasn't so common.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The present study examined the attitude of people in Kamal Vinayak, Bhaktapur towards various aspects of marriage focusing on inter-caste marriage.

The result of the survey shows that intellectual atmosphere, association with peer group and global contact with outer world influence people. These factors in turn have effect on the attitude of people towards caste which has been liberalized up to some extent. The traditional norms and practices regarding endogamy have been changing. However, marriage outside one's own caste in a way depends upon the level of caste to one's own caste.

Nepal is a multiethnic kingdom with many ethnic and caste groups with different language, customs and culture. The Newars claim to be the original inhabitants of Kathmandu valley. The Newars are divided into two religious groups viz. Hinduism and Buddhism. Within the Newar community, there are many sub castes groups which are categorized on the basis of their hereditary occupations.

Intellectual atmosphere, association with peer group and global contact with outer world influence the young people to acquire the new ideas to modify the traditional practices. Young generations don't blindly follow the norms passed down from their parents and grandparents. As a result, there's some divergence in the traditional normative pattern and liberal attitude in each generation that follow. Modernization creates new ideas. Increasing modernization has tremendously affected Nepalese society. Changes have been observed in basic institutions like family and marriage. The force of modernization is liberalizing people's attitude toward various aspects of marriage. For instance majority of young people believe that marriage fulfills the purpose of companionship and they favor love marriage and inter-caste marriage. They want to discuss regarding marriage with their parents. Nevertheless, they want to make final decision of their own. The liberal attitude of young generation shows the flexibility in matters of inter-caste marriage.

In traditional agrarian society, the demand for labor supply brought all the family members under one roof. Mutual obligation and loyalty to the family was a major concern. Therefore extended joint family system was a norm but today people become more individual oriented and urbanization as reshaped the family structure. Most of the families desire to live in nuclear families in urban areas. Even though traditionally Newars preferred joint family system most of them however live in nuclear type of family. People live away from their parental home revealing disintegrating the joint living. The process of urbanization is affecting the structure of family. But it cannot be said that the joint family is totally disintegrating because even the highly educated people who are independent and living separate from their parents still desire to live with their parents in their old age.

It shows that in some respects the character and nature of family and marriage are slowly changing, but in other aspects, we still see the persistence of traditional norms and values.

Traditional marriage was rigid. It had strict rules and regulations. Marriage was compulsory for all individuals because unmarried person was regarded unholy and incomplete. Main purpose of



marriage was dharma and progeny. In order to pay ancestral debt and ensure the future of a family, son was necessary.

Marriage and family are the oldest and the universal institutions found in all societies. These are the basic institutions of society. Marriage is the institutionalized and legitimate form of man and woman's relationship based upon sex. It is related with the procreation of children, their upbringing, descent and inheritance. Therefore, marriage is socially and legally approved relationship to have children and right to sexual relation.

In a joint family, all the members stayed under the same roof and had common kitchen. They performed all the ceremonies, religious rites and duties jointly. The family was self sufficient. So the social contact with others was restricted or confined to blood relations only. With increase in population, people moved from one place to another in order to supply the essentials of life. They weren't always following their hereditary occupation but also involved in economic activities created by industrial revolution. Technological advancement affected people's hereditary occupation. Similarly, educational attainment developed more independent and secularized feelings. Individualism means new identity, consciousness and attitude towards the established social norms and institutions. These all lead to geographical and social mobility, people's participation, social contact and interaction with outer world.

Some other features are significant. Although traditionally for fulfilling religious and social obligations, the Newars of the study area nowadays seem to have taken a lesser attitude towards these traditional expectations. The majority of both males and females, regard marriage necessary because of the need for companionship as the first preference and for social and religious objectives as the second preference.

The father had the full rights and obligation to find the mates for their children. And the children had to accept the parents' decision. Traditional marriage was more a union between two joint families than between two young couples. As a result there were little chances of romantic love before marriage limiting the number of love marriages. Nowadays the cases of love marriages are increasing. It is because of the opportunity of free mixing of girls and boys in colleges, working place and internet. The study also reveals that romantic love is the main cause behind increasing number of inter-caste marriages in society

Considerable change has been observed in the age of marriage of a boy and girl too. Completion of higher education and job acquisition for economic independence make marriage at later age. This view is held by both parents and children.

Similarly people's attitude towards forms of marriage and family has also been changed. People are preferring nuclear family to joint family for economic independence and better care of children. Nowadays the qualities expected of a bride or a bridegroom in a marriage is no longer traditional. Education, occupation and family background score top priority in the selection of a spouse. The degree of preference given to each modern quality vary from one family to another and from one individual to another depending upon the degree of influence experienced by the person from outside world

With regard to inter-caste marriage, it was found that the people's attitude towards inter-caste marriage has undergone a huge change. People are slowly accepting inter-caste marriages in the family. As many as 44 instances of inter-caste marriage were found in the family of the respondents out of which 19 inter-caste marriages were within the Newars and 25 were from non Newars. However bit of hesitation still existed due to fear of being ostracized from *Dewali* puja and other ceremonies where fukee members take part.

In conclusion we can say that Modernization is modifying the attitude of the Newars. Young people are gaining broader outlook and liberal attitude. They show liberal thinking towards traditional conservative values of marriage and family. Education, assimilation, acculturation and diffusion change their ideology. Change in ideology brings change in spheres of society. Since marriage and family are the basic social institution related with the social structure, change in social structure is inevitable which is possible only through behavioral change and not only through change in attitude. This has caused change in the traditional patterns of social institutions like marriage and family among the Newars.

Nepali society is changing from its traditional form under the impact of various forces like education, urbanization, sanskritization and westernization. These factors are affecting the social, economic, political fields and cultural pattern of society and its social process. In today's competitive hour, education and limited resources cause people to take new occupation for individual. For better occupation, people pursue higher education. People migrate to urban and semi-urban areas in search of education, employment, health facilities and other facilities. The

social and geographical mobility weakens kinship bond. Young and independent individuals make their own choice in occupation and life. New ideas and aspirations are developing through global contact and there is tussle between young and old, change and continuity respectively.

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**APPENDIX**

Questionnaire Schedule

**A. Family**

- 1. Full Name of the interviewee .....
- 2. Age .....
- 3. Sex .....
- 4. Religion .....
- 5. Address .....
- 6. Marital Satus .....
- 7. Educational Status
  - a) Illiterate    b) Literate
  - c) Metric      d) Metric Above
- 8. Occupation
  - a)Business    b) Clerical job
  - c)Artisan     d) Profession
  - e)Agriculture f)Social Service
  - g)Student    h)House wife

**Family and Occupation**

- 9. Which family do you belong?
  - a)Joint Family
  - b)Nuclear Family
- 10. How many members are there in your family?
- 11. What occupation would you like to have for your son?
  - a)Business    b) Clerical job
  - c)Artisan     d) Profession
  - e)Agriculture f)Social Service
  - g)Student    h)House wife
- 12. What occupation would you like to have for your daughter?
  - a) Business    b) Clerical job

- c) Artisan      d) Profession
- e) Agriculture   f) Social Service
- g) Student      h) House wife

13. Which type of family do you prefer?

- a) Joint Family
- b) Nuclear Family

14. Why do you like nuclear family?

- a) Children are better taken care of      b) Independent household
- c) Less expenditure      d) Privacy

15. Why do you like joint family?

- a) Emotional attachment      b) Social security
- c) Economic support      d) Labor supply

## **B. Marriage**

16. Is it necessary to marry?

- a) Yes      b) No

17. Why should a person marry?

- a) Social norm
- b) Religious duty
- c) To continue family line
- d) To support one's old age
- e) Economic partnership
- f) To have life partner
- e) To meet sexual desire

18. Which type of marriage do you prefer?

- a) Traditional marriage      b) Modern marriage

19. Who do you think should have the authority to select marriage partner?

- a) Boy and girl themselves      b) Parents
- c) Both parents and children      d) Parents and relatives

20. What should be the proper age at marriage?

- a) Boy      Min..... Max.....
- b) Girl      Min..... Max.....





