

## **Views of Maharashtra Postgraduates about Dowry, Divorce, Remarriage and Singlehood**

Sumangala Badami<sup>1</sup>, Vishala Patnam<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"Postgraduate Human Development and Family Studies, Marathwada Agricultural University, Parbhani, Maharashtra State".

<sup>2</sup> (Head, Dept of Human Development and Family Studies, Marathwada Agricultural University, Parbhani, Maharashtra State, India)

---

**Abstract:** Three hundred Maharashtra postgraduate students (21-26 yrs) were chosen at random from purposely selected seven colleges of Parbhani town, Maharashtra state. Seventy two percent of the sample PG students hailed from middle SES group and the remaining 23 percent from low SES. The data was collected personally interviewing the PG students based on the interview schedule cum checklist. Majority of the PG boys and girls expressed unfavourable views about taking or giving dowry in marriage. Significantly a higher percentage of the Maharashtra PG girls reported positive views about divorce for valid reasons as compared to their male counterparts. Majority of them had favourable views about remarriage of divorced / widow / widower for the reason of preventing problems of singlehood and to have a partner to lead a happy life and majority of them have not favoured singlehood for the reasons - difficult to live without a companion and exploitation of self by people. Significant differences were found in their views based on SES and gender.

**Keywords:-** Dowry, Divorce, Remarriage, Singlehood, Marriage, Marriage trends, Mate selection,

---

### **I. Introduction**

Emotional stability of a society is lined with the institution of marriage. Matrimonial relations affect not only happiness of the individuals they are also concerned with social and ethical norms. The institution of marriage has facts which are both public as well as private in nature; therefore, it is of vital importance to society. The marital relationship usually involve some kind of contract, either written or specified by the tradition, which defines the partners' rights and obligations to each other, to their children if they have and to their relatives. Marriage is an important economic decision. It has impact on children's outcome and long term inequality in them. The winds of socio-cultural changes affecting marriage and mate selection. Marriage is the backbone of society. Marriage like a successful career requires various preparations. A mature approach to marriage requires an understanding of its various aspects like psychological, sexual, social, economical and spiritual. It matures with time and grows sweeter with age. The responsibilities of the parents are greater today than in the past as the conditions are changing. Mayuri (1999) studied youth and adults of Baroda and found that majority of the youth and adults of Baroda expressed both advantages and disadvantages of the dowry practices, while similar findings were reported in the study conducted on slum girls of Parbhani town (MS) by Deshpande and Patnam(2000).

### **II. Methodology**

Three hundred Maharashtra postgraduate students in the age range of 21-26 yrs were chosen at random from purposely selected seven colleges of Parbhani town, Parbhani district, Maharashtra state. Out of the seven colleges three colleges belonged to Swami Ramanand Tirth University and the remaining four to the Marathwada Agricultural University, Parbhani. The data pertaining to the study was collected personally interviewing the PG students in their respective college campus based on the interview schedule cum checklist. The SES of PG the students was assessed by administering revised socio-economic status scale of Kuppuswamy (2009).The collected data was pooled, statistically analyzed and discussed below. Seventy two percent of the sample PG students hailed from middle SES group and the remaining 23 percent from low SES.

### **III. Results And Discussion**

**Table 1** indicates that irrespective of SES, 80- 95 percent PG boys and girls expressed that dowry neither should be taken nor given in marriage for the reasons that already parents spend a lot on upbringing of girls and boys and making them independent followed by it is an illegal social practice (83 - 85 %), it can leads to ill treatment of married women (61 - 63%) and the couple must try to earn enough to fulfill their needs (29 - 33 %). Significantly a higher percentages of PG girls expressed unfavorable views against dowry system as compared

to their counterpart PG boys. On the other hand, a meager percent (5%) PG girls and 19 percent PG boys stated that dowry must be given or must be accepted in marriage as it helps in solving family problems (48 - 100%) and 52 percent only PG boys stated that dowry comes in handy for establishing new home. It is interesting to record that none of the PG girls in low SES and meager percentage (6%) of PG girls in middle SES expressed favorable views for dowry system and the corresponding percentages of PG boys for it were 24 and 18. In low SES group all the PG girls and 76 percent PG boys expressed unfavorable views towards dowry system. The corresponding percentages in middle SES group were 93 and 82. These results are in favour of the findings reported in the research studies of Bharati and Patnam (1995), Joglekar (1999) and Mayuri (1999) and not in agreement with the findings reported in the studies of Deshpande and Patnam (2000) and Nadagouda and Saroja (1990), which clearly indicate that educated youth are getting well aware of the ill effects of dowry system and developing egalitarian attitude towards life partner or their modern outlook made them to develop unfavourable attitude towards dowry system.

**Table 2** elaborates the views of postgraduate students about divorce and their reasons for it. Irrespective of SES, 62 percent PG boys and 44 percent PG girls expressed unfavorable views about divorce for the reasons that couple can face family and social problems (77%) followed by children are deprived of both parental love and care (54 - 74%) and divorced parent has to shoulder dual responsibilities of father and mother (32 - 39%). Significantly a higher percentages of the PG boys expressed unfavorable views about divorce as compared to their counterpart PG girls. While it was vice-versa with regard to the reason that children get deprived of both parental love and care. However, on the other hand 38 percent PG boys and 56 percent PG girls expressed favorable views about divorce. Significantly a higher percentage of PG girls developed favorable views about divorce as compared to their counterpart boys for the reasons that it helps to get rid of pain in marriage (47 - 56%) and to put an end to interpersonal bitter relationship (44 - 52%).

The trends of results were almost similar to PG boys and girls in low SES and middle SES groups with regard to their views about divorce. These findings are in contrast to the findings reported by Goldstein and Kenney (2001), which indicates that the youth particularly the PG girls were more practical and had modern outlook towards marriage and personal life.

**Table 3** illustrates the views of postgraduate students about remarriage of divorced / widow / widower and their reasons for it. Irrespective of SES, 69 - 82 percent PG boys and girls expressed favourable views about remarriage of divorced / widow / widower for the reasons it prevents problems of singlehood (72- 73%), to get a life partner for leading happy life and for maintenance of family (57 - 61%). In low SES group 66 percent each PG boys and girls expressed favourable view about remarriage of divorced / widow / widower. The corresponding percentages of it in middle SES were 70 and 88. Significantly a higher percentage of middle SES PG girls expressed favourable views about remarriage of divorced / widow / widower compared to their counterpart PG boys. Such significant difference was not found with regard to it in low SES group. There were no significant differences in the reasons given by them in low SES and middle SES groups. Irrespective of SES, 31 percent and 18 percent PG girls expressed unfavorable views about remarriage of divorced / widow / widower for the reason that it would be difficult to adjust with new life partner and marital life (100%). Thirty three percent each PG boys and girls in low SES group expressed unfavourable view about remarriage of divorced / widow / widower. The corresponding percentages in middle SES group were 30 and 12. Significantly a higher percentage of PG boys in middle SES group expressed unfavourable views about remarriage of divorced / widow / widower. However no significant differences were recorded in the reasons given by the PG students in low SES and middle SES groups. These findings are in agreement with the inferences drawn in the study of Gunjal and Patnam (2001). The results also indicate that the sample PG students have realistic and practical approach towards remarriage of divorced / widow / widower due to the impact of mass media and relaxation in customs of society.

**Table 4** illustrates the views of postgraduate students regarding singlehood and their reasons for it. Irrespective of SES, 23 percent PG boys and 31 percent PG girls expressed positive views about singlehood life / unmarried life for the reasons that it helps in leading care free and independent life and in perceiving life goals (100%). The trend of results in low SES and middle SES groups based on gender of PG students was almost similar. Overall no significant differences were found in their positive views about singlehood life based on gender and their socio-economic status. On the other hand 77 percent PG boys and 69 percent PG girls irrespective of SES expressed negative views about singlehood life for the reasons that it is difficult to lead singlehood life without a companion (80 - 83%), people exploit singlehood persons and his / her resources (62 - 66%) and it may lead to behavioural or personal disorders if not involved in constructive activities (58 - 62%). Similar type of results was recorded in low SES and middle SES groups based on gender of PG students. No significant differences were found in the negative views of sample PG students about singlehood life.

IV. Conclusion

A large majority of the Maharashtra PG boys and girls expressed unfavourable views about taking and giving dowry in marriage. Significantly a higher percentage of the Maharashtra PG girls reported positive views about divorce for valid reasons as compared to their male counterparts. Majority of them favoured remarriage of divorced / widow / widower for the reason of preventing problems of singlehood and to have a partner to lead a happy life and majority of them have not favoured singlehood for the reasons that it is difficult to live without a companion and exploitation of self by people. Significant differences are found in their views based on SES and gender.

Table 1 Opinions of postgraduate students regarding dowry and their reasons

Opinions and reasons of PG students	SES group and percentages of postgraduate students								
	Irrespective of SES		t / Z values	Low SES		t / Z values	Middle SES		t / Z Values
	Boys (150)	Girls (150)		Boys (42)	Girls (42)		Boys (108)	Girls (108)	
<b>Favourable views</b> Dowry should be given /to be accepted in marriage	19.33 (29)	4.66 (7)	3.75*	23.80 (10)	---	---	17.59 (19)	6.48 (7)	2.75**
<b>Reasons</b> Comes in handy for establishing new home	51.72 (15)	---	---	50.00 (5)	---	---	52.63 (10)	---	---
It helps in solving family problems	48.27 (14)	100.00 (7)	5.77*	50.00 (5)	---	---	47.36 (9)	100.00 (7)	5.30**
<b>Unfavourable views</b> Dowry should not be given/ accepted in marriage	80.66 (121)	95.33 (143)	3.75*	76.19 (32)	100.00 (42)	3.42*	82.40 (89)	93.51 (101)	2.75**
<b>Reasons</b> Parents spend a lot on upbringing of girls and boys and in making them independent	84.29 (102)	100.00 (143)	5.33*	93.75 (30)	100.00 (42)	1.40 <sup>N</sup> <sub>s</sub>	80.89 (72)	100.00 (101)	5.00**
The couple must try to earn enough to fulfill their needs	28.92 (35)	32.86 (47)	0.80 <sup>NS</sup>	31.25 (10)	35.71 (15)	0.40 <sup>N</sup> <sub>s</sub>	28.08 (25)	31.68 (32)	0.50 <sup>NS</sup>
It is an illegal social practice	85.12 (103)	83.21 (119)	0.40 <sup>NS</sup>	87.50 (28)	88.00 (37)	0.12 <sup>N</sup> <sub>s</sub>	84.26 (75)	81.18 (82)	0.50 <sup>NS</sup>
It can lead to ill treatment of married women	63.63 (77)	61.53 (83)	0.33 <sup>NS</sup>	46.87 (15)	59.52 (25)	1.30 <sup>N</sup> <sub>s</sub>	69.66 (62)	62.37 (63)	1.16 <sup>NS</sup>

Figures in parentheses indicate number of PG students  
 NS - Non Significant \* - P<0.05 level \*\* - P < 0.01 level

Table 2 Views of postgraduate students about divorce and reasons for it

Views of postgraduate students about divorce and its reasons	SES group and percentages of postgraduate students								
	Irrespective of SES		t / Z values	Low SES		t / Z values	Middle SES		t / Z Values
	Boys (150)	Girls (150)		Boys (42)	Girls (42)		Boys (108)	Girls (108)	
<b>Unfavourable views about divorce</b>	62.00 (93)	44.00 (66)	3.00**	71.42 (30)	33.33 (14)	3.80**	58.33 (63)	48.14 (52)	1.66 <sup>NS</sup>
Children get deprived of both parental love and care	53.76 (50)	74.24 (49)	3.00**	60.00 (18)	78.57 (11)	1.80 <sup>NS</sup>	50.79 (32)	73.07 (38)	2.87**

*Views Of Maharashtra Postgraduates About Dowry, Divorce, Remarriage And Singlehood*

Divorced parents has to shoulder dual responsibilities of father + mother	32.25 (30)	39.39 (26)	1.00 <sup>NS</sup>	33.3 3 (10)	42.8 5 (6)	0.95 <sup>NS</sup>	31.7 4 (20)	38.4 6 (20)	0.87 <sup>NS</sup>
Couple can face family and social problems	77.41 (72)	77.27 (51)	---	83.3 3 (25)	71.4 2 (10)	1.20 <sup>NS</sup>	74.6 0 (47)	78.8 4 (41)	0.50 <sup>NS</sup>
<b>Favourable views about divorce</b>	38.00 (57)	56.00 (84)	3.00 <sup>**</sup>	28.5 7 (12)	66.6 6 (28)	3.80 <sup>**</sup>	41.6 6 (45)	51.8 5 (56)	1.42 <sup>NS</sup>
To get rid of pain in marriage	47.36 (27)	55.95 (47)	1.00 <sup>NS</sup>	50.0 0 (6)	46.4 2 (13)	0.20 <sup>NS</sup>	46.6 6 (21)	60.7 1 (34)	1.55 <sup>NS</sup>
To put an end to interpersonal bitter relations	52.63 (30)	44.04 (37)	1.00 <sup>NS</sup>	50.0 0 (6)	53.5 7 (15)	0.51 <sup>NS</sup>	53.3 3 (24)	39.2 8 (22)	1.55 <sup>NS</sup>

Figures in parentheses indicate number of PG students  
 NS - Non Significant \* - P<0.05 level \*\* - P < 0.01 level

**Table 3 Views of post graduate students about remarriage of divorced / widow / widower and reasons for it**

Views of PG students about remarriage and reasons for it	SES group and percentages of postgraduate students								
	Irrespective of SES		t / Z values	Low SES		t / Z values	Middle SES		t / Z values
	Boys (150)	Girls (150)		Boys (42)	Girls (42)		Boys (108)	Girls (108)	
<b>Favourable views about remarriage</b>	69.33 (104)	82.00 (123)	2.16*	66.66 (28)	66.66 (28)	---	70.37 (76)	87.96 (95)	2.83**
To get a life partner for leading happy life and for maintenance of family	57.69 (60)	60.97 (75)	0.50 <sup>NS</sup>	64.28 (18)	64.28 (18)	---	55.26 (42)	60.00 (57)	0.71 <sup>NS</sup>
Preventing problems of singlehood	72.11 (75)	73.17 (90)	0.16 <sup>NS</sup>	60.71 (17)	67.85 (19)	0.70 <sup>NS</sup>	76.31 (58)	74.73 (71)	0.33 <sup>NS</sup>
<b>Unfavourable views about remarriage</b>	30.66 (46)	18.00 (27)	2.00*	33.33 (14)	33.33 (14)	---	29.62 (32)	12.03 (13)	2.83**
Difficult to adjust with new life partner and marital life	100.00 (46)	100.00 (27)	---	100.0 0 (14)	100.0 0 (14)	---	100.0 0 (32)	100.00 (13)	---

Figures in parentheses indicate number of PG students  
 NS - Non Significant \* - P<0.05 level \*\* - P < 0.01 level

**Table 4 Views of postgraduate students regarding singlehood and reasons for it**

Views of PG students about singlehood	SES group and percentages of postgraduate students								
	Irrespective of SES		t / Z value	Low SES		t / Z value	Middle SES		t / Z Values
	Boys (150)	Girls (150)		Boys (42)	Girls (42)		Boys (108)	Girls (108)	
<b>Favourable views about singlehood life</b>	23.33 (35)	30.66 (46)	1.40 <sup>N</sup> <sub>s</sub>	23.8 0 (10)	38.0 9 (16)	1.50 <sup>N</sup> <sub>s</sub>	23.1 4 (25)	27.7 7 (30)	0.66 <sup>NS</sup>
Reasons Helps in leading carefree & independent life	100.0 0 (35)	100.0 0 (46)	---	100. 00 (10)	100. 00 (16)	---	100. 00 (25)	100. 00 (30)	---
Helps in pursuing life goals	100.0 0	100.0 0	---	100. 00	100. 00	---	100. 00	100. 00	---

*Views Of Maharashtra Postgraduates About Dowry, Divorce, Remarriage And Singlehood*

	(35)	(46)		(10)	(16)		(25)	(30)	
<b>Unfavourable views about singlehood life</b>	76.66 (115)	69.33 (104)	1.40 <sup>N</sup> <sub>S</sub>	76.1 9	61.9 0	1.50 <sup>N</sup> <sub>S</sub>	76.8 5	72.2 2	0.66 <sup>NS</sup>
<b>Reasons</b>				(32)	(26)		(83)	(78)	
Difficult to lead singlehood life without a companion	82.60 (95)	80.76 (84)	0.40 <sup>N</sup> <sub>S</sub>	100. 00	96.1 5	1.33 <sup>N</sup> <sub>S</sub>	75.9 0	75.6 4	0.42 <sup>NS</sup>
May lead to behavioral /personality disorders if not involved in constructive activities	58.26 (67)	61.53 (64)	0.50 Ns	68.7 5	61.5 3	0.70 <sup>N</sup> <sub>S</sub>	54.2 1	61.5 3	1.00 <sup>NS</sup>
People tend to may exploit singlehood person and his / her resources	61.73 (71)	66.34 (69)	0.83 <sup>N</sup> <sub>S</sub>	40.6 2	53.8 4	1.30 <sup>N</sup> <sub>S</sub>	69.8 7	70.5 1	0.14 <sup>Ns</sup>
				(13)	(14)		(58)	(55)	

Figures in parentheses indicate number of PG students

NS - Non Significant \* - P<0.05 level \*\* - P < 0.01 level

### References

- [1]. Bharati, D. and Patnam, V. (1995).Cited in dissertation on Perceptions of college girls about marriage and mate selection submitted to Marathwada Agricultural University, Parbhani.
- [2]. Deshpande, and Patnam, V. (2000).Cited in dissertation on Perceptions of slum girls about selected aspects of marriage and mate selection submitted to the Marathwada Agricultural University, Parbhani.
- [3]. Goldstein, J. R. and Kenney, C. T. (2001). Marriage delayed or marriage forgone. American Sociological Review, 66:506-519.
- [4]. Gunjal, A. and Patnam (2001) Cited in dissertation on Opinions of rural girls about marriage and mate selection submitted to the Marathwada Agricultural University, Parbhani.
- [5]. Joglekar, J. (1999). Castisim in marriage market. Daily newspaper Maharashtra Times, 22 December.
- [6]. Mayuri, K. (1999). Opinions of youth about dowry. J. of Social Welfare,54(11):93.
- [7]. Nadagouda, S. and Saroja, K. (1990). Attitudes of married and unmarried Hindu working women towards dowry. Abstract of research studies Rural Home Science College, Dharwad: 28.