

## **Hundabali is a social problem in modern Indian society**

Dr. Prof. Aruna Digambar Kasare

M.A., M.ed, M.S.W., M. Phil., Ph.D

Mahatma Fule Collage of Social Work Taloda Dist. Nandurbar

### **Summary**

The two-letter word 'hunda' is a word that lends money to the bridegroom and makes the bridegroom rich and happy. Although the subject of 'hunda' has become a stumbling block, it is one of the most burning issues facing modern society today. But there is a great deal of indifference to this issue in all sections of society. Although this problem became more acute after independence and resulted in the enactment of the Dowry Prevention Act, today, even after 74 years of independence, the number of dowry victims is increasing day by day. Today more than 70% of the society in India is well educated and more economically prosperous than ever before. But the problem of hoodwagging persists. This means that the education system was able to educate the society, but it did not change their thinking. Today, our steps are towards globalization. In such a situation, we all neglected social change. Basically, patriarchal culture still dominates Indian society today. Even though the government passed the Dowry Prohibition Act in 1961, according to the records of the National Crime Bureau, the dowry of one bride is still taken every hour in India. In today's modern society, giving and receiving dowry is considered as a matter of prestige of a society. The Constitution of India came into force on January 26, 1950, and although it upheld the principle of gender equality, in reality, there is still a huge gap in gender equality in Indian society. In marriage, the girl's side is considered inferior and the boy's side is considered superior. Wedding expenses; Also, jewelery, gifts, property, Varadakshina and many other such demands are made in the form of conditions. If these demands are not met, the dowry is not enough, or the mana is not respected, then the married woman is harassed by the in-laws, mother-in-law or other relatives of the bride. She is given mental and physical torment. Hunger is kept in confinement. There are beatings, on occasion burning and even murder. Even in the so-called progressive Maharashtra, the incident of dowry victim is read in the newspapers. Why are married women denied the right to life even today in this independent India? We have been searching for the answer to this question for the last 75 years; But the answer to this question has not been found yet. In this article I have tried to give an idea of all these questions.

### **Preface**

According to the National Crime Records Bureau's 'Crime in Maharashtra-2019' report published by the central government department, the number of cases of harassment of women is more than the actual number reported. Basically women have to suffer due to ignorance, illiteracy, undesirable norms and traditions about their rights. Many women do not file charges against themselves for the sake of publicity and false reputation. According to the report, 86% of the convicts in the dowry case are acquitted due to lack of evidence. There is no direct evidence of marital abuse. Many defendants are acquitted on the grounds of suspicion. The victim is less likely to openly harass the victim. Also, it is not possible for anyone to witness the suicide. In many cases, there is not enough evidence to prove that a married woman died in an accident or

that she committed suicide, and no such attempt is made. According to the report, 35% of the cases in Maharashtra have not been investigated and no chargesheet has been filed in the court. Statistics show that even two per cent of the complaints of harassment lodged by father-in-law's congregations are not being punished. In such a situation, men or families committing such crimes will have no fear of the law. Criminals only benefit from the fact that many women are not aware of their rights. Another important point to note from this report is that the proportion of women among the persons arrested for crimes like dowry harassment and dowry victimization is more than 25 to 30%. From this, it is safe to say that woman is the enemy of woman. In order to increase one's prestige in the society at the wedding ceremony, dowry is given in the marriage of a girl and is doubled in the marriage of a boy. Due to this practice many worlds were broken, many families were destroyed. In this article I have tried to study this horrible practice.

#### **Objectives of the study**

- To find out the reasons behind taking dowry in the society.
- Effects of dowry system on society
- To study the provisions of the law for prevention of hooliganism.
- To study social measures for prevention of dowry.

#### **Reasons for dowry in the society**

- 1) **Patriarchal family system:** All the problems of Indian women are rooted in the patriarchal family system. In society, men have the first place and women have the second place. In today's Indian society, property rights are not in the hands of men. Her financial status is determined by her father, brother or husband. This has left women in a position of perpetual vulnerability.
- 2) **Influence of religious norms and traditions:** Dowry system has been prevalent in India since ancient times. Over time, this practice took on the form of a religious ritual, and it is still practiced today. There is such a tradition and the tradition is still going on. Now the dowry and jewelery earned in marriage is considered to be the property of the father-in-law. Therefore, a woman has become a means of earning cash in marriage and if she does not get it, she is persecuted to get wealth.
- 3) **Obligation of inter-caste marriage:** In Indian society, the obligation to choose a spouse from one's caste for marriage is strictly observed. In such a case, there are limits to the selection of Sumogya. The parents of the girl are willing to pay more dowry with the desire to get her daughter from a prestigious family and a high paid in government service. Taking advantage of this, the fathers have started bargaining by demanding maximum dowry.
- 4) **Imitation of the aristocracy:** In the past, kings, chiefs, rich, ruling families used to marry a girl to show off their wealth and give dowry to the father to suit their prestige. This practice was followed by other sections of Indian society and this practice became commonplace everywhere. Even the lower castes of the society started taking out loans and

giving dowry to their father and getting married in Damdaula. Due to this lust, dowry has become a social problem all over India.

- 5) **Preference for Educated, Prosperous groom:** In India even today girls have a nominal learning opportunity. Financially affluent parents, however, expect their daughter to be highly educated and wealthy, and they are willing to pay any amount for it. As a result, there is a demand for more dowry from such a rich, educated and high-ranking groom.
- 6) **Dowry is a means of gaining social prestige:** In recent times, how many dowries were given to the groom and how many dowries were taken by the groom has now become a means of gaining social prestige. That is why the practice of dowry as a means of uplifting social prestige has become very common in the society.
- 7) **Lustful, consumerist tendencies of the upper class:** Consumerist lifestyle is rooted in today's social life. Some, on the other hand, crave riches without effort. If there is a tendency for such tendencies, then their greed increases due to easy, easily obtained wealth. People with bigotry are constantly demanding more and more of this kind of dowry.

#### **Effects of dowry practice on society**

- 1) **The practice of marrying only for dowry exists:** Due to the understanding that dowry is a condition for marriage, it is observed that many marriages take place only for dowry. For the last two decades, there has been a rush among the youth in Punjab to go abroad. Young people who are not able to afford to go abroad have a good chance of getting married. He marries only for a dowry and leaves his wife behind and settles abroad. Not one but thousands of such incidents have come to light. According to Balwant Singh Ahluwalia, former Union Minister of Punjab, between 2001-2011, there were 30,000 such incidents in Punjab alone. Where the marriage was solemnized only for dowry and after the marriage the wife left her home and the husband flew away.
- 2) **Dowry persecution:** According to the National Crime Bureau, there were 7146 cases of dowry in India in 1998. This number increased to 8172 in 2008. In 2011 alone, 8331 women were killed for dowry. The fact that every hour a married woman is killed for a dowry in India is now accepted at the government level. In India, 70% of women are victims of domestic violence. According to the EU, India recorded 3,09,546 crimes against women in 2013. Of those, 1,18,866 crimes were related to domestic violence. Eighty-five percent of women victims of domestic violence never speak out against injustice. Only 1% of the total crime was recorded by the police. Every year thousands of women in the country fall victim to this violence and die.
- 3) **Dowry is borrowed for dowry:** In rural areas 80% of the total loan taken from the bank is taken for marriage. It has also become an equation for a farmer to commit suicide in a few years if he has taken a loan for dowry. This leaves the girls with no choice but to run away

and get married. It is also observed that many girls are left behind due to not getting married at the right time. Many girls even commit suicide because their father does not have enough money to pay the dowry.

#### **Measures taken by the government to curb the practice of dowry**

The dowry system is having many adverse effects on the society. Due to the unbearable persecution of the dowry, many girls committed suicide and many were burnt alive. The dowry system leads to corruption and crime in order to make more money in the society. The dowry system as a whole adds to many social problems. Let's take a look at the number of laws that the government has enacted to curb this dowry.

- 1) **Dowry Prevention Act-1961:** It was done to prevent dowry practice and to prevent incidents like dowry victimization. According to the law, giving and receiving dowry is considered a crime. The following new provisions were made in the Act in 1984 and 1986.
  1. This Act is applicable throughout India.
  2. Under this Act, taking dowry is a non-bailable offense.
  3. Ownership is given to the bride's wedding gift.
  4. If a person who promotes dowry is found guilty, he will be sentenced to 5 years imprisonment and fined Rs. 15,000. Such a fine can be punished.
  5. Dowry cases cannot be settled amicably.
- 2) **Dowry related provisions in the Indian Penal Code:** The Indian Penal Code - 1860 has the following provisions regarding dowry related offenses.
  1. According to Section 304B of the Penal Code, if a married woman dies unnaturally within seven years of marriage and such an event is observed, such death of the married woman is considered as dowry sacrifice.
  2. In the case of dowry, the convict is sentenced to a minimum of 7 years and a maximum of life imprisonment.
  3. Under section 306, inciting a wife to commit suicide is an offense.
  4. Section 498 provides for imprisonment of 2 years and fine if the husband or his relatives are found to have physically or mentally abused the married woman.

#### **Social measures to prevent dowry**

- 1) **Establishing Gender Equality:** At present in the patriarchal society of India, the secondary position of women, the power in the family creates imbalance and the discrimination against women is conducive to the dowry practice. This requires eliminating gender inequality, giving girls a share in their parents' wealth after marriage, and getting housework for the housewife.
- 2) **Raising awareness about dowry:** It is necessary to inculcate in the society that taking cash in the form of dowry, expecting gifts is against human moral values. Giving or receiving dowry is not a matter of prestige but of social and legal crime. For this, the

society of educational institutions, government, women's organizations, police system, media should be enlightened.

- 3) **Creating social pressure:** It is important for the dowry adherents of the dowry system to be oppressed by the society. Because of this the society is watching the action you are taking. If such a family becomes aware of this, it will create fear in the actions of such persons.
- 4) **Promoting inter-caste marriages:** In marriages arranged by parents, it is generally observed that all the customs are strictly followed. Caste, wealth and prestige are considered when the bride and groom decide on their own. Such things do not happen in inter-caste marriages because such marriages take place with the preference of the children and there is no room for marital bargaining.
- 5) **Empowering women:** Women who are less educated, paralyzed and involved in customs are more vulnerable. Therefore, women should be given the opportunity of education and they should be given priority in jobs and industries. They get job and business opportunities through education. Such self-sufficient women will become self-reliant and will not accept dowry marriage and may fight against dowry. They will not live under the pressure that their husbands will throw away.
- 6) **Strict implementation of law:** Five decades after the enactment of the anti-dowry law, the incidence of harassment and dowry for dowry has not decreased. Taking advantage of the shortcomings in the law, dowry givers, dowry takers, dowry harassment or victims are seen roaming the society with bright heads. For that, strict implementation of this law is required.

### **Conclusion**

Although the practice of taking dowry has ruined the lives of countless women, the end of dowry is not in sight. There is an urgent need for mass awareness to eradicate this practice which is a disgrace to Indian culture. There is a need to provide concrete training to the youth in the city as well as in most of the rural areas to protect their self-esteem and their right to life. There are many undesirable norms in Indian society and it is customary to combine religion for selfish ends. One of them is the dowry system. There was a dowry at the wedding. After Kanyadana, Varapuja and Varadakshina are given. Some hypocrites ask for dowry on the occasion of Varadakshina. In Indian society, giving alms is considered a good deed. Adding the virtue of earth donation to the concept of Kanyadana brought righteousness in it. I mean, think of this Dharmaveda society as trapped in that trap. For this, the hypocrisy and superstition behind this ritual should be convinced to the youth. Basically, a daughter is not something to be donated, it is not something to be transferred from father to daughter-in-law; She is a living person, she has individual freedom. Gender equality is impossible unless the youth realize this. Also, Kanyadana has no place in law, nor protection of law. Noise, windfall, display of wealth, wastage of food, wastage of electricity, wastage of water all have to be stopped. Why is the society so indifferent about the mental and physical abuse and violence that is taking place in the homes of

married women for dowry? The answer to this question is a simple question. The dowry system cannot be abolished unless girls are treated equally in society.

#### References

1. Geeta Sathe - Bharatim Stree Jeevan, Mauj Prakashan, Pune 2010.
2. Asha Khandekar-Gavai - Violation of Women's Human Rights, Sugava Prakashan, Pune.
3. Vijam Maulkar, Damavati Padalkar - Gender and Violence, Phadke Prakashan, Kolhapur.
4. Chandrakant Khandagale - Sexual Violence..
5. Website & newspaper articals