

INTERMARRIAGES AND GENERATIONAL RELATIONS: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY IN KATHMANDU VALLEY

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ABSTRACT

Marriage is a universal social institution. It establishes not only conjugal relations between husband and wife, but also establishes relations between families. Nepal is a land of multi-cultural, religious and linguistic groups. So, different patterns of marriages are followed. Now a day, social change in marriage is faster than before. These social changes have dramatic impact on the family, the individual choices of mate, criteria of mate selection and divorce. In a way, these changes have promoted intermarriages, which have affected the traditional structure of the family. Most of the studies reviewed mostly, deals with intermarriages from community and societal perspective. This study examines the inter and intra generations relations of the women, in intermarriages on the basis of the following dimensions: frequency of contact, support relation, affectionate relation and conflict relation.

KEYWORDS: Marriage, Intermarriage, Intergeneration, Intrageneration, Frequency of contact, Support relation, Emotional relation, Conflict relation

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a universal social institution. It exists in some form in almost every community, throughout the world. People get married at least once in their lifetimes. Marriage has traditionally been a prerequisite for starting a family, which usually serves as the building block of a community and society. So, marriage is considered, as the first stage of the family formation. Marriage establishes an alliance between two families, rather than two individuals.

Nepal is a home to a variety of religious-ethnic groups, who follow their own patterns and customs of marriage (Bista 1972; Macfarlane 1976; Subedi 1998). Nepal was a Hindu state, before Jana Andolane (Peoples Movement II), in 2006. Hindu religion has a high place in its deep rooted traditional customs. For Hindus, marriage is not merely a biological, social and economic concern, but also a religious rite de passage and eternal spiritual obligation. Traditions among Hindus eight forms of marriages are recognized. They are *Brahma*, *Daiva*, *Arsha*, *Prajapati*, *Gandharva*, *Paisacha*, *Rakshasa* and *Asura*. Out of these, three types of marriages are found in Nepal. Besides these, major forms of marriages in Nepal are arranged marriage, elopement marriage, and force/ capture marriage, exchange, marriage, *Jari*/ adultery, marriage, court/ registration marriage and intermarriages (inter-caste, inter-religion, international).

As arranged marriage is the norm in Nepal, it is the responsibility of the family members, to arrange the marriage of their young ones. The family in Nepal is characterized by gentleness and patriarchy. According to Rao and Rao (1982), there is a close relationship between the type of the family and the type of the marriage. Societies having a nuclear family as a norm, emphasize romance as the basis for marriage. In most societies, where the joint family system is the norm, marriage is largely, arranged by the parents and elders. Marriage does not occur at random, neither does intermarriage.

Every society employs quite a complex and detailed set of rules and regulations, governing who may marry who i.e. Rules of endogamy and exogamy. Endogamy is an established practice, which limits the field of mate selection. But, the matrimonial advertisements in newspapers and emergence of marriage brokerage business, to some extent have widened the area of mate selection. The traditional pattern of arranging marriage, limit the youth participation in spouse selection, led to early marriages. The concepts of divorce, widow remarriage, intermarriages (inter-caste marriage, inter-religious, International), were least known.

Nepal is experiencing social and economic change, including an increase in formal education, wage work, government services, and mass media, development of transportation and communications, and exposure to the outside world. These social changes have dramatic impact on the family, individual choices in marriage, especially with regards to participation in spouse choice, intermarriages, late marriages and divorce (Allendorf and Ghimire 2012). Education has brought changes in the attitudes, beliefs, values and ideologies of the people creating individualistic feelings. The increasing education is providing new avenues of employment, to the younger men and women. Change in age at marriage, freedom in mate selection and change in attitude towards intermarriages, which in turn has affected the traditional structure of family relations. So, the present study has been envisaged to focus on intermarriage in Nepal and how it influences the family relations.

INTERMARRIAGES

Intermarriage is a form of exogamy or marrying outside one's social group, whether that group is defined by religion, racial or other differences. The other term such as mixed marriage is also used for intermarriage. Intermarriage can be typified as (Bambawala 1977; Subash 2006).

- Interracial or inter-ethnic marriage, i.e. Marriage between people of different races.
- Inter-religious marriage, i.e. Marriage between people belonging to a different religion.
- Inter-caste marriage, i.e. Marriage between people of different caste. Inter-caste marriage is a term used in South Asia and Middle Eastern countries for marriage, where couples are from two different social groups.
- International or cross national marriage i.e. Marriage, between people of different nationalities.

In almost all communities in the world, marriage is guided and controlled by prevailing social values, norms and customs. Such regulatory forces vary with culture and also change with time. Intermarriage challenges norms about endogamy and creates problems, both for families and for society, as a whole (at 2000; Breger and Hill 1998). In intermarriage, the traditional values of arrangement of marriage, bargaining for a dowry and incorporation of the new brides in the traditional pattern, are replaced by modern values such as love, companionship and individuality (Bambawala 1977; Manakashi and Ramadive 1982).

Intermarriage is a universal phenomenon. The issues of intermarriages vary from society to society, culture to culture and country to country. Literature on intermarriages brings out different issues concerning it.

Intermarriage is steadily increasing. According to Bennett (1963), international marriages mostly occur, followed by interfaith and interracial. Most of the people who had interfaith marriages were themselves, offspring of a mixed marriage. Factors promoting interfaith marriages are love, neighborhood, friendship, education, occupation etc. Interfaith

married couples experienced conflict, over religion of children, church attendance, conversion of religion, etc. (Prince 1962; protein 1972; Neharic 2006).

In United Nation, white and black are the dominant racial groups. Intermarriage was not legal until U.S Supreme court ban Antimiscegenation Act. Interracial couples, as compared to endogamous couples have higher rates of divorce. The reasons for divorce are couples previously married, cohabitation before marriage and two-parent family eats (Davis 1941; Kalmijin 1993; Kreider 2000).

Caste based untouchability, continue to exist because of traditional concepts of purity and pollution in Nepal. Intercaste marriages, especially with Dalits continue to be problematic. Mostly, urban population accepts the idea of marriage outside caste groups. People accept only certain types of intercaste marriages i.e., in which both are from upper caste, or both from a lower caste. In some cases, there is no problem to marry people, from water acceptable caste. Couples, whether non- Dalit married to delete, or Dalits married two Dalits are discriminated by their parents, relatives and faces problems like social boycott, displacement, etc. (Gore 1968; Regmi 1999; Jong, Ghimire et.al, 2006; Dhaka 2011; Mohara 2011).

Though the marriages are interfaith, interracial and interest, mixed marriages raises the similar issues and the same kind of problems. The mixed married couples face the issues like cultural adjustment, damage of family reputation, conversion of religion and concern for children. Similarly, problems like, ostracize, violence, parental disapproval, displacement, etc. (Donnan 1990).

In Nepal, intermarriages are an emerging issue, especially between Dalits and non-Dalits. The majority of the studies, mainly deal with inter-caste marriage, between Dalits and non-Dalits, neglecting the other forms of intermarriages, for example, inter-ethnic marriage, inter-religious marriage, international marriage and the issues, involved in them. It is clear from the studies that, none of the studies have focused on the family relations. So, keeping the gap in mind, the proposed study was undertaken to find out family relations of intermarried women, particularly their inter and intra-generational relations. Intergenerational relations refer to relations, between the individuals of different cohorts or generations i.e. parents and parents-in-laws. And, intergenerational relations refer to relations between the individuals of same cohorts or generations, i.e. siblings and siblings-in-laws.

Many of the theoretical attempts have been made to understand the intergenerational family relationships. Intergenerational relationships do not operate, along a single dimension. Instead, they represent a complex set of simultaneous interactions, along a series of dimensions. The three dimensions to study intergenerational relations are Peterson and Bush 2012. Intergenerational solidarity emphasizes the strength, of the relational bonds between generations. The concept of intergenerational solidarity presents six dimensions of intergenerational family relations. Some of the writers also have studies intragenerational relations, based on these dimensions of solidarity (Lee, Mancini and Maxwell 1990; Miner and Uhlereng 1997; Descartes 2007; Voorpostel and Blieszner 2008). Most of the studies on solidarity, revolved around these six dimensions: Association type and frequency of activity shared by family members, structural physical settings, such as geographic proximity, function exchange of instrumental support, affectional emotional closeness, consensual similarity of opinion and value, and normative aspects shared family expectation. Conflict dimension or critical approach to family relations, specifically focuses on the problems experienced by family members. Ambivalence dimension, focuses on both solidarity and conflict picture of family relations. On the basis of above mentioned dimensions,

the following dimensions i.e. Frequency of contact, support relations, affectional relations and conflict relations, were used in the present study.

Method of Research

The present study is descriptive in nature. It was conducted in the Kathmandu valley. Kathmandu valley is comprised of the three districts i.e. Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur district. The universe of the study was women, who were in intermarriages. For the proposed study 210 women, who were in intermarriages were selected by a snowball technique. Data was collected from the respondents, with the help of pre-tested interview schedule.

Findings

Inter and intra generational relations are studied in the light of frequency of contact, support relations, emotional support and conflict relation

FREQUENCY OF CONTACT

Intergenerational contact does not necessarily coincide, with the perceived quality of the intergenerational ties (Silverstein and Bengtson 1997). There are various reasons for this. First contact is motivated by normative obligation, to have contact (Rosi and Rosi 1990). Second, people in a very good relationship may have infrequent contact, due to restrictions, as they live far from each other. So, contact is an important dimension of the intergenerational relationship (Lye 1996), as it facilitates the exchanged of social and economic support, as well as in maintain familial solidarity. In the present study, frequency of contact includes Co residence or non-Co residence with in-laws, quality of communication and visit with family members.

Table 1: Distribution of the Respondents According to their Residence

S. No	Type of residence	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
1	With in-laws	48	22.86
2	A separate residence	162	77.14
Total		210	100

The no. 1 table reveals that, the majority of the respondents; 77.14 percent have separate residence and only 22.86 percent live with their in-laws. It is found that, most couples live with their in-laws in the early years of their marriage. The reasons for not living together with in-laws are job, education of children, not accepted etc.

Table 2: Distribution of the Respondents According to Frequency of Contact

Frequency of contact	Inter-generational Relations				Intra-generational Relations			
	Parents		Parents-in-laws		Siblings		Siblings-in-laws	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
More frequent	146	69.53	104	49.52	151	71.90	112	53.33
Less frequent	34	16.19	66	31.43	53	26.67	88	41.91
N/A	30	14.28	40	19.05	3	1.43	10	4.76
Total	210	100	210	100	210	100	210	100

Table no. 2, indicates the distribution of the respondents, according to frequency of contact with their parents and parents-in-laws (intergenerational relations) and siblings and siblings-in-laws. 69.53 percent of respondents have more

frequent contact with their parents and 49.52 percent of them have more frequent contact with their parents –in-law. 16.19 percent of the respondents have less frequent contact with their parents, as compared to 31.43 percent with their parents in-law. The table shows that, the proportion of respondents, having more frequent contact with parents is higher than parents –in-law. It means that, respondents have a strong frequency of contact with their parents, than parents-in-law. The question is not applicable to 14.28 percent and 19.05 percent because, they did not have their parents and parents –in-law.

On the other hand, 71.90 percent of respondents have more frequent contact with their siblings, as compared to 53.33 percent with siblings-in-law. 26.67 percent of the respondents have less frequent contact with their siblings and 41.91 percent with their siblings-in-laws. The proportion of more frequent contact is higher among siblings, as compared to siblings-in-law, which means respondents frequently communicate with their siblings, than siblings-in-law. The question is not applicable to 1.43 percent and 4.76 percent of the respondents, because they did not have siblings and siblings-in-law. From the table, it is concluded that, the proportion of respondents having more frequent contact with siblings and their siblings-in-law, is higher than the parents and parents-in-laws. It means, respondents have a strong frequency of contact with intragenerational relations, than intergenerational relations.

Table 3: Distribution of the Respondents According to Frequency of Visits

Frequency of visits	Inter-generations Relations				Intra-generational Relations			
	Parents		Parents-in-laws		Siblings		Siblings-in-laws	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Visit more	109	51.91	82	39.05	122	58.09	91	43.33
Visit less	71	33.81	88	41.90	85	40.48	109	51.91
N/A	30	14.28	40	19.05	3	1.43	10	4.76

Table no. 3, shows the distribution of the respondents, according to frequency of visits to their family members. 51.91 percent of respondents visit their parents more, as compared to 39.05 percent, who visit their parents-in-law more. 33.81 percent of respondents visit their parents, less than 41.90 percent, who visit less to parents-in-law. The table reveals that, proportion of respondents, visiting their parents is higher than those visiting their parents-in-law. It means that, respondents visit more frequently to their parents, than parents-in-law.

In case of siblings and siblings-in-law, 58.09 percent of respondents visit their siblings more, while 43.33 percent visit their siblings-in-law more. 40.48 percent of respondents visit their siblings less, as compared to 51.91 percent who visit their siblings-in-law, less. The table shows that, the proportion of respondents visiting their siblings is higher than the proportion of visiting their siblings-in-law. It means that, respondents visit more frequently to their siblings than to their siblings-in-law.

The table shows that, the proportion of respondents, visiting their siblings and siblings-in-law is higher than the proportion of visiting, with their parents and parents in-law. It is concluded that, respondents visits more to their siblings and siblings-in-laws as compared to parents and parents. This is because most of the respondents are migrated to Kathmandu valley, their parents and parents-in-law live in their native villages, while their siblings and siblings-in-law live around them, in the valley due to their job, studies etc.

SUPPORT RELATIONS

Exchange behaviors between family members are prevalent in all societies and typically consist of exchange of material and non- material rewards, including money, goods, services and psychological supports such as prestige, honesty

and legitimacy. Intergenerational relationships are established, over the entire life course of both individual and the family. The provision of support obtained by elders in later life, for example, could be seen as reimbursement for love provided to adult children, when they were dependent earlier in life (Park, Phua et.al 2006). Supporter relations also depend on the quality of relationship, parent's age and status (Lin and Yi 2007). Voorpostal and Bleieszners (2008) found that, when the relationship with a parent was poorer, more support was exchanged between siblings. There is also a gender difference in receiving help. Sons are more likely to give financial or household assistance to their parents, while daughter is more likely to provide advice and home care (Lin and Yi 2007). Similarly, sister-sister ties, tend to be closer and more supportive than a brother-brother or brother-sister pairs (Maccini and Maxwell 1990).

Table 4: Distribution of the Respondents According to whether they Provide any help to Family Members?

Categories	Inter-generational Relations				Intra-generational Relations			
	Parents		Parents-in-laws		Siblings		Siblings -in-laws	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	47	22.38	97	46.19	39	18.57	39	18.57
No	133	63.34	73	34.76	168	80	161	76.67
N/A	30	14.28	40	19.05	3	1.43	10	4.76
Total	210	100	210	100	210	100	210	100

Table no. 4, depicts the distribution of the respondents, showing the kind of help they extend to their family members. It shows that, 22.38 percent of respondents extend help to their parents, whereas 46.19 percent of respondents extend help to their parents-in-law. 63.34 percent of respondents do not provide any help to parents, as compared to 34.76 percent to their parents-in-law. In the table, the proportion of respondents extending help to their parents-in-law is higher than to their parents. This shows that, respondents mostly extend help to their parents-in-law, than their parents.

On the other hand, the majority of the respondents, 80 percent and 76.67 percent do not extend any kind of help, to their siblings and siblings-in-law. It is concluded that, respondents mostly extend help to their parents-in-law and parents, as compared to siblings and siblings-in-law.

Table 5: Distribution of the Respondents' According to whether they Seek any help from the Family Members?

Categories	Inter-generational Relations				Intra-generational Relations			
	Parents		Parents-in-laws		Siblings		Siblings -in-laws	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	66	31.43	36	17.14	59	28.09	35	16.57
No	114	54.29	134	63.81	148	70.48	165	78.57
N/A	30	14.28	40	19.05	3	1.43	10	4.76
Total	210	100	210	100	210	100	210	100

Table no. 5, presents the distribution of the respondents, concerning whether they seek any type of help from their family members. 31.43 percent of the respondents seek help of their parents, while 17.14 percent of respondents seek help from their parents-in-law. 54.29 percent of respondents do not; seek any type of help from their parents, as compared to 63.81 percent from their parents-in-law. From the table, it is found that, the majority of the respondents do not receive any type of help. But the proportion of those receiving help is higher from parents than parents-in-law. It means that, respondents generally receive help from their parents than parents-in-law.

Similarly, the majority of the respondents, 70.48 percent and 78.57 percent, do not receive any help from their siblings and siblings-in-law, respectively. But, the proportion of receiving help is higher among siblings, which means they receive help from siblings whenever needed.

From, the table now. 5 and 6, it is found that, majority of respondents; provide help to their parents-in-laws than parents and vice-verse, in case of receiving help. The proportion of both providing and receiving help, is higher from parents and parents-in-law, than siblings and siblings-in-law. So, the support relations are stronger in intergenerational relations, than intergenerational relations.

AFFECTIONAL RELATIONS

A fictional relation comprises emotional closeness. Here, we try to know the frequency of respondents, listening to parents' ideas and sharing emotions, and vice-versa

Table 6: Distribution of the Respondents According to Emotional Closeness

Frequency of emotional closeness	Inter-generational Relations				Intra-generational Relations			
	Parents		Parents-in-laws		Siblings		Siblings-in-laws	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Emotionally more colors	156	74.29	109	51.90	164	78.09	126	60
Emotionally less close	24	11.43	61	29.05	43	20.48	74	35.24
N/A	30	14.28	40	19.05	3	1.43	10	4.76
Total	210	100	210	100	210	100	210	100

Table no. 6, shows the respondents by frequency of emotional closeness, with their family members. 74.29 percent of respondents feel emotionally closer to their parents, as compared to 51.90 percent to parents-in-law. 11.43 percent of the respondents feel emotionally less close to their parents, than 29.05 percent to parents-in-law. The table shows that, respondents are emotionally closer to their parents than parents-in-law.

Besides these, 78.09 percent of respondents were emotionally more close to their siblings, while 60 percent of respondents were emotionally more close to siblings-in-law. 20.48 percent respondents feel less emotionally close to their sibling, while 35.24 percent of respondents feel emotionally less close to siblings-in-law. It is revealed that, respondents were emotionally more close to their siblings, as compared to siblings-in-law. From the above table, we conclude that, respondents feel emotionally more close to their siblings and siblings-in-law, as compared to parents and parents-in-law. So, emotional closeness is strong, among intergenerational relations than intergenerational relations.

CONFLICT RELATIONS

Conflict is an inevitable feature of interpersonal relationships. Conflicts are first and foremost family conflicts, approximately half is fought within the same age group i.e. Partner conflict, sibling rivalry (Marc 2008; Cicirelli 1985) other half is intergenerational conflict. Women have more frequent conflicts, with their parents and family members because, they function as kin keeper, caring, household work and are more burdened with family work, than males.

Table 7: Distribution of the Respondents According to Nature of Relation

Nature of relation	Inter-generational Relations				Intra-generational Relations			
	Parents		Parents-in-laws		Siblings		Siblings-in-laws	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Conflict relation	42	20	46	21.91	45	21.43	45	21.43
Cordial relation	138	65.72	124	59.04	162	77.14	155	73.81
N/A	30	14.28	40	19.05	3	1.43	10	4.76
Total	210	100	210	100	210	100	210	100

Table no. 7, presents the distribution of the respondents, according to the nature of relationships with family members. 20 percent of respondents have conflict relation with their parents, whereas 21.91 percent of them have conflicting relation, with their parents-in-law. The majority of the respondents, 65.72 percent and 59.04 percent have cordial relations, with their parents and parents-in-law. The proportion of conflict with parents-in-law is higher than parents. It means that, respondents have more conflict with their parents-in-law, as compared to parents. The reasons for conflict are different on the views of the person, being married to different castes, family and household issues etc.

In case of siblings and siblings-in-law, majority of 77.14 percent and 43.81 percent of respondents have cordial relations with their siblings and siblings-in-law. In both groups, respondents have equal percentages of conflict relation with their siblings and siblings-in-law. Though, majority of the respondents have cordial relation with family members, the proportion of conflict is higher with siblings and siblings-in-law. It is concluded that, respondents have more conflict with their siblings and siblings-in-law, as compared to parents and parents-in-law.

CONCLUSIONS

As intergenerational and intragenerational relations are studied in the light of frequency of contact, support relations, emotional support and conflict relations; it was found that, the majority of the respondents have separate residences. Frequency of contact is stronger in intragenerational relations, than intergenerational relations. Respondents' frequently on visit is more to siblings and siblings-in-law, than parents and parents-in-law. This is because, most parents and parents-in-law are old and live in their native villages. With regard to support relations, the majority of the respondents, provide help to parents-in-law than parents and vice-verse, in case of receiving help. The proportion of both providing and receiving help is higher from parents and parents-in-law, than siblings and siblings-in-law. So, the support relations are stronger in intergenerational relations than intragenerational relations. Respondents are emotionally more close to their siblings and siblings-in-law, than parents and parents-in-laws. Emotional closeness is stronger in intragenerational relations than intergenerational relations. As the majority of the respondents have cordial relation with their family members, the proportion of conflict is higher with siblings and siblings-in-law. It is concluded that, respondents have more conflict with their siblings and siblings-in-law, as compared to parents and parents-in-law.

From the above study, it was concluded that, family relations are based on multi dimensions. Solidarity and conflicts are part of the life. Conflicts between family generations, does not indicate the absence of solidarity. Those being in conflict still provide support, maintain contact and emotionally are close. Solidarity and conflict do not present a single continuum, rather it can be observed simultaneously (Isha 2016). Family relations are a mixture of both solidarity and conflicts, so, it was found that, majority of respondents were not living together with their in-laws and still maintain contact, provide and receive help, they were emotionally connected and also have conflict in relations. So, women in

intermarriages have ambivalent intergenerational relations and intra generational relations.

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