

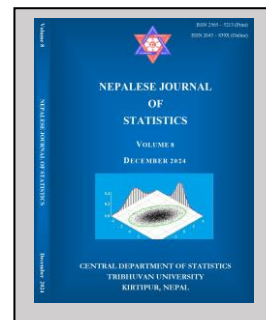
Contingency Table Analyses of the Bride-Price Practice in Marriage: A Case Study of Shikhar Metropolitan Area-I Kapallekee in Far-Western Nepal

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ABSTRACT

Background: The socio-cultural fabric of Nepalese society is deeply intertwined with traditional marriage practices, which are influenced by various factors, including parental economic status and education. Previous studies suggest that these elements significantly affect the types of marriages individuals experience, particularly in rural settings where customs and financial considerations dictate marital arrangements. This study seeks to explore these dynamics to better understand how parents' socio-economic conditions shape their children's marriage choices.

Objective: The primary objective of this research is to empirically examine the interplay between marriage types—Bride Price and Kanyadaan—and various socio-economic factors within a rural Nepalese context. Specifically, the study aims to analyze how respondents' socio-economic characteristics, including their parents' educational attainment and economic status, influence the prevalence and distribution of these marriage practices. By identifying patterns and relationships among these variables, the study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the cultural and economic drivers shaping marital traditions in the study population.

Materials and Methods: The research employed a quantitative approach, utilizing structured questionnaires to gather data from 126 respondents in rural areas of Shikhar Metropolitan area I of Doti. The Contingency Table Method was conducted to examine the associations between types of marriage (bride price and Kanyadaan) and many socio-economic variables. Data were collected and analyzed to identify patterns and correlations that reflect the socio-economic influences on marriage practices.

Results: This study explores the prevalence and determinants of two distinct marriage practices—Kanyadaan and Bride Price—in a diverse socio-cultural setting. Based on an analysis of 126 marriages, 38.1% were classified as Kanyadaan marriages, emphasizing spiritual bonds, while 61.9% followed the Bride Price practice, involving monetary transactions. The study reveals significant associations between marriage types and socio-demographic variables. Bride Price marriages were

most common among Sudras (84.4%) and least prevalent among Brahmins (14.3%), highlighting jatis-based disparities ($p < 0.001$). Similarly, educational attainment emerged as a critical determinant, with Bride Price marriages declining from 84.72% among illiterate women to 0% among those with secondary education ($p < 0.001$). Occupation and economic status of parents also influenced marriage practices, with Bride Price marriages most prevalent among farmers (72.6%) and the poor economic class (100%), while less common among government employees (18.2%) and middle-class families (54%) ($p < 0.01$). Although temporal trends showed fluctuations in Bride Price prevalence, these were not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Overall, the findings underscore the role of education, jatis, and socio-economic factors in shaping marriage practices, with implications for understanding the persistence of traditional customs and their transformation in response to modernization.

Keywords: Bride price, education, kanyadaan, marriage practices, parental influence, socio-economic status.

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INTRODUCTION

The practice of bride price in Hindu societies is an ancient tradition deeply rooted in cultural and social customs. Though in modern society this practice has led to various complications, historically it was respected and seen as a dignified part of marriage. This ritual, known as the Bride Price Practice in Marriage (BPPM), has been noted in numerous historic marriages, including those of Kaikeyi, the third wife of King Dasharatha of Ayodhya, and Gandhari, wife of Dhritarashtra in the Mahabharata. These examples highlight how, in the Vedic period, the bride price was perceived as a gesture of respect—a sincere and valued gift. Marriage remains one of the most significant institutions in any society, and the financial responsibilities associated with it have always been a substantial concern for families. Studies on the role of financial exchanges in marriage have been conducted for years, especially examining how the exchange of money or goods influences family and social dynamics. In past societies, bride price—defined by Murdock (1965) as a “gift of money or goods given to the bride’s kin by the groom or his kin”—was common. This payment typically granted the groom the right to marry the bride and, in many cases, the right to her children. In some instances, payments were made to the bride’s parents or relatives, giving rise to a structured social norm known as the bride price (Majupuria & Majupuria, 2009).

The legal framework in Nepal also defines the bride price as a custom involving the transfer of money from the groom's family to the bride's family. However, in contemporary society, this practice is often perceived as undignified. Many believe it contradicts the spirit of *daan* (दान), the selfless act of giving central to Hinduism, by placing a monetary value on the marriage transaction. In contrast, the practice of *Kanyadaan*, which involves no financial exchange, is considered far more honorable, signifying religious merit and spiritual purity within Hindu traditions. In Nepal, the bride price was formally abolished in 1963 with the introduction of the National Code, and further restrictions were introduced in the 1973 revision. According to Bennett (1979), the Act of 1976, section 4, specifies punishments for accepting a bride price, with fines ranging from Rs. 12,000 to Rs. 25,000 and/or imprisonment up to one year. Even with these legal provisions, various forms of marriage payments persist in many Nepali communities, albeit under different guises. The *Muluki Ain* of 2021 BS (Nepali Calendar) continues to protect women from economic exploitation and solidifies their social status in areas such as marriage, property rights, and alimony. Despite legal safeguards, enforcement remains weak, and bride price practices are still prevalent across Nepal.

According to Majupuria & Majupuria (2009), the custom of paying a bride price is practiced across various Nepali ethnic groups, including the Rai, Limbu, Dhimal, Tharu, Magar, Gurung, and others. Among the Tharu people in Chitwan, a prospective groom traditionally works for his future bride's parents for two or three years as a form of bride price payment. In the Danuwar community, marriages are socially validated only after the groom pays a certain amount to the bride's family, sometimes amounting to a lifetime's earnings. If payment is incomplete, the bride's family may refuse to attend family events at the groom's house, such as births, deaths, or religious ceremonies (Majupuria and Majupuria, 2009). Bride price practices are found worldwide in various forms. Murdock's World Ethnographic Sample study found that approximately 47% of societies worldwide have some form of bride price custom. Payments vary from livestock, as seen among the Swazi people of Southern Africa, where twelve cattle are typical for commoners and more for princesses, to pigs in New Guinea and the Philippines, and horses among the Navaho and Somali. These practices range in cost, with some, such as among the Subanun of the Philippines, reaching several times the groom's annual income and necessitating years of service or debt (Frake, 1960; Kuper, 1972; Mead, 1934). While the bride price is often associated with patriarchal structures and may imply a lower status for women, it can also offer certain protections. In cases where a marriage ends due to no fault of the bride, the bride price may not be returned, providing financial security for the woman. However, the financial dependence on the bride price can pressure a woman's family to encourage her to stay in an unhappy marriage to avoid returning the payment.

Frederick Pryor's cross-cultural study on economic distribution explores why certain societies maintain bride price practices. He found that bride price customs are more prevalent in societies where newly married couples live with or near the husband's family, viewing the payment as compensation to the bride's family for the labor they "lose" with her departure. Pryor suggests that bride price practices are more common where women perform more physical labor than

men and where household decisions are primarily male-dominated (Pryor, 1977). In this study, we analyze the current status and social consequences of the bride price in Nepali society as a case study. The following section outlines the research hypotheses, design, and related topics. Materials and Methods section provides the research background and requirements. Results section presents data analysis and findings, while Summary and Conclusion section discusses summary conclusions and offers recommendations. Finally, Conclusion sub-section provides concluding remarks and potential future directions.

Hypotheses and their correspondence to research design

Working hypotheses

A critical factor influencing population growth is the "mean age at marriage." This study hypothesizes that the mean age at marriage for women married through the bride-price system is lower than for women married through other systems. The rationale is that families who view their daughters as a source of financial gain may tend to arrange marriages at an earlier age. Interestingly, the bride price practice in marriage reveals several notable trends over time. One such trend is the increasing amount of bride price being paid, which is hypothesized to vary across different Jatis. Additionally, domestic violence often marks the beginning of a pattern of abuse directed toward women. This research hypothesizes that women married through the bride-price system experience a higher incidence of domestic violence from their husbands or family members compared to those married through other systems. This connection between the bride price and increased vulnerability to domestic abuse is another key focus of the study.

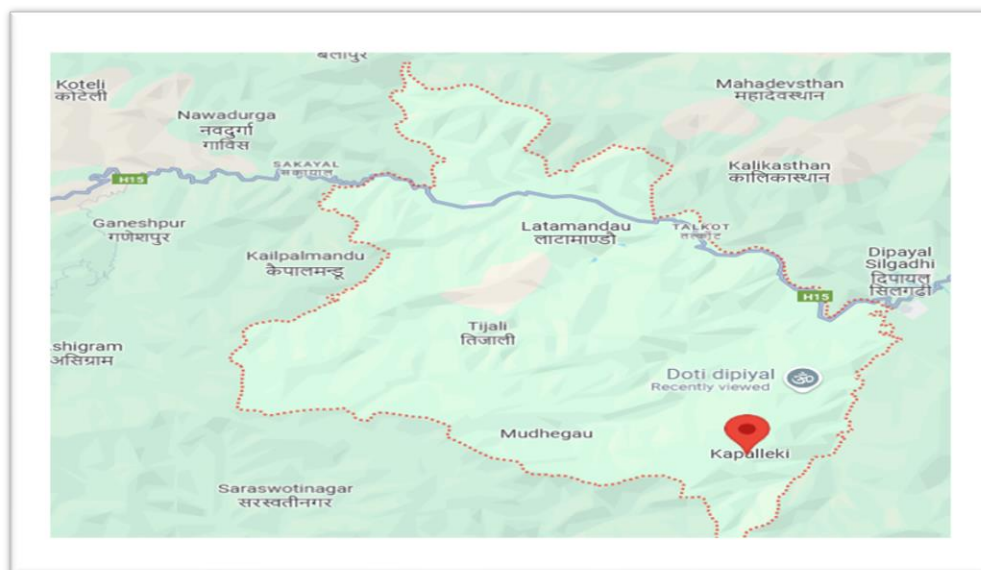
MATERIALS AND METHODS

This section outlines the various methods applied to conduct the research, including the study area's background, research design, data types and sources, data collection techniques and data analysis methods. An analytical research design was employed to comprehensively explore and understand the research objectives.

Study area and location

The study was conducted in the Far-western region of Nepal, specifically in Kapalleki, Shikhar Metropolitan Ward 1, encompassing 9 villages. The ward was selected for convenience. Within the ward, we randomly selected 3 villages (clusters) out of 9. These villages are Tirchhodi-Netkada, Malligam, and Joshi-gau.

Of the 170 married women in these 3 clusters, we successfully interviewed 126. The sampling process followed a multi-stage approach: convenience sampling in the first stage and cluster sampling in the second, satisfying the randomization principle of research design. These villages represent demographic diversity, with representation from various Jatis, such as Brahmin, Thakuri, Chhetri, and Sudras in the region. This diversity was essential for examining social practices across different groups and understanding the influence of Jatis on marital practices like bride price.



Map 1. Kapalleki and Shikhar metropolitan area, Doti, as shown on Google Maps.

Population and sample size

The total population in the study area was 622 individuals within 170 households. The sample size consisted of 126 respondents, selected through purposive sampling to ensure targeted insights into bride price practices and the experiences of women. This sampling method was chosen to focus on individuals with relevant knowledge or experiences, providing more detailed and meaningful data.

Nature and source of data

The study utilized both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through fieldwork, employing semi-structured questionnaires to gather qualitative and quantitative data directly from respondents. Secondary data included published and unpublished sources such as research articles, census reports, and records from the Shikhar Sub-metropolitan office. This approach provided a well-rounded view of the subject, combining firsthand accounts with broader context from secondary sources.

Data collection techniques

Multiple techniques were employed to gather comprehensive data, each tailored to capture different aspects of the study's focus.

Interview schedule

A structured interview schedule was designed to gather detailed responses from the participants. This schedule facilitated the collection of both quantitative data (e.g., age at marriage, bride price amount) and qualitative information (e.g., experiences of women in bride price marriages). The schedule ensured consistency in data collection while allowing for in-depth exploration of sensitive topics.

Observation

Field observations provided insights into aspects not captured by the survey questionnaire. Observing social dynamics, daily interactions, and visible signs of inequality or domestic challenges offered additional context. Observations focused particularly on the lives of women married through bride price transactions, including any challenges they faced within their households or communities.

Key informant interviews

To gather historical context and understand social practices, interviews were conducted with five key informants. These included the sub-metropolitan chairperson, local elders, women's representatives, and social workers with a deep understanding of the community and marriage customs. Religious scholars, or pundits, also contributed insights into traditional marriage rites, bride price practices, and the ways these practices have evolved. These informants provided valuable perspectives that added depth to the analysis.

Reliability and validity of data

This study represents a pioneering exploration of bride price practices in Nepal. To enhance data reliability and validity, several measures were employed. The structured questions used in the questionnaire were well-tested to ensure clarity and consistency. Key questions were repeated in different formats to check the reliability of responses. For validating sensitive concepts, such as the amount paid as bride price and experiences of domestic violence, cross-verification with respondents' relatives was conducted. Additionally, pre-testing the questionnaire in a similar setting helped refine the questions, further improving the reliability and validity of the data. While the study's sample size of 126 respondents across three villages may limit the ability to generalize findings, the internal validity remains strong given the careful data collection and verification methods used.

Research background and requirements

The empirical data for this study were gathered in the spring of 2013. This section describes the analytical methods, tools, and statistical techniques used to interpret the data. Analysis was conducted using SPSS software, employing tools like ANOVA, Regression Analysis, and Cross-Tabulation. Relationships among variables were tested using F-tests and Chi-square tests to assess statistical significance. The results interpretation relies on specific statistical measures, including mean, standard deviation, and various regression and comparative tests. Given the statistical tools

used, it's essential to recognize the limitations each tool may present, as these factors impact the study's overall validity. The study utilized structured questionnaires, which come with inherent limitations, and did not include women who were absent during data collection.

Limitations of the study

This study, like all research, faces certain limitations and delimitations:

- **Sample size:** The study sample size is 126, which is reasonable for this scope of research but could have benefitted from a larger sample for improved representation and generalizability.
- **Jatis representation:** The study considers Jatis as a primary variable, specifically focusing on Brahmin, Chhetri, Sudra, and potentially some other ethnic groups. However, due to sampling constraints, representation of all relevant Jatis groups, such as Baisaya and certain ethnic minorities, could not be included. This may slightly limit the generalizability of findings across all Jatis in the region.

RESULTS

Data analysis and research findings

Distribution of jatis/ethnicity in the study area

The following table provides data on the distribution of households by Jatis/ethnic groups within the sampled area. The data in Table I shows a total of 170 households in the study area, distributed among various Jatis/ethnicities. The largest proportion of households belongs to the Sudra community, comprising 34.70% (or 59 households) of the total. This group includes sub-groups such as Kami, Sarki, Parki, and Tailors, indicating the prominent presence of skilled artisans and craftsperson in the area. Brahmins represent approximately 25.90% of the households, and Chhetries follow closely with 24.12%. The Thakuri group makes up the smallest segment, with only 15.30% of the households. This distribution highlights the diversity within the sampled villages and provides a sociocultural context for examining practices, such as marriage customs, that vary among Jatis.

Table I. Jatis' Distribution in the study area.

Jatis/Ethnicity	Brahmin	Chhetri	Thakuri	Sudras	Total
No of households	44 (25.90%)	41 (24.12%)	26 (15.30%)	59 (34.70%)	170

Source: DDC Report, 2000

Distribution of respondents according to types of marriage

Marriage can be classified into various types and sub-types across different societies. In the study area, two primary types of marriages were identified based on monetary transactions: Kanyadaan marriage and Bride Price marriage. Kanyadaan is considered an ideal form of marriage where no money is exchanged, emphasizing the spiritual and social bonds rather than financial

transactions. Conversely, in Bride Price marriage, the parents of the bride directly demand a monetary amount before the marriage, which is referred to as the bride price. This payment can also be viewed as a marriage expense, where the bride's family asks for money to facilitate the marriage but is not obligated to return it. The following table (Table 2) illustrates the distribution of the respondents based on their types of marriage: Data in Table 2 shows that 38.1 percent of marriages were held as Kanyadaan marriage while 61.9 percent of the marriages were held as bride price marriage.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents according to their types of marriage.

Types of Marriage	Kanyadaan	Bride price	Total sample size
Frequency	48 (38.10%)	78 (61.90%)	126

Source: Field Survey-2013

The interactive relationship between respondents' jatis and their types of marriage

This study aimed to explore the interactive relationship between respondents' Jatis and their types of marriage, as illustrated in Table 3. The analysis presented in Table 3 reveals distinct patterns in the prevalence of marriage types among different Jatis. Notably, the percentage of Bride Price marriages is the lowest among Brahmins, at approximately 14.3%. This is followed by Thakuris, with about 42.3%. In contrast, Chhetries exhibit a higher rate of Bride Price marriages, approximately 65.9%, while Sudras show the highest percentage at around 84.4%.

Table 3. Relationship between the respondents' jatis and their types of marriage.

Respondents' Caste	Types of Marriage		Total
	Bride Price	Kanyadaan	
Brahmin	2 (14.30 %)	12 (85.70%)	14
Thakuri	11 (42.30%)	15 (57.70%)	26
Chhetri	27 (65.90%)	14 (34.10%)	41
Sudra	38 (84.40%)	7 (15.60%)	45
Total	78 (61.9%)	48 (38.1%)	126

Chi-square (χ^2) = 27.661, df = 3, p-value = 0.000

Source: Field Survey- 2013

The results indicate a highly significant relationship between types of marriages and respondents' Jatis, as evidenced by the chi-square statistic (p-value = 0.000, df = 3). This suggests that Jatis play a critical role in determining the nature of marriage arrangements within the study population. To further visualize these findings, the following bar graph (Fig. 1) illustrates the comparative prevalence of Bride Price and Kanyadaan marriages across the different Jatis, providing a clearer understanding of the disparities among them. The results underscore the

cultural dynamics influencing marriage practices and highlight the significant correlation between Jatis and marriage type in this context.

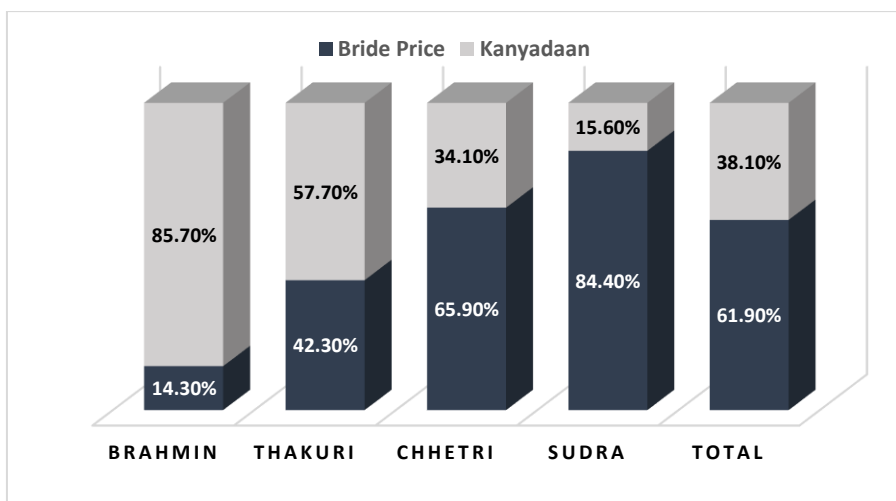


Fig. 1. Respondents' jatis vs. their types of marriage.

The interactive relationship between respondents' education status and their types of marriage

Education plays a vital role in shaping individuals' lives and has a positive impact on various aspects of society. It is often emphasized that the educational status of women is crucial in influencing multiple facets of human existence. Some of the surveyed women indicated that attending adult literacy classes organized by the government significantly affected their lives. The following table illustrates the distribution of the education status of women in the study area in relation to their types of marriage.

Table 4. Distribution of the education status of the respondents and their type of marriage.

Respondents' Education Level	Types of Marriage		
	Bride Price	Kanyadaan	Total
Illiterate	61 (84.72%)	11 (15.28%)	72 (57.15%)
Just Literate	11 (35.48%)	20 (64.52%)	31 (24.60%)
Primary	6 (33.33%)	12 (66.67%)	18 (14.28%)
Secondary	0 (0%)	5 (100%)	5 (3.98%)
Total	78 (61.90%)	48 (38.10%)	126

Chi-square (χ^2) = 23.342, df = 3, p-value = 0.000

Source: Field Survey-2013

The data in Table 4 reveal a stark contrast in marriage types based on the educational status of the respondents. Among illiterate women, a significant 84.72% of marriages were categorized as Bride Price marriages. However, this percentage declines dramatically among literate respondents. For those who are just literate, 35.48% of marriages were Bride Price marriages, and among those with primary education, the figure is slightly lower at 33.33%. Notably, no respondents from the secondary education category participated in Bride Price marriages, as all of them (100%) were married through Kanyadaan. This highlights a strong correlation between higher educational attainment and the preference for Kanyadaan marriages, which do not involve monetary transactions. The findings suggest a highly significant relationship between the types of marriage and respondents' education status, as indicated by the chi-square statistic ($p\text{-value} = 0.000$, $df = 3$). This underscores the impact of education on marriage practices, where increased educational levels are associated with a shift away from Bride Price marriages toward Kanyadaan marriages. To further elucidate these findings, a bar graph (Fig. 2) provides a visual representation of the differences in marriage types across various education levels, emphasizing the role of education in shaping marital customs within this community.

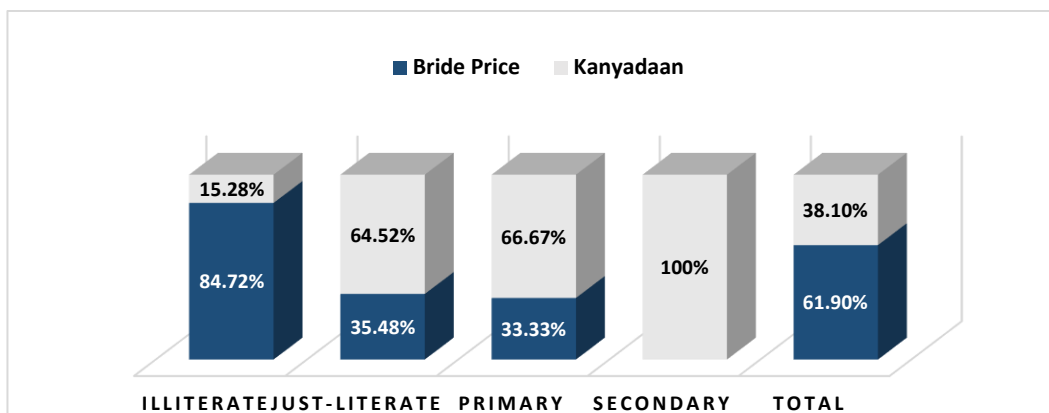


Fig. 2. Education statuses of the respondents vs. their types of marriage.

The interactive relationship between respondents' types of marriage and their dates of marriage (Time)

It is believed that the bride-price practice in the marriage has been in the societies for many centuries despite being undignified and brings a shame to the parents. In this part of the study, we wanted to see if the percentage of the bride price practice marriages mitigated over the passage of time. The sample data captured the marriages that took place between 1999 and 2059 BS, which are presented in the Table 5 and Fig. 3 below. The analysis shows that the percentage of bride price marriage was slightly higher than 50% of the total number of marriages that took place during 1999 – 2014 BS. This percentage has increased after 2014 B.S. and reached a maximum of 80.8% during 2030 - 2039 B.S. The percentage has started to fall and reached 50 % again during the last decade (2050 - 2059 B.S). However, the relationship between the types of marriage and dates of

the marriage that they took place is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level, which is an indication that the bride price practice remained the same over the time overall.

Table 5. Interrelationship between respondents' types of marriage and their dates of marriage.

Dates of Marriage (in BS)	Types of Marriage		Total
	Bride Price	Kanyadaan	
1999 - 2014	6 (54.50%)	5 (45.50%)	11 (8.70%)
2015 – 2029	11 (57.90%)	8 (42.10%)	19 (15.10%)
2030 – 2039	21 (80.80%)	5 (19.20%)	26 (20.60%)
2040 – 2049	23 (63.90%)	13 (36.10%)	36(28.60%)
2050 – 2059	17 (50.00%)	17 (50.00%)	34 (27%)
Total	78 (61.90%)	48 (38.10%)	126

Chi-square (χ^2) = 6.409, df = 4, p-value = 0.171

Source: Field Survey, 2013

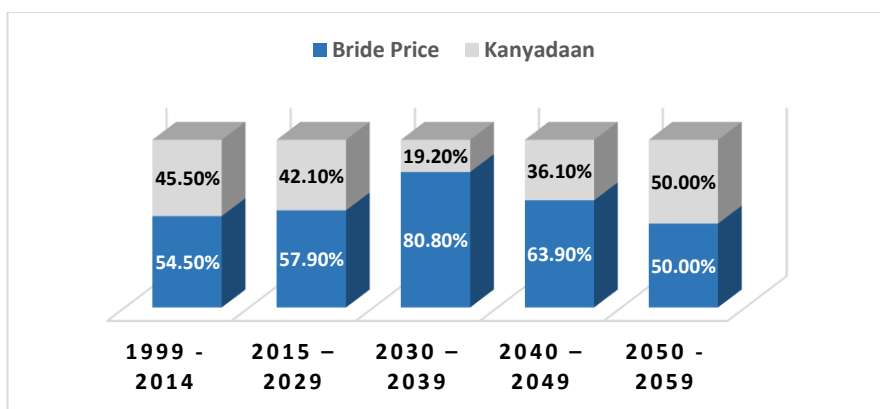


Fig. 3. Respondents' types of marriage vs. their date of marriage.

The interactive relationship between respondents' types of marriage and their parents' occupation

The occupation of parents significantly influences the socio-economic status of a family. Individuals employed in government and educational sectors, as well as those working abroad, are typically perceived to possess greater decision-making power, knowledge about legal matters, and access to education than those engaged solely in agricultural labor. Consequently, it is often observed that individuals involved in mental work hold a higher socio-economic status compared to those engaged in physical labor. In marriage customs, a notable trend emerges: families involved

in off-farm business tend to favor the Kanyadaan marriage practice, while families engaged in agriculture are more likely to opt for the bride price practice. This study aims to explore the interactive relationship between the respondents' parents' occupations and the types of marriage they experienced, as illustrated in Table 6 and Fig. 4. The analysis in Table 6 reveals that the highest percentage of bride price marriages (72.6%) occurs among farmers. This is closely followed by businessmen, with a bride price percentage of 70%. In contrast, the percentage of bride price marriages among school teachers is markedly lower at 20%, and the least prevalent is found among government employees, at just 18.2%. These findings indicate a statistically significant relationship between the types of marriage and the occupations of the respondents' parents (p -value = 0.001, $df = 4$). This suggests that socio-economic factors associated with parents' occupations play a crucial role in determining marriage practices within this community.

Table 6. Distribution of the respondents' types of marriage and their parents' occupation

Respondents' Parents' Occupation	Types of Marriage		Total
	Bride Price	Kanyadaan	
Farmer	61 (72.60%)	23 (27.40%)	84 (66.70%)
Businessmen	7(70.00%)	3 (30.00%)	10 (7.90%)
Working outside the country	7 (43.75%)	9 (56.25%)	16 (12.70%)
School Teacher	1 (20.00%)	4 (80.00%)	5 (4.00%)
Government Employee	2 (18.20%)	9 (81.80%)	11 (8.70%)
Total	78 (61.90%)	48 (38.10%)	126
Chi-square (χ^2) = 19.243, $df = 4$, p -value = 0.001			

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The interactive relationship between respondents' types of marriage and their parents' economic status

The economic status of a family is believed to significantly influence the upbringing of children and their marriage choices. It is commonly understood that parents with limited financial means are more inclined to use the bride price practice for marrying their children, rather than the Kanyadaan practice. This study aimed to empirically examine the relationship between respondents' parents' economic status and the types of marriages they engaged in. The economic status variable is categorized into two groups: Middle Class and Poor, based on the local village standards; however, both categories are considered poor by national standards. The observed patterns and data are presented in Table 7 and Fig. 5. The analysis in Table 7 reveals that the percentage of bride price marriages among respondents whose parents belong to the middle class

is approximately 54%. In stark contrast, the proportion rises to 100% for respondents with parents in the poor economic category, who exclusively utilize the bride price practice.

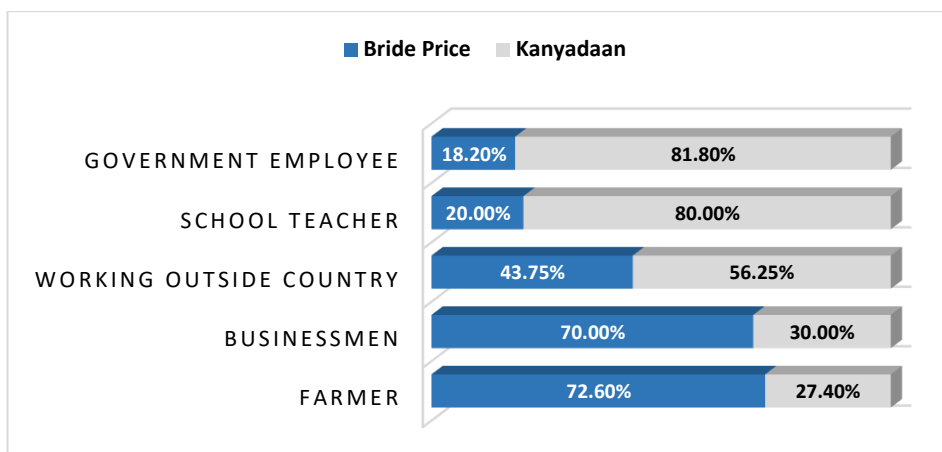


Fig. 4. Respondents' types of marriage vs. their parents' occupation.

Table 7. Distribution of the respondents' types of marriage and their parents' economic status.

Respondents' Parents' Economic Status	Types of Marriage		Total
	Bride Price	Kanyadaan	
Middle Class	57 (54.30%)	48 (45.70%)	105 (83.30%)
Poor	21 (100%)	0(0%)	21 (16.70%)
Total	78 (61.9%)	48 (38.1%)	126

Chi-square (χ^2) = 15.508, df = 1, p-value = 0.000

This relationship between the types of marriage and the respondents' parents' economic status is highly significant (p-value = 0.000, df = 1). Therefore, we can conclude that parents from poorer economic backgrounds are more likely to engage in the bride price marriage practice compared to those who are economically secure. In fact, among the poor, the bride price practice is utilized exclusively at a rate of 100%.

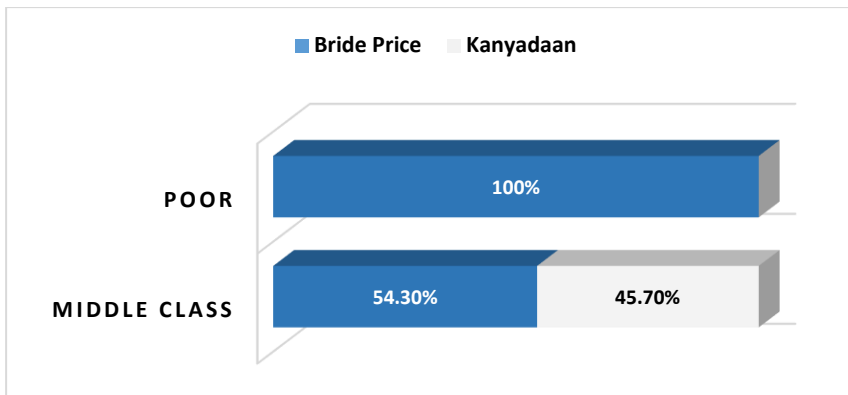


Fig. 5. Respondents' types of marriage vs. their parents' economic status.

The interactive relationship between respondents' types of marriage and their parents' education status

Education is widely recognized as a crucial factor that influences various aspects of socio-economic status and personal development. The educational attainment of parents is believed to play a decisive role in shaping their children's marriage practices. This study aimed to explore the interactive relationship between the education status of respondents' fathers at the time of marriage and the types of marriages their children experienced, as presented in Table 8 and Fig. 6.

Table 8. Distribution of the respondents' types of marriage and their fathers' education status.

Respondents' Fathers' Education Status	Types of Marriage		Total
	Bride Price	Kanyadaan	
Illiterate	55 (78.60%)	15 (21.40%)	70 (55.60%)
Just Literate	20 (48.80%)	21 (51.20%)	41 (32.50%)
Literate	3 (20.00%)	12 (80.00%)	15 (11.90%)
Total	78 (61.90%)	48 (38.10%)	126

Chi-square (χ^2) = 22.409, df = 2, p-value = 0.000

The data in Table 8 illustrate a clear trend: among respondents with illiterate fathers, approximately 78.6% of marriages were conducted as bride price marriages. This percentage decreases to about 48.8% for those with just literate fathers. In contrast, only 20% of marriages involving literate fathers followed the bride price practice. The relationship between types of marriage and respondents' fathers' education status is highly significant ($p = 0.000$, $df = 2$). Thus,

we can conclude that illiterate fathers are significantly more likely to engage in the bride price marriage practice compared to their educated counterparts.

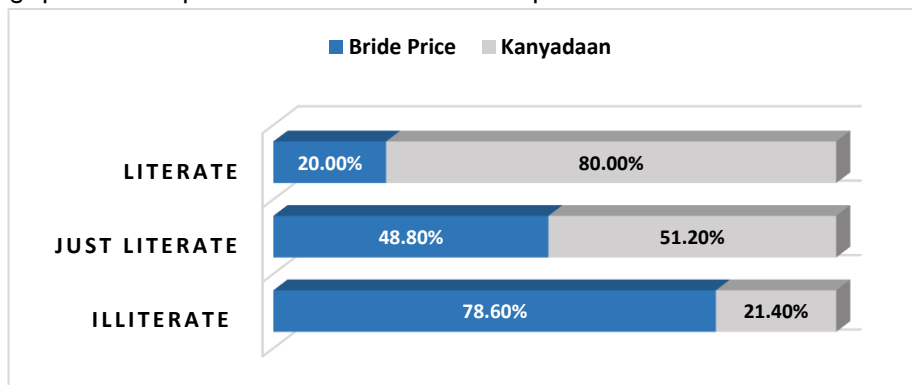


Fig. 6. Respondents' types of marriage vs. their fathers' education status.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

This study explored the intricate relationships between respondents' types of marriage and various socio-economic and educational factors, specifically focusing on their parents' occupations, economic status, and education levels. By analyzing data from a field survey conducted in 2013, the research aimed to understand how these variables influence marriage customs, particularly the prevalence of bride price and Kanyadaan practices. The findings indicated that parental occupation plays a significant role in shaping marriage practices. For instance, a substantial percentage (72.6%) of respondents from farming backgrounds opted for bride price marriages, while those whose parents worked in government positions exhibited a strong preference for the Kanyadaan practice (81.8%). This trend underscores the socio-economic disparities associated with different occupations, suggesting that individuals engaged in more intellectually demanding jobs tend to follow Kanyadaan traditions, which may align with higher socio-economic status and broader social networks.

Additionally, the analysis of economic status revealed that families categorized as poor were exclusively engaged in bride price practices (100%). In contrast, families classified as middle class demonstrated a mix of both marriage types, with 54.3% opting for bride price and 45.7% for Kanyadaan. This finding highlights the correlation between economic stability and marriage choices, suggesting that financial resources and social standing influence the types of marriages formed. The educational status of respondents' fathers further revealed significant insights. Among illiterate fathers, 78.6% of marriages were bride price arrangements, whereas only 20% of marriages involving literate fathers utilized this practice. The stark contrast indicates that education influences marriage customs, with more educated parents likely favoring Kanyadaan, which may reflect a shift towards modern values and practices. Overall, the data corroborate the hypothesis that parental socio-economic background and education significantly impact the marriage customs.

of their children, thereby revealing broader cultural and societal trends regarding marriage practices in the studied population.

Conclusion

The findings from this study provide compelling evidence that various factors related to parents significantly influence the types of marriages their children pursue. Specifically, the relationship between parental occupation, economic status, and educational attainment demonstrates a complex interplay that shapes cultural practices around marriage.

Parental occupation: The research illustrates that occupations characterized by higher socio-economic status, such as government employees and school teachers, correlate with a preference for Kanyadaan practices. In contrast, those from agricultural backgrounds predominantly engaged in bride price marriages. This trend may be reflective of broader societal values, where higher education and status align with changing perspectives on marriage customs.

Economic status: The study emphasizes the significant role of economic status in determining marriage types. Poor families were found to exclusively practice bride price marriages, suggesting that financial constraints may limit choices and perpetuate traditional practices. Conversely, middle-class families exhibited a more balanced approach, indicating a shift towards adopting diverse marriage customs.

Educational attainment: Education emerged as a critical determinant of marriage practices. Illiterate fathers predominantly favored bride price arrangements, while more educated fathers tended to opt for Kanyadaan. This finding indicates a potential shift in values associated with education, highlighting its transformative role in modernizing societal norms surrounding marriage. In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of socio-economic and educational factors in influencing marriage practices, contributing to a deeper understanding of cultural dynamics and societal change within the community.

Recommendations for future research

To build on the findings of this study and further explore the complexities of marriage customs in relation to socio-economic and educational factors, the following recommendations for future research are proposed:

Longitudinal studies: Conducting longitudinal studies could provide insights into how marriage practices evolve over time and how shifts in socio-economic status and education levels influence these changes. This approach would help in understanding the long-term effects of educational and economic advancements on marriage customs.

Qualitative research: Future studies could incorporate qualitative methods, such as interviews and focus groups, to gain deeper insights into individual experiences and perceptions surrounding marriage practices. Understanding personal narratives could enrich the quantitative findings and provide a more nuanced perspective on the cultural significance of bride price and Kanyadaan practices.

Cross-cultural comparisons: Research could be expanded to include cross-cultural comparisons, examining how marriage practices differ across various communities and regions.

This would help in identifying universal trends as well as unique cultural factors that influence marriage customs.

Interventions and programs: Investigating the impact of educational interventions aimed at improving socio-economic conditions within communities could provide valuable data on how such programs influence marriage practices. This research could guide policymakers in designing effective strategies to promote educational attainment and economic development, ultimately fostering progressive changes in marriage customs.

Impact of modernization: Exploring the effects of globalization and modernization on traditional marriage practices could provide insights into how external influences shape cultural norms. Research in this area could focus on how exposure to different cultures and ideas alters perceptions of marriage, particularly among younger generations.

By addressing these recommendations, future research can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the factors shaping marriage customs and their implications for societal development.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declared that there is no conflict of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

G. B. Malla led the research design process, including the development of the questionnaire and measurement tools, determined the sampling schemes, developed the theoretical or methodological framework, guided the data analysis and contributed significantly to manuscript writing. S. B. Malla organized the data, performed data analysis, and conducted a thorough proofreading of the manuscript. H. C. Malla designed the questionnaire, conducted data collection, performed the literature review, and contributed to the writing of the manuscript. M. D. Uprety selected the research problem, performed the literature review, and contributed to the manuscript writing.

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DATA AVAILABILITY

The original analyses performed in excel are presented in detail within the manuscript. However, restrictions apply for the sharing of the dataset.

ETHICAL STATEMENT

Ethical standards were diligently followed throughout the research process. The researcher ensured respect for participants' social values and maintained strict confidentiality of all respondent information. Formal permission for data collection was obtained from local authorities. Additionally, to foster trust and comfort among respondents, researchers established rapport by connecting with a few educated women from the community who then facilitated introductions to other respondents. These trusted community members helped administer questionnaires, supporting data collection and enhancing respondent comfort and openness.

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