

Capitalism and Marriage Practices- A case study of Pokhara Metropolitan City

*Shreedhar Pokhrel**

Abstract

For the most of human history, the family was primarily concerned with producing economic output. Families were built around production, thus choosing a spouse depended on how effectively one could both produce, including having more kids to supply the labor for farm or small business needed. Women and men were "yoke mates," as Stephanie Coontz, the family historian, put it. Marriages were about the ties of what economists call "complementary productive human capital." The rise of industrial system led to an increase in the amount of work performed outside of the home where people made bundle of social relationships. This all phenomenon results changes in marriage practice and love marriage becomes dominant features of capitalism where husband-wife relationship resolved around similar interests and consumption habits for rising the prosperity and easiness of life.

This paper examines the changing trends of marriage in capitalistic society and the factors affecting the selection of mate by arguing that selecting mate is not a personal decision but its outcome of particular form of society type and nature. The evidences presented here use data from both secondary literature and primary sources. The primary data have been purposively selected using case study methods on Pokhara Metropolitan city. Particular attention is paid to the transformation of marriage practices in city area with the rise of capitalism. The results indicate that the marriage institution have been changing rapidly than ever before with the rapid expansion of market economy, migration, education and communication which is directly or indirectly related to the personal decision of individuals mate selection process. The study also provides a more nuanced understanding of the involvement of men and women in decision making process for the selection of mate despite their caste and class.

Keywords: *Marriage, Capitalism, Decision making power, Relationship*

Introduction

Marriage as an institution practice everywhere in different forms the institution of marriage has long history of transformation and development. The institution of marriage has crucial role for development and well-functioning of society. Marriage institution was begun when people started to live in group, and it is root of family formation. Morgan believed that the first form of family- The Consanguine family- was started when the marriage group are separated according to generation, all the grandfather and grandmother within the limits of the family are all husband and wives of one another it applies to father and mother and grandchildren also, such a family had consisted of the descendent of single pair (Morgan, 2021). Traditional societies practice different forms of marriage such as forced marriage,

*Research Scholar

endogamy-endogamy marriage but now love between man and women as the basis of marriage is a central feature of modern societies. Such love is powerful cultural component with large implication both societies themselves and the civilization they are affecting (Macfarlane, 1986).

The Study of marriage forms and nature, social norms and values regarding marriage, its impact in individual and society is the passion of social or behavioral scientist such as anthropologist, economist, psychologist, political scientist and obviously sociologist. Sociologist mostly concern with social change whereas they focus on change in human interaction and relationship that transform cultural and social institution and within institution practice. They wanted to dig out why and how social change is occurring and what is happening in social institutions. Mills believe that sociologist can understand and analyze these changes in social institution based on historical developments of society, nature of society, individual and role of global forces to shape these social changes (Mill 1959). The changing practice of marriage needs to be studied for understanding the social change.

The essential thing about marriage is that it is a stable relationship in which a man and women are socially permitted, without loss of standing in the community to have children. Marriage is a social union or a legal contract between people that creates kinship. The institution of marriage in which interpersonal relationship; generally intimate and physical are acknowledged in a different of ways depending on the culture or subculture in which it is found, and it is durable connection between male and female (Westermarck, 1921). The reason behind marriage is different such as legality of children, emotional support, economic, spiritual and religious propose. Nowadays the concept of marriage between heterosexual group also changes and some countries constitutionally accept homosexual marriage which challenge the traditional definition of marriage.

A Society is a system of interlocking groups well integrated through institutionalized patterns. One of the most important structural systems of every society is its kinship system made up in part by marriage. Marriage as an institution develops to fulfill the human needs in society. It helps to fulfill biological and psychological needs of human being. Malinowski believed that culture is always instrumented to satisfy organic need. Therefore he had to bridge the gap between the concept of biologically basic needs of the organism and the facts of culturally organized behaviors (Malinowski, 1939). He strongly argued that the institution of marriage is developed by man for fulfill their basic needs of reproduction.

The belief, ideas and practices of marriage system differ by nature of society, religion, culture, ethnic and kinship norms and values of group people belonging to. I have observed different forms of marriage specially in western part of Nepal namely arrange marriage and love marriage, both are dominant practice. The number of arrange marriage decreasing gradually and love marriage became popular among young. Why people are motivated to get love marriage, on which circumstance people are encouraged to get love marriage. Love marriage is not independent or a unique feature of society it also relates with democracy, individuals' freedom or pathways towards freedom, level of education, occupation and other individual and social feature. In general people thought that love is a complete emotional or expressive which do not care about other boundaries such as caste, religion, class, kinship but

in contrast people preference of partner mostly belong from acceptable caste group, religion, class. On the other hand our parents and grandparents also have a heart and may have feeling like today's young generation but rarely got love marriage.

In order to understand the reason behind the practice of love and marriage I have focused on some questions and find out the answer of these questions

1. What are the key factors of choosing own mate and get marriage?
2. How the expansion of capitalism or nature of society determines the nature of marriage practice in society?

The basic method of data collection for this study was based on the case studies and interview for interview I used particularly key informant interview, unstructured interview. For key informants interview I was interviewed with some selected people particularly with the elderly people and their experience also provide the guideline for research. I used to collect case study of people who participate in love marriage. I had spent adequate time and attention to the respondent for case study which provided me the opportunity to make a friendly relationship with them and gather reliable information. Furthermore, I had used life history method to gather background information of respondent by using their own word. Life histories consist of biographical material assembled about individual-usually as recalled by the individual themselves. Over procedure of research don't usually yield as much information as the life histories methods does about the development of beliefs and attitudes over time. Life histories methods does about the development of beliefs and attitudes over time. Life histories studies rarely rely wholly on people's memories, however, normally sources such as letters, contemporary reports and newspaper descriptions are used to expand and check the validity of the information individual provide (Giddens, 2009).

Conceptual Framework

Sociology of Family, a new branch of sociology, has stressed the changing patterns of social institutions like family, marriage kinship etc. in the changing context of society. Marriage system are very important subject matter to be studied in the discipline of sociology. Every society accepts and supports marriage institutions strongly. In the society marriage is seen as a source of support, entertainments and satisfaction to all married couples (Acharya 2001). Marriage is also a source of legitimacy to reproduction of children in society, and it has importance in economy or livelihoods of people. However, there is difference practice of marriage system exist in the society. In arranged marriage parents and kinship member choose partners for their adult or parents take decision. The partner chooses from their interest group mostly from selected caste, religion, class and so on. On the other hand, love marriage is a system of marriage where a boy or girl can take decision for to whom they get married or not.

Capitalism is a unique nature of society or a mode of production with specific feature such as individualism, production for market, motive to make a profit, cycle of investment leads to industrialization, urbanization, advancement of technology and global village. Where people normally make people separate from family not only in terms of indigenous

or familial occupation, or their ancestral property but also physically and emotionally. In the process of job and education people are migrated from one place to another place, they left their birthplace in the process of his/her work or for good opportunities. Their family, kinship, religious, caste, ethnic, social boundaries became weak, and they have new friend or co-worker, began to earn or economically independent which give them freedom to choose partner, take own decision. In capitalism people who are separated from family by physical and emotional, not sustain from ancestor property, not to claim or unable to claim ancestor property, separate occupation and lifestyle from family. Probably never return 'home' in future, individual freedom, educated about independent and self-responsible person is generally make self-decision about choice of marriage. Love marriage is that marriage system for those individual who is free, independent, and self-responsible (Mishra 2006).

Factor affecting the marriage practice in capitalism.

Education

One of the major variable or quality of respondent directly related to the decision of marriage and specific feature of capitalistic society is education especially mass education, where pupil united on formal setting for achieving common goal of prosperity and change. Education plays a significant role in changing the social relationship, enlighten the people or able to find cause effect relationship of every social phenomenon and lead a social institutional transformation. On the other hand, capitalism is a specific historical period where individualism reached in peak, so that people often think and educated to think about their individual own prosperity and happiness rather than familial, kin group, caste group prestige and values.

In capitalist society education is major weapon of winner that's why every individual seek for proper education opportunities and migrated from here and there. In my field Pokhara most of the respondent are at first migrated from rural to urban and neighbor district to relatively developed city Pokhara where higher education institution is access. They started to live there either in a room or in a hostel for their future education. During that time, they have new friendship circle and co-workers to whom they became interested. In such educational institutions have similarity of age group, goal and target but different caste, religion, gender, ethnicity, social background, class which is not clearly shown.

The place where I conducted research is a core for education in western region where the higher education is available and people from countryside immigrated for education purpose. One of my respondents Mr Deepak who is 38 years old belong from Syanza district. He came to Pokhara before fifteen years after finished his secondary level. Then he joins Prithivi Narayan Collage and finished his bachelor's degree in physics. He meets a girl in collage annual function and became close friends. Their friendship gradually changes into love than got marriage. His wife belongs from so called higher cast, and urban area but both of they are not more concern about their social stratification because they have had a hope to cope with situation and live their life without support from their families. After getting marriage they started to live in rented room together and both are found a job and live a normal life and self-sustain.

Migration

Migration is a process of movement from where one people can move from one place to another place permanently or temporally. This is because people always look forward for gaining any opportunities and facilities to make their life easier and speedy. Mainly in capitalistic nature of society the growth of migration trend has increased rapidly than ever before. In the context of Nepal people are involved in both internal and external migration. But in this research includes internal migrant respondent only. Most of the respondents migrate for tow reason, firstly for searching of employment opportunities, secondly for better education which enable them to show the pathways to prosperity. For instance, my respondent of as 31 came for Argakachi, had hoped that they would be able to get job in daytime in Pokahra and able to continue their education in the morning sift. If they had had a job, it would be easier for him to continue education. Mr Bhushal a hardworking man migrated from rural area in the process of searching for education and occupation meet a life partner in this process and share their feeling and thought to forget their loneliness as both are far from their family. Mostly in city, where the gathering of migrated have less kinship relationship in addition with the word of professor Chaitanya Mishra “For sustain between unidentified and surface identify people, decrease the pressure of competition and for decrease the long alienation love and love marriage became a highway in capitalism” (Misra, 2002). Therefore, the migration has a dominant role for sustaining capitalism and influencing the changing of marriage practices.

1. Globalization and marriage practice

The idea that we all now live in a global economy based on global market providing goods and services across the world is now commonplace. Moreover, Macshall McCludhani, concept of the ‘global village ‘in which we not only know what is happening on the other side of the world but can watch it life, as it happens is a reality. Through modern global communication, through the internet, people across the world can talk face to face, or at list monitor to monitor. The global world in now, all aspects of life, society and culture has been affected if not redefined by globalization. Even the political world is now a truly global one.” (Slatter, 2003).

Now in the new era of technology people are dealing with the whole world from the small room as technology and communication makes the whole world into a single village. Nothing remains personal or the events happening in one parts of the world affect the whole world. For instance, the Ukraine Russia war affect the whole world. Another example of the incident of September 11 attack in America affect immigration and foreign labor policy which effect at the end the individual livelihood, social institution.

Before the period of capitalism people used to live in a limited boundary. The nature of economy is subsistence economy where people mostly produced thing for their self-use and mostly production based on agriculture. They had connected only with their kinship network, neighbors village people because it was not possible to travels by foot for long distances.

After the expansion of globalization along with development of transportation and technology people tend to expand their connectivity and network all over the world. They

started to travel different places for employment, business, education. On the other hand, people exchange their economy and labor with global markets while the cultural value and social beliefs also come with the economy.

In the current situation each culture or group of people are separated from the global movement and exchange. Mostly the market culture impact on all the global. The expansion of capitalistic culture and individualism and concept of global citizenship beyond the local boundaries broaden the individual network and connectivity which is only possible through globalization. The boundary of society and family became weaker as people may not limited within a limited boundary of social relationship by maintaining their cast, religion, class, education, geographical area and so on. As in case of my respondent Mr. Shaha a boy of 36 who passed his bachelor's degree in computer science belong to the Tarai region get marriage with the young girl from Kavre district which is one of the mountain regions of Nepal. Mr. Shaha lived in abroad and Mr. Bhetwal studied in Kathmandu. At first both are connected through social media and later they got marriage and move to Pokhara. After few years of marriage their family also accept their relation. Their family also said that the effect of globalization and the awareness created in society after the expansion of communication, globalization and capitalism.

2. Communication and changing marriage practices.

Human relation became meaningful when the two men or women interact each other. Communication helps one to share their feeling, ideas, thoughts and many other things with each other. The development of technology provides us variant types of sources of communication such as telephone, Internet, cell phone and so on. Through the expansion of technological development people can easily tale and some closer with each other at any time. From Sociological perspective, interaction is one of the crucial aspects of social relationship which is possible through means of communication. Adding to this Sociologist William Kornblum write the important of interaction for social control and social progress as due to repeated interaction among individual and groups, families communities, corporation, armies, entire societies indeed all the social forms we can think of interpersonal behaviors in which people communicate, give and talk, share, complete and so on. For exchange of goods, information, love and all the rest- that is , if there were no interaction among people- obviously there could be no social life(William, 2011).

Thus, I can strongly argue that the increasing sources of communication and technological development also affects the social relation and the culture in which we brought on based on my informant information. This can be seen as in results of changing the trend of marriage practice in different parts of our country. Also in my field sites too I found the same impacts of communication on peoples life which determines their social relation that they establish with their parent after they select their mate. For instance, in my case of Mrs. Thapa she was university student lived in urban area meet with her partner in the Facebook and continuously connected through Facebook later then they are come into conclusion and get married. Thus, the development of communication is success to change the perception of the people about the caste system, and to think outside of their world. The increasing trend of the watching television and listening to the radio, using social media aware people there Is a world beyond their boundaries and motivate to choose their partner freely.

Conclusion

Generally, marriage is seeming to be a union between two opposite sexes. It is an universal institution exist all over the world however its forms and practices are differ from society to society, cultural to culture. On the other hand capitalism also speared all over the world in different forms and nature. Moreover, the effect of capitalism or level of impact correspondingly differ by one place to another place based on their access to global connectivity, uses of technology and communication, internal and external mobility, impact of mass education and changing nature of economy. Mostly adult who have access to education and other social opportunities are less likely to engage in arrange marriage. People who had access to T.V viewing, listening and watching western media, and reading of magazines was seems to be a significant predictor of participation and choice in the selection of a marriage partner among Nepali resident, regardless of their cultural group membership (Lloyd,2006;340). The expansion of capitalism and its impact on social institutions such as education, marriage, media, market, economic organization, business in Pokhara furthermore enhance high internal and external mobility, connection with the global world and people and new dream path and destiny for adult. Such institutional change not only show the new dream but also detached from the kinship boundary, family, religious borderline, adopting new social and cultural norms and values which lead to changing new types of marriage particularly love marriage, which is a specific feature of capitalism.

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