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## **Dowry: An infectious custom**

**Shrishti Dogra**

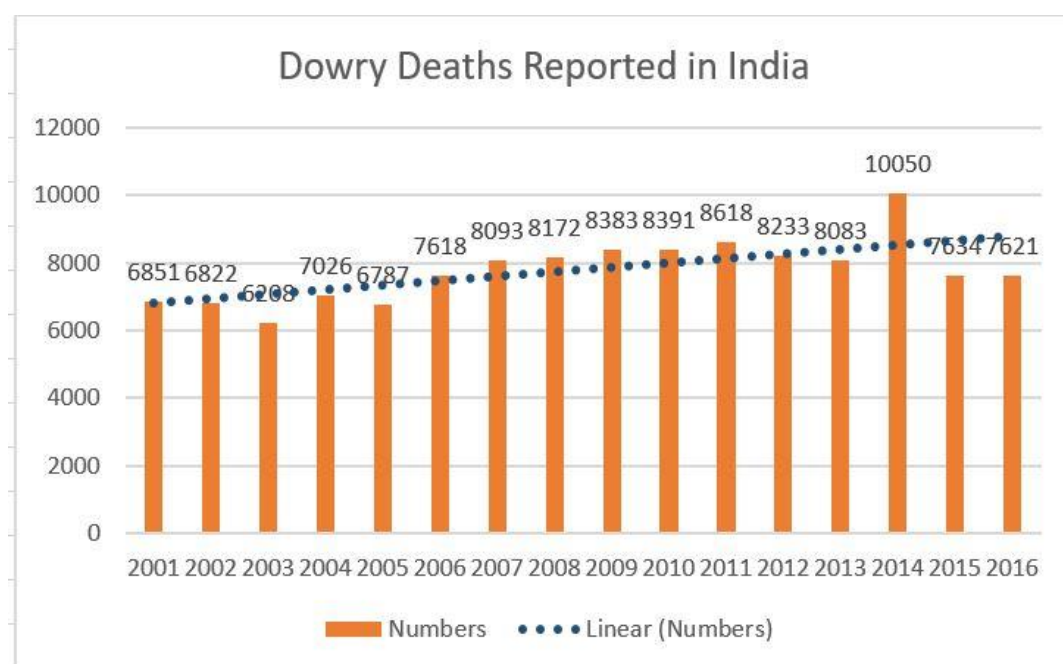
A marriage harmonizes two individuals for ultimate eternity. It is considered to be a holy process. It is recognized by liveable continuity. It is followed by traditional rituals and it also joins two families together. There are certain practices and rituals which are followed and one such custom is Dowry.

This is a practice which is being followed since ages in our country, wherein some essential items were given in the form of gifts to the bride by her parents so that she does not face any kind of problem. And these gifts were owned only by the bride. But as we all are aware of the fact that time changes everything, it even changed the whole concept of this custom too for a few people. Now, the meaning, the purpose and even the value of those gift items have changed to an extent that the items which were meant to be for the bride now fulfils the needs and demands of such grooms and their family.

And the people attending the marriage, the groom and his relatives judge the status of the bride's family by the amount of sum they give in the form of dowry. The in-laws of the bride try to show off the sum that they have received from the bride's parents to the society.

The main factor behind dowry is the greed of such people. They demand shamelessly the expense that they have done on their son, from the bride's parents. They wish to take everything from them that they including their son couldn't afford. And if they are unable to fulfil their demand they take the revenge by doing violence on the bride. The girl, who with immense amount of expectations and aspirations enter her husband's house now sees all her dreams shattering. This is a very common reason for domestic violence in India.

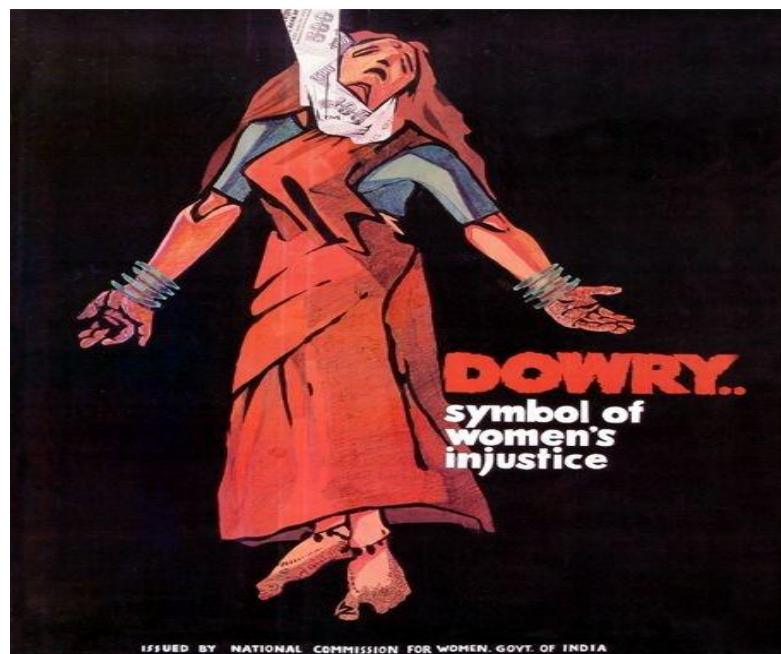
I even want to focus on the point that in today's world not only the illiterate but even the literates are practicing and uplifting this.



Dowry system is that one custom which is responsible for female foeticide and female infanticide as it is one of the major reasons that some people think that a girl child is a burden on the parents. As mentioned earlier the parents used to give gift to their daughters in the form of 'stridhana' which were the valuables given to the bride on her marriage and only the bride had the authority over it but nowadays, the in-laws of the bride want that too.

There are many acts and provisions in our Constitution that are against this system but it is still growing and gaining more and more strength. Some of them are **Dowry Prohibition Acts, enacted on May, 1<sup>st</sup>, 1961,**<sup>1</sup> intended to prevent the giving or receiving of a dowry. Under this Act, dowry includes property, goods or money given by either party to the marriage by the parents by the parents of either party by anyone else in connection with the marriage.

And under **Section 304-B,**<sup>2</sup> whoever commits dowry deaths shall be punished with an imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than 7 years but which may extend to an imprisonment for life. Even though there is an implementation of the laws which protects the



women from such activities but still there is a fall back as this system is gaining rapidity. These laws have saved the lives of many women but still there are many who are going through the pain. The educated people are also performing this shameful activity and encouraging it. In my opinion there is no point, no meaning and no value of one's educational qualifications if he/she is performing such practices even after knowing the repercussions of it.

And if one is educated, they do not need anything from anyone, they can earn for themselves and Stand on their own feet and instead of taking money from the bride's parents one should help

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<sup>1</sup> [Twinkleben Umeshbhai Patel vs State Of Gujarat](#) on 4 May, 2018

<sup>2</sup> [Deepak Kumar @ Babbu @ Ballu vs State Of U.P.](#) on 1 August, 2019



them and do everything equally as marriage is not only a bond between husband and wife but is a life long relationship between the two families too. So everyone should play an equal role and should not burden the ones who are already giving their daughter.

This male dominating society can only gain equality if such customs are eradicated not only in the books but also from the minds and mentality of the people.

I have seen many families mortgaging their property, selling their valuables just to meet with the needs and demands of such shameful people and even then they do not get satisfied. There are so many articles, essays that tell is about this heinous custom but still it is persistent and constant.

Because of this custom, marriage, a holy process now seems to be a settlement for a few people. They do not consider the bride as their family member but consider her as a source of income. They have no sentiments for the girl and her family but they have a lot of affection towards the money and the valuables that they will get.

Such people have no right to take anybody's daughter with themselves instead they should be boycotted by the society. It is the need of the hour to punish such people and this can only be done by the bride's parents or the girl herself.

A girl who marrying you should be treated as one's own family member and not as a slave. She has now devoted herself to you by leaving her parents home and entering to a new house which is a new world for her.

Women are treated as goddess in our country then why such activities are still in existence, whereby women are treated as slaves , as a source of income?

This custom raises many questions on the upbringing of such people who follow it. In my opinion, even if somebody gives a lot in charity and have done a lot of good work, but is also practicing this, is doing much bad then the expected good.

One bad thing can ruin your whole profile and this is one of those things which might provide you with money and all but will literally decay the respect you gained throughout your lifetime in just a few seconds.

People nowadays should not stand against the inter-caste and inter-religious marriages as doing so closes the doors for the bride and the groom to choose a perfect partner for themselves and it is also the easiest way out to stop this practice as both of them will have an equal sharing of everything and automatically dowry system will loose it's pace and will gradually go away and after that not even a single family will consider a daughter as a burden, and also there will be no more dowry deaths. This will make a world which would be free from such mentality.

And I would also like to say that people who are promoting dowry by giving it, should donate blood instead. It can and will save somebody's life and not someone's avarice.

## **CONCLUSION:**

To conclude my topic I would like to say that this 'dowry system' is so much deep rooted in our society that it is not possible that one or two families or individuals can eradicate it but this will only be removed if each one of us stands against this custom and we should first start by ourselves. And there are many of us who are raising their voice against Dowry and setting examples for others<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> [Kerala village goes online for dowry-free marriages.](#)