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## **FACTORS IN CAUSATION OF INTERCASTE MARRIAGE – A SOCIOLOGICAL BREAKTHROUGH.**

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### **ABSTRACT**

An empirical study was conducted on two hundred (200) intercaste married spouses in Varanasi district of eastern Uttar Pradesh to examine the causation factors that govern intercaste marriage using exploratory cum- descriptive design. The observations made enunciate that in most of the cases more than one facto had been responsible to bring the couples together. In majority physical attraction appeared most promising factor to bring the couple together. Besides, socio-cultural factors also emerged asleadimf factors among the couples to ignore caste difference.

Generally, in intercaste marriage the selection of a partner solely rests with the party itself. Among young men and woman intimacy spontaneously develops when they meet each other on various social occasions or when they happen to live near each other or when they study or work together. There are further, casual occasions like social visits, cultural programmes, social gathering, college, picnics, functions of cultural associations, sports practice and competitions, teacher-student or employer-employee relationships, working together in an office/industrial establishment/educational institutions, and introduced by common friends etc., which are means for bringing together people belonging to different caste and cultural groups. This intimacy in some cases results in the permanent union of both. But intercaste marriage are not invariably brought about by the parties themselves. There are instances of such marriage which were arranged and celebrated by the parents and/or relatives, and not as the result of the initiative on the part of the parties. There have been cases, though rare, when the persons who are so united



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did not even know each other before marriage. There are also instances in which the males took the initiative and found out suitable partners for themselves without prior development or intimacy between the two. Intercaste marriage, therefore, need not be indiscriminately identified with 'Love marriage'. Keeping aforesaid facts in mind the present piece of work was undertaken to unearth the causation factors which were operative in bringing about the parties together.

#### METHODOLOGY

The current study was done using an exploratory cum- descriptive design, while its main purpose is to make an exploratory study of the problems of intercaste marriages. **The hypothesis which is being proposed to be tested is "That in most of the spouses conception the most important qualities for pair selection are good character, superior education and handsome in look, superior intellect, economically potential and self confident. They do not much approve of caste marriage."**

The universe of the study consist intercaste married spouses in Varanasi district of eastern Uttar Pradesh. It is no doubt true that selection of representative samples is perhaps the most difficult single aspect of any social survey in the field of sex and marriage (Chesser,1974). Since the present study is of a homogenous group and the method chosen for analysis is qualitative, a comparatively smaller group of units is required. Keeping above fundamental basics a sample of 200 spouses constituting intercaste marriages were selected on a purposive basis. For the purpose highly structured interview schedule was prepared to collect the relevant information. Relevant data were collected both from primary as well as from secondary sources. The data thus collected were analyzed statistically using appropriate statistical design (Snedecore and Cochran, 1994).

#### Results and discussion

Results recorded during current study are presented in following heads.



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## ETIOLOGICAL FACTORS

The pull motives which formed the basis of the intercaste marriages for the couples can be assessed more thoroughly from the replies they have furnished to the question, “what were the pull factors as well which have attracted your attention in selection of your life partner.

Table 1 : Pull factors of intercaste marriage

Pull Factors	Spouses					
	Male		Female		Total (M+F)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Mainly physical attractiveness	95	47.5	98	49.0	193	48.3
Mainly good character & good temperament	55	27.5	44	22.0	99	24.7
Mainly academic attainment or high accomplishment in art or literature	30	15.0	18	9.0	48	12.0
Mainly higher socio-economic status	10	5.0	32	16.0	42	10.5
Mainly westernized and modernized	08	4.0	08	4.0	16	4.0
Mainly way of living	01	0.5	01	0.5	02	0.5
Total	200	100.0	200	100.0	400	100.0

$$X^2 = 15.793$$

$$d.f.=5(P<001)$$



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There are some forceful pull factors as well which have attracted the attention of the couples towards one another, either during the first meeting or at early stage of their association. Further it is to be noted that the couples who have given any single characteristic as the most attractive force are very rare. The majority of them have stated more than one factor as the main force to draw them together. But in this study attention has been focused only the most forceful factor which led them to enter into intercaste marriage.

It is evident that the most attractive factor is said to be ‘physical attractiveness.’ The largest number of couples that is, 48.3 percent (48.5 percent of the males and 49.0 percent of the females) have given this as one of their considerations. A larger number of couples maintain that it is the physical aspect of beauty that immediately attracts the attention of any person. They hold that physical beauty is a powerful broker in marriage market. Beautiful girls and handsome boys are like beautiful flowers, the site of them creates a desire to possess, to care and enjoy. Thus, beauty solves half the problem of courting. When this attraction is predominant, all other factors, however untasteful, are pushed to the background. Therefore, the choice of mates is essentially impulsive in character, and to support this instinctive activity the service of reason is called for and justification and rationalization take place. Even though this point merits consideration, it will be contrary to facts if we stretch it far to apply it to all the cases because we have in our survey a few cases where there is not only no positive aspect of beauty, but the negative phase of it has gone to such an extent that it would be hardly possible to use the word physical attraction, much less beauty in that context. It may also be pointed out that, if this is the only factor that governs selection, then, as a logical consequence, it is quite likely that, when the attractiveness of the youth fades away, the marriage bond itself would be at stake.

Further, results reveal that 24.7 percent of the couples (27.5 percent males and 22.0 percent females) have accepted good character as well as good temperament of the parties as one of the major factor governing their choice. It is of interest to note that 12.0 percent of the couples (15.0 percent males and 9.0 percent females) have attracted towards each other due to the



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academic attainment or high accomplishment in art or literature or sports of the other party. It is possible for intellectually matured couples to understand each other very quickly and make the necessary adjustments after marriage without difficulty.

Higher socio-economic status of the other party is also a positive factor which attract a male or female. There are 10.5percentof the couples (5.0 percent males and 16.0 percent females) who have given this as one of their considerations. But higher socio-economic status, like physical attractiveness, are unreliable inducements and not sound foundations for marriage, if it is to last. If the marital union is primarily based upon these factors, their waning away in future would bring disaster in its trail. There are cases in which misinformation or lack of understanding in this respect, create conflicts between the couples, when they were later on disillusioned.

But it is really a matter of deep concern that a few female respondents have gone out of the group for marriage to enhance their social prestige. The reason for these females to marry outside their caste group is the stigma of their being identified with lower caste group. They wish to have a higher caste group name and also which to become part of the higher caste group which according to them is a distinct advantage. There are some cases in which westernized and modernized made of living of the other party also played their role in arousing favorable response, 4.0 percent of the couples (4.0 percent males and 4.0 percent females) have given evidence to this fact.

Further, leading carefree life has been given as an attraction force by 0.5 percent couples (5.0 percent male and 0.5 percent female). There are a few instances in each of these both couples where leading carefree life for the other party became in effect the crucial point of attraction. This factor also would create the emotion of self-submissiveness in the other individual and thereby, by harmony become much earlier.



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## CIRCUMSTANTIAL FACTORS

It may be clear at the outset that the pull motives consist in the aims and objectives to be followed that one sets before oneself and the push factors, the situations that circumstances that induce persons to proceed in the direction of their goal actualization.

It is clear from table 2 that in the case of the largest number i.e. 49.0 percent of couples intercaste marriages may be said to have originated from socio-cultural factors. Socio-cultural factors helping the cause and promotion of intercaste marriage indirectly are those associations in which people from different castes and cultural groups come together and work for the realization

Table 2: Push Factors of Intercaste Marriage.

Pull Factors	Spouses					
	Male		Female		Total (M+F)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Socio-Cultural Factors	103	51.5	93	46.5	196	49.0
Professional Factors	42	21.0	59	29.5	101	25.3
Residential Propinquity	39	19.5	31	15.5	70	17.5
Psychological Factors	12	6.0	09	4.5	21	5.2
Economic Factors	4	2.0	08	4.0	12	3.0
Total	200	100.0	200	100.0	400	100.0

$X^2=6.048$

d.f.=4 non- significant

of certain objectives. There are, further, casual occasions like social visits, cultural programmes, social gatherings, picnics, etc. which are important means for bringing together people belonging



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to different caste and cultural groups. There are several socio-cultural occasions for young men and women to come together and mix freely. The occasions result in getting acquainted, leading to subsequent meetings and development of intimacy.

There are some interesting cases in which some males and females happened to know each other in the university campus and their deep interest in literary pursuit gradually brought them closer and closer, ultimately leading to marriage. In the university campuses there are three types of social relations possible viz., those between the teachers, those between the students and those between the teachers and the students. 10 couples in our sample were class mates in the B.A., B.Sc., M.A., M.Sc., M.B.B.S. and M.D. and M.S. classes and two were studying in the commerce faculty together. Four were university mates belonging to different subjects, yet their distinction in such subjects created an appeal for each other. In 12 cases, intimacy developed more particularly while taking part in extra-curricular activities such as literary associations, dramas games etc. Thus, students in university campus have gone for inter-caste marriages. Association, freedom to mix, common interests, have all contributed to this, the opportunity to mix together was primarily provided by the university campus. Among teachers themselves there was 10 instances of intercaste marriages, and between teachers and female students. The proposal of a teacher is generally accepted by a female student with a bit of surprise and reverence, while the teacher sometimes feels a little uneasy, because of the traditional disapproval regarding marital relationship between the two. Some teachers have pointedly drawn attention to this situation. Thus, there are in all 41 cases in which opportunities for contact presented themselves in the university campus.

Another social field which offers a good occasion for young men and women to attract towards each other and ultimately leads to unite in marriage is family visits. When the parents of the children get plenty of occasions as well as a right to become friends during family. When they grow up in age and the questions or their marriage come up, their intimacy and friendship prompt them to contract differences at times do not become serious impediments for young



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people, because their parents happen to be good friends. At such situations present great problems for the parents who never expected such consequences to results from their own social relationship. There are 60 such couples in our study. The table 2, further shows that the identical professions present numerous opportunities to young people to mix and become intimate with persons with diverse and sometimes conflicting cultural patterns. It is the awareness of professional interests or the identification of the professional interests and attitudes that makes them more attracted towards each other and ultimately leads to unite in marriage. There are 25.3 percent couples in which cases such provisional interests resulted in intercaste marriage. This awareness of 'commonness' is likely to exist more in those people who are placed in more specialized occupations. The greater the degree of specialization or of stratification, the greater the tendency to selective mating of this sort." It is also clear from the above table that there is one important factor as well which promote intercaste marriage. This important factor is residential propinquity. There are 17.5 percent of the couples in our study who were residing in neighboring areas before marriage. More than half of these couples were staying actually either in the same building or in the adjoining ones. Thus, providing opportunities for their acquaintance and knowing each other intimately. In the remaining cases, the couples stayed in the same locality, but not so close as to meet very often. However, they occasionally saw each other when they were passing by the side of each other's house. It was discovered in the present study that in the case of families which are residentially so close, children are likely to develop friendship amongst themselves. Apart from these, physiological and emotional factors too are there which promote intercaste marriage among the couples.

### **CONCLUSIONS:**

Based on the findings it may conclude that pull and push motives are more extra- sacrament than otherwise. Physical attractiveness appeared as most promising factors governing intercaste marriage. The reason for attraction may therefore, be a complex of several factors such as good character, good temperament, higher academic attainment or high accomplishment in art or





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literature, proficiency in music, histrionic talent, sports etc.socio-cultural factors are another which play an important role in promoting intercaste marriage among couples.

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