Structural Functionalist Perspective

When the cost-benefit ratio is balanced, so that no party stands gain or lose either materially or socially, prestation are unlikely to be transferred. The absence of institutionalized groom wealth, then, reflects the fact that there are no regular situations in which a man's grouping suffers disadvantage by the alienation of his productive and reproductive powers.

Jack Goody (1973) concentrates primarily upon bride wealth and dowry which are associated respectively with Africa and Eurasia, where their practice is seen to be functionally related to contrasting organizational structures. For Goody, it is their nature of enduring social and economic structures, not the commercial logic of conjugal transactions, which gives forms and meanings to these payments. He states that bride wealth and dowry involve the redistribution of property at marriage and must consequently be analyzed in the wider context of property relations. But such relations are themselves entailed in an encompassing social order. Thus dowry, which is a form of diverging devolution, is associated with bilateral systems, since heritable wealth is not retained within the bounds of a corporate unit. Bride wealth, on the other hand, typically involves a transfer between corporations (minimally defined), and is linked to the lineal devolution a descent structures.

Eurasian dowry is associated with hierarchy and hypergamy whereas African bride wealth with their absence. Diverging devolution places a stress upon both the material bond and strong affinal ties. For the couples who are the beneficiaries of a conjugal fund at the expense of the interest of the sibling group and descent corporation become central in a set of social and material relations. In contrast, bride wealth does not differentiate or attach privilege to the couple, who are not endowed at the cost of sibling unity and corporate interest: the establishment of a conjugal fund is patiently antithetical to the property relations in descent systems with lineal inheritance arrangements. Here, as a result, affinity takes second place to decent as a principle of social organization. It is those societies where dowry is endemic, which in their emphasis upon the primacy of affinity have been the regional source of "alliance theory", while those characterized by bride wealth and lineal devolution have yielded "descent theory" these theories, argues Goody, reflect objective structural differences. Goody has founded his scheme upon the
taxonomic opposition between bride wealth and dowry, an opposition which is held to comprehend differences in group structures, marriage payments, kinship relations, property arrangements and stratification.

While neither of the overarching schemes developed by Sipro and Goody respectively yields a satisfactory explanation of marriage payment, and both are mired in methodological problems, two constructive observations flow from their considerations. First, Goody is correct in insisting that these payments be analyzed in the context of total systems, although it does not follow that such a system need be constituted of functionally related institutions. Secondly, both schemes stress the economic implications of marriage payments, and rightly so. Evans Pritchard (1934, p.172), as Barnes points out, noted that bride wealth everywhere has economic value. But economy and commerce are not coterminous, and the fact that exchanges have economic implications does not necessarily mean that they are commercially or economically motivated. Moreover, the way in which the actors experience and construe transactions does not itself explain why those transactions occur, or how they are related to an ordered set of values in any socio-cultural system. There is, quite patiently, a difference between the manner in which exchanges are constituted in a society and the way in which they are experienced by its members.

**Dowry**

Dowry is reduced to a “paradigmatic conception”; a typification, i.e. of its dominant characteristics and social correlates. First, dowry is usually held not merely to entail female property, but also to be inseparable from pre-mortem inheritance (Tambiah, ibid, p.64) and “diverging devolution” (Goody op. cit., p 17), since it is transferred from common familial holdings to a daughter at marriage. However there are few dissenters of this view; Madan (1965, p.156), describing a Kashmiri village, specifically does not make the connection; and Yalman (1967, pp. 174-5) says of Kanyadana Sinhalese that female inheritance is “merely a reflection of the general descent ideology”, while dowry is the “result of a bargain” struck in the negotiation of status relations.

Secondly, dowry is generally viewed as implying a stress upon bilateral kinship since it mitigates the exclusive retention of property within a corporate (unilineal)
descent group. The corollary is that the conjugal bond and affinal linkages-predicated upon a shared interest in the marriage-acquire social primacy, notwithstanding the existence of descent ideologies. Positive marriage rules are frequently attributed to the material logic of systems of this kind (e.g. Yalman, 1967; Goody, op. cit.). For cousin marriage payments of various kinds may have the effect-or be conceived indigenously to have it-of either retaining property within (as in FBD unions), or returning it to (as in cross-cousin unions), a grouping which, at least notionally, holds or once held it.

Thirdly, dowry is generally seen to be related to hypergamy. Even where it is dominant type of prestation, it may not be transferred in unions between equals or children of the poor, for whose marriages bride wealth is more usually tendered. As Tambiah puts it, dowry may, in this aspect, be conceived of as a direct exchange of status for wealth; in India, “it is a superb pawn to use in the formation of marriage alliance and in pursuing the game of hypergamy” (p.72). Its association with an emphasis upon affinity and the negotiation of prestige and status, moreover, is often taken to explain tendency towards monogamy, the careful arrangement of unions, and the coexistence of alternative patterns of residence and affiliation. None of these characteristics is universal; but each may be present to a greater or lesser extent in any one community.

Bridewealth
Bridewealth is viewed as a transfer made between corporate (unilineal) groups or their lower order segments (Goody, op.cit., p.7; Mair, 1971, pp.66-5). In the course of exchanging prestations and rights in women, these units create relationships of affinity and debt with each other, affirming their own internal solidarity and mutual interests in the process. The paradigmatic association of bridewealth with corporate (descent) structures has further institutional corollaries. It is seen to “fit” with polygynous marriage; the unity of the sibling group and the formation of house which, being differentiated by their matrilateral ties, represent foci of segmentary fission and fusion; virilocal residence; the levirate, sororate and other forms of secondary union; and so on. All this, patently, evoke the classical portrayal of the “structure of unilineal descent groups” (Fortes 1953) and warrants Goody’s observation concerning the analytical link between bridewealth “systems” and “descent theory”. In short, the segmentary lineage
model, and its grounding in the pervasive concept of the corporation, looms large in our understanding of these marriage payments.

The effect of dowry or “indirect dowry” on women’s status is a complex issue. In contrast to the popular anthropological contention that bridewealth is associated with a high valuation of a women’s labour, whereas dowry is related with a lower economic status for women, possibly because dowry coexists with class hierarchies and hence a greater availability of hired labour (Schlegel and Eloul: 1988), several scholars have argued that it is not dowry per se but access to the goods and relations between marrying families that determines women’s status. Thus, rise in dowry may be connected with a decline in a women’s status in some cases (Kapadia 1933, Paul 1986, Heyer 1992), but as Heyer found, the decline may be connected to increased capital outlay for weddings rather than a fall in the value of women’s labour. Increased dowry may not be necessarily disempowering for women, depending on the women’s control of the gift and the hierarchy between the affines (Bradford 1985, Upadhaya 1990).

**Structuralist Perspective**

Prestations are seen here as integral elements of such systems, whose motivation lies in the universal principle of reciprocity (Levi Strauss. 1969, pp. 52-68).

a. The meaning of marriage payments is not to be understood by the cross-cultural comparison of their surface manifestations and their general social correlates, but by first establishing their relations to other organizational elements within encompassing system.

b. Any such system may be analyzed at two levels. On the one hand, it exists as constitutive order; i.e. as set of related principles which give form to the socio-cultural universe. On the other, it is a lived-in, everyday context which represent, itself to individuals and groups in a repertoire of values and contradictions, rules and relationships, interests and ideologies.

c. The marriage process is a fundamental dimension of the reproduction and potential transformation of the social system at large.

d. The mobilization, alienation and distribution of prestations, along with other principles and processes, may represent a generative mechanism whereby social
units, roles and relationships are actualized, transformed and given their manifest content.

It may be thus summarized as: the transfer of material objects, an interrelated class of alienations, of which marriage prestations are one element, represent a point of articulation between the organizational principles which underlie and constitute a socio-cultural system and the surface forms and processes which together comprise the lived-in universe.\(^\text{10}\)

Marriage prestations are not ontologically separable from marriage. Rather they are complementary elements of the same thing: a meaningful order with reference to which the physical fact of cohabitation is transformed into a social fact. In those contexts where a union is defined by an initial payment, but where the remainder is given in installments, the ideology of affinity is closely associated with the concept of debt, the debt, as the saying goes is the relationship. Here, where the link between affinity and debt is culturally emphasized, marriage tends to be viewed as a 'process of becoming' rather than as a 'state of being'. In short, the alienation of prestations marks the progressive realization of a categorically inscribed relationship.

**Marriage Prestations**

Anthropologists have pointed out that at marriage certain rights of the women are transferred from her natal group to that of her husband and that bride wealth can be seen as a compensation for their transfer.

a) The husband and his group acquire the rights in the woman's labour which until then have been vested in her natal group (especially when a woman joins her husband). What is significant about this type of exchange is that each family simultaneously gives women to and receives women from the other. In the past a variety of marriage prestations moved in both the directions between the bride and the groom and their families and to the various persons linked to the solemnization of marriage. But presently, it has become one-way flow of gifts i.e. from the brides to the groom's side.

b) It has come to encompass and dominate the entire life of a proposed and existing marriage, from when the match is sealed, the engagement, wedding, birth of grandchildren to their marriages, on every important or newly marked ritual or social event in either of the families. The onus for this rests on the bride’s family and their continuing contribution to their daughter’s household through appropriate gift wrapped expenditure for public display.

Prestations do not merely index different marriage choices; rather they become an instrument used by individuals in politically and economically inspired efforts to shape social networks to advantage and to control other persons within them. As such these prestations may have little to do with the establishment of affinal ties between units, or with groups at all, this being quite unlike the pattern typically described for exogamous unilineal systems, where their symbolism has certainly to do with the incorporation of bride, the affirmation of inter-group relations, and so on.

Not only does the total order of constitutive principles impart meaning to marriage payments in any society but also it gives form to the manner in which its members experience their social universe and conceive the dominant ideology and order of values in terms of which action is motivated within it. Values which are indigenously held to motivate marriage transactions within a system, and which are conceived in terms of utility or reciprocity, bargain or balanced exchange, depend upon its socio-cultural constitution.

Economists provided two major explanations - one demographic, and the other status based. The demographic explanation, originally proposed by the demographer Jack Caldwell and developed by Rao (1993), lays the blame on population growth. A sharp decline in mortality, first noticed in the Indian sub-continent in the 1920’s, resulted in increases in population growth because fertility did not decline at the same pace. High rates of population growth resulted in a pyramidal age structure – that is, each year more babies were born than in the previous year so there were always more young people than older people. Since men typically marry women who are 5 to 10 years younger than them, this means that there were always more women in the “marriage market” than men creating a “marriage squeeze.” Counteracting this effect was the fact that in India, there are more boys than girls of the same age - a consequence of the
famous “missing women” phenomenon. However, until very recently the “marriage squeeze” overwhelmed the “missing women” effect resulting in about 1.2 women for every man in the marriage market. This has shown to be correlated with the rise in dowries (Rao 1993, 2000).

At first glance, the bequest theory of dowry does not seem entirely implausible. In virilocal societies, that is, societies where women move to their husband’s/in-laws’ household upon marriage, dowries are one way in which married women can receive their proper share of the family inheritance. And even in non-virilocal societies, inheritance practices that preclude females from fully sharing in their parents’ estate may justify the interpretation of dowry as a bequest. But regardless of entitlements, women who marry out are generally not able to exercise control over their own property. For example, in most parts of India it is common for women to give up control of their property to their brothers in exchange for rights of visitation.

Feminists Social Theories:

Liberalism

Feminist liberals argue that women and men possess the same epistemological resource, the transcendent mind. In the Indian context, the feminists claim women’s rights as individuals to, for example, education (Channa 1988), pay equity (Gandhi and Shah 19991), and land control (Aggarwal 1994). But the legitimacy of personal authority goes against the conception of individuals within the family and kinship networks, where they have to consider others’ expectations and meet responsibilities towards them (Karlekar 1988). Within those networks, rights have been understood in association with status positions, generally privileging men and some women over other women. Outside the networks, similar understandings regulate the relationships between, for instance, landlord and land less laborer and higher and lower caste members. The relationships can seem part of the natural social order, of traditions that are beyond questioning (Aggarwal 1994).

The liberal feminists stress for improving the women’s access to the public realm in order to have politics of equality. They demand state’s protection of women’s right as individuals to determine their lives, thereby becoming the equals of men. The U.S
liberals assume, as their Indian counterparts do, that women choose between careers and full-time family lives for personal reasons (Singh 1990). The assumption disregards myriad pressures and over generalizes the choice of middle-class women with income from a spouse or another source.

A major striking point is the actual private-public like. Conceptually, the state mediates the individuals' private interests. But the state, comprising elected individuals and their appointees depends on corporations and other large financial contributors for its own survival. Thus, it has an interest in preserving and expanding capital within its borders and wherever capital travels in the world. The state, then, resists demand for women's equality if its financial mainstays consider themselves better served by hierarchal gender relations: women as primary housekeepers, men as primary breadwinners. Feminists liberalism identifies women as a class entitled to rights as women, but leaves economic and social structure intact, with no way to readdress inequitable distribution of social goods among women and men.

Essentialism

The essentialists advocate for an Universal Woman to the Enlightenment's Universal Man and propose that the Enlightenment's asymmetrical ordering of reality is a male construct validating masculinity and social paradigms of dominances and subordination. In contrast, the female perceives realities in terms of unities. Her rational mind is embodied, has feelings and is engaged with, not in opposition to, other persons and things. The essentialist celebrates aspects of the human being, which have been deprecated and ascribed to women. However Indian feminists deplore assumptions of women's inherent caring function as an ideology that impedes their full human development. Thus, essays on education critique practices that socialize girls for dedication to family service (Channa 1988). This puts them in opposition to calls for women's devotion to families as their national identity (Jain 1993) and to Indian psychoanalysts functionalism. The Sita and Draupadi ideals of female self-denial, assumed to create boundaries for women in both traditional and modern sectors in India (Kakar 1988) are shown to be harmful and changeable norms. The Freudian view that female's 'penis envy generates self-hatred, motivating hostility to other females as in
mother-in-law/daughter-in-law conflicts (Nandy 1988), is undermined by displays of the contexts that demean both.

The essentialists’ useful attention to hitherto unappreciated qualities of women is gravely flawed by failing to notice artifacts of their status in patriarchal society. They also err in ignoring the diversity of gender experience. Their analysis presents women as biologically and psychologically determined. While the essentialists recognize gender power relations, women’s agency to change their status emerges in impractical programmes.

Marxism/Socialism
Feminist socialists vies the essential and radical feminists definitions of patriarchy as generative of human oppression as being anti-theoretical. Both socialist and Marxist feminists agree that the humans are defined by their production of the means of their existence. Both see humans, not as liberals do, differentiated from animals by their rational capacity, but as biological beings in a continual process of praxis to solve problems of existence. Work is considered the essence of humanness, changing in form as people perceive new deeds, devise ways to satisfy them, and develop appropriate social relations. So while socialists strive to regain for a natural social reality which has been spoiled by the social systems that is exemplified in capitalism, Marxists visualize of a dynamic material foundation of perfectible human thought. Since each solution to meeting needs is negated by a new one, a dialectical analysis is required to understand history. Its contents would consist of contradictory forces that precipitate change in the economic base of each period in society.

However, the social and Marxist feminists differ on the definition revolving women’s domestic labour and everything they do at home. Both see this activity as providing capitalists with profits extracted from concealed labour, in visible but necessary to the economy. For the Marxist feminists domestic labour produces is of value since its products are consumed within the family; in the economy outside, products with exchange value are produced. They thus propose that the answer to women’s question is to bring women in the public labour force, make them available to learn class consciousness and join the struggle to hasten the arrival of socialism. In this
way, the domestic labour would be socialized in making it real work and dissolving the separation between private and public realms. The western advocates however propose that the pay homemakers, hence constituting them as workers ready to join others in the class struggle (Costa and James 1972). But neither side of the debate addresses overlaps of women's domestic and market work. The production of food and other for sale as well as for family use (Nicholas and Srinivasan 1994) falls outside their dichotomy. The proposal of wages for housework leaves women in their domestic position, adjuncts in the class struggle. Like other side of the debate, it positions women in relation to the economy and ignores female-male relationships.

Feminists' socialism seems to be the most promising of the theories. It overcomes the limitation of the others. The requirement for material historicity grounds accounts for women in diverse realities, countering the essentialists' universalizing attempts. The concept of socially constructed thought discards the liberal assumption of natural substrata of mind, entitling an elite group to control those who deviate. The vision at the end of capitalism offers of eliminating not only gender but also all oppressions by eradicating hierarchical social structures. The economy is an important pillar of social arrangement but does not stand-alone. What are needed are feminist syntheses of economy with its dimensions of consciousness, sexuality, procreation, child rearing, and cultural phenomena that are at least partially independent of the economy such as race, religion and ethnicity.

Post-Modernism

Feminists' theorizing is post-modern in its rejection of the Enlightenment's fundamental proposition: the assumption of self abstracted from its contingencies (body, emotion and social location) knowing universal laws of nature. The truth claims of Marxism, humanism, religion and feminism are seen as bids for power. Instead it positions women as subjects and the theoretical variations converge on a view that such positioning, necessarily subjective, presupposes the self's objectivity. In their spatially oriented terms, assuming a subject position constructs a centre of power and margins occupied by someone. To avoid this, they advocate indeterminacy, a stance of uncertainty admitting to multiple viewpoints. The Indian feminists view post modernism equivocally. Its
rejection of a dominant centre is consistent with their own rejection of the idea of negotiating a space for Indians within the feminism, which presumes that feminism is ‘Western’ (Kumar 1993). Kumar claims for Indian feminists ‘a kind of universalism, of which western feminism is one stream and Indian feminism another’, a claim discredited by post-modernists.

The post-modernists provide important cautions against privileging some women at the expense of others. When they insist on prohibiting all truth claims as equal threats of dominance, women’s demands for relief for oppression can only be seen as no more justified than that of the oppressors. The endless deferral of conclusions can be seen as constructing a ‘feminine’ space where intellectuals aggressively play out tentative ideas.

Hypothesis

The hypotheses of the present study are as following:

a. Since India opened up to foreign investment in 1990, the country has seen a rise in dowry-related violence alongside its economic boom. The country’s growing economy exacerbates dowry crimes by encouraging a culture of materialism.

b. The hedonism, materialism and consumerism are triumvirate processes that have rapidly occupied space in human mind and social settings in India during the last one and half decade.

c. Women, the worst sufferers of such change, have become victims of molestation, rape, domestic violence including dowry torture and death.

d. The tentacles of dowry have penetrated in all social constituencies i.e. both in urban and rural areas, upper, middle and lower castes and classes, different religions, etc. overall it has assumed a pan-Indian character.

e. The increasing rate of literacy and the governmental emphasis (whether through media or various welfare schemes/ financial incentives) on status equality of male and female child has not made any significant change towards eliminating the gender biases from peoples’ minds.

f. The education and employment of the women, instead of decreasing this prevailing practice, has in many cases reinforced the problem of dowry. Direct
State intervention, in this matter, could do little in the absence of popular support and social awakening.

Objectives of the Study

The present work proposes to focus on the following areas:

1. The study aims to enquire into the causes and analyze the factors that led to the gradual rise in the offences impacting the women and which have direct or indirect bearing with the dowry and its correlates.

2. To analyse the emerging patterns and to discover the correlation between consumerist culture that has rapidly sprawled as a result of economic factors in last one decade, and the expansion of the basket of dowry and the articles therein.

3. The paradoxical state which seems to have been emerging that more educated, urbanized, mobile and high income groups of some parts of north India show higher tendency toward gender discrimination (as rapidly declining sex-ratio in successive Population Censuses provides a testimony) is not only peculiar but retrogressive. This study shall make an attitudinal and qualitative analysis into such paradoxical state of affairs with special emphasis on the expansion of employment opportunities and literacy among the women and their effects on dowry exchanges.

4. To explore the history of dowry in Orissa and study the dowry practices in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar among different classes, castes and religions.

5. A comparative study of the incidents of dowry in lower, middle and upper-middle classes.

6. To look into the legislations enacted by the State and supplementary measures such as rehabilitation centres, counseling cells (run by government and NGOs), and the role of NGOs in providing support to the dowry victims.

7. A brief analysis into the role of media both electronic and print media with local, regional and national range in tackling the escalation of dowry culture.

8. To evaluate the existing legal measures and to access the impact of the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961.
9. To review the role of enforcement agencies in dealing with the problems and intends to identify the factors which are responsible for its escalation in spite of various laws, preventive measures.

10. There is need to supplement the punitive measures by appropriate preventive measures. Keeping in view the prevailing situation an in-depth study of the subject is need of the day; so that suitable measures may be suggested and incorporated in the statutes for combating and eradicating the evil.

Methodology:

Universe of the Study
The universe of study is the twin cities of Orissa: Cuttack and Bhubaneshwar. From herein, three habitations from each of the districts have been selected. The IRC Village, VSS Nagar and Bermunda Slums have been selected for study from Bhubaneshwar whereas Tulasipur, Rajendra Nagar and Mehendipur from Cuttack. The universe has been selected purely on social and economic criterion giving a sufficient weightage to gender, caste, religion, educational backgrounds and income profiles of the respondents.

The following sources have been selected for the purpose of data collection:
1. The general public and their opinion through face to face interaction and discussion to have a broader view of the existing problem and pervasive social consciousness among them about dowry.
2. The accounts produced by the victims and the newly-wed bride facing adverse situations as are result of dowry demands by the in-laws.
3. Problems faced by the affected kins and family members of the girl's side.
4. Reports versions and fact findings produced by the police and law enforcing agencies about its frequency, gravity of the offence, false fabrications, delay in justice delivery and mental trauma arising out of systemic insensitivity.
5. Private agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working for counseling and rehabilitation.

The study proposes to have a detailed analysis of responses collected from the respondents representing the different caste, class and educational backgrounds. The proportional random sampling technique has been used to secure an adequate and
representative sample from the universe composed of units having variegated socio-economic backgrounds. The proportional random sample will enable one to encompass the wide range of probable respondents possessing different educational, age, employment and marital profiles; this would also provide an opportunity to share their customs and practices during pre-marriage, marriage and post-marriage stages.

Techniques of Data Collection

a) Interview Schedule-The tools used for data collection are interview schedules for the victims, affected family members, officials of law and policing agencies, office bearers of NGOs, Rehabilitation and Training Centres. Herein, the structured interview schedule with closed-end questions will be used to collect purely quantifiable data such as of age, gender, education, income, occupation, class profile, etc. of the respondents. This will help to classify and tabulate the information in comprehensive manner and facilitate one to make the analytical comparison, if any. The study will also use unstructured interview schedule with open-ended questions to gather the information based on different perspectives, opinion and experiences.

b) Participant and Non-Participant Observation: Besides, the study will adopt the technique of participant and non-participant observation to secure first hand information of various monitory/non-monetary exchanges performed during pre-marital, marital and post-marital stages. Here, while doing a participant observation, one will take utmost care to eschew falling a prey to the ‘process of nativization’ or possibility of biases from ‘the observed’. Being a technique of merit among the phenomenologists, both kinds of the observations would help the findings be based on one’s direct interface and experience with marital ceremonies and other related exchanges.

One will remain vigilant about the marriage ceremonies and transactions that will be taking place in designated areas and among the various castes, classes and religions during the period of field study. The participant/non-participant observation of marriage celebrations would add a practical and concurrent dimension to the study. Brief accounts of interactions with the general public will give an insight about the perceptions and changing dimensions of dowry in the Oriya society.
c) **Qualitative Research Techniques:** In order to collect the attitude and opinion based qualitative data, the study proposes to undertake the open discussions with the respondents (the victims, their family members, in-laws, others, etc.) and the public. One will access the available case studies, the reports, debates and discussions appearing in popular media, etc. to feel the pulse for this problem at microscopic and macroscopic levels.

d) **Secondary Data and Information:** To secure the statistics and data related to demography, literacy rate, sex-ratio, population density, etc. and the offences related to women such as dowry tortures and deaths, wife-battering, family violence, molestation, rapes, etc. one will access the secondary sources such as Census Reports, records of Municipal Corporation, the State commission of Women and Human Rights Protection Cell, Police Stations, *Mahilla* Police stations, NGOs, Rehabilitation and Training Centres, Shelter Homes, etc. This will help to have an insightful understanding about the intensity, frequency of crimes against women and provide a glimpse of heightening demands of fat dowry which is constantly threatening the very existence of the women.

**Sample**

The study proposes to collect the information and data from the twin cities of Orissa, India's 8th largest state in terms of area. Herein, IRC Village, VVS Nagar and Bermunda Slums from the city of Bhubaneshwar and Tulasipur, Rajendra Nagar and Mehendipur from Cuttack have been selected as the areas understudy. A total of 132 (61 males and 71 females) respondents from Bhubaneshwar and 141 (68 males and 73 female) from Cuttack having a diverse background in terms of income patterns and economic profiles, gender, castes, educational backgrounds, age groups, marital status, occupation types, have been studied. Among 132 respondents in Bhubaneshwar 80 are married and 42 unmarried, and amongst them the respondents from Upper Castes, Socio-Economically Backward Classes (SEBCs) and SC/STs have 55, 34 and 43 numbers, respectively. Further, among these 132, the respondents with lower income group (income Rs. 1 lakh p.a.), middle-income group (between Rs. 1 to 3 lakhs p.a.) and higher income groups (income above Rs. 3 lakh p.a.) are 67, 44 and 21 respectively. Of the total respondents
from Cuttack, 81 are married, 51 unmarried, the upper castes, SEBCs and SC/STs are 53, 40 and 48 respectively. The income groups among respondents in Cuttack a 67, 53 and 21 composition in lower to the higher income groups. A proportional stratified random sampling technique will be adopted to select the sample size providing adequate and representative sample size. The diverse and expansive nature of universe solicits the study to resort to the stratified random sampling that helps classifying the universe into smaller constituencies assisting one to make the sample adequately representative. The percentage of respondents of the sample in approximate proportion to their percentage in population size makes it representative even more.

Here one will make use of network random sampling also in order to have better reach to the respondents that are either not directly accessible or do not want to be, due to some or the other personal or legal reasons (such as victims and accused of dowry offences and their family members, litigant parties, etc.). A network random sampling enables one to interact with respondents which are potentially important and relevant from the point of view of the subject understudy but many a times they are left out of the range of respondents under the purview of study because of one or the other reasons. The technique will require having healthy interaction, investment of time with the introducing respondents and establishing a friendly rapport, to which one will pay her due attention. This technique may suffer from the limitation of biases of both the researcher and the one who refers her to the potential respondent. Here, any such bias in selection of these respondents would be removed by making choices purely on random basis.

The method to analyze the compiled data is comparative-analytical. Here the comparison is made between the upper, middle and lower middle classes relating to the culture of dowry practices among them. Similarly, the co-relation between education and employment status of women and its effect on the practice of dowry among diverse castes, classes, religions is also focused on. A broader comparison across the period (i.e. since early 1990s until the present era) focuses on the resurgence of dowry due to the impact of globalization.