**Introduction**

**Statement of the Problem**

The present study is an attempt to understand the Changing Caste and Kinship Networks among the Muslims of Jammu City in the state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). The study has shown that Muslims in Jammu region do not constitute a homogenous category and caste remains an important social base for kinship networks that are formed and fostered in the present context. The Muslims of Jammu also differ on the basis of other criteria as they are from different places of origin, possess varied local customs and rituals, and have different timings of arrival and settlement.

The state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) is described as the crown of India. It is divided into three regions (Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh). According to 2001 Census the total percentage of Muslims in the state is 67.0% and the total percentage of Hindus is 29.6%. Thus the state of J&K is predominantly a Muslim state.

**Table -1.1: Religious Population of three Divisions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>% Muslim</th>
<th>% Hindu</th>
<th>% Sikh</th>
<th>% Buddhist and other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kashmir (53.9%)</td>
<td>5,476,970</td>
<td>97.16%</td>
<td>1.84%</td>
<td>0.88%</td>
<td>0.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu (43.7%)</td>
<td>4,430,191</td>
<td>30.69%</td>
<td>65.23%</td>
<td>3.57%</td>
<td>0.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladakh (2.3%)</td>
<td>236,539</td>
<td>47.40%</td>
<td>6.22%</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>45.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jammu and Kashmir</strong></td>
<td><strong>10,143,700</strong></td>
<td><strong>66.97%</strong></td>
<td><strong>29.63%</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.03%</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.36%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Jammu province accounts for around 44 per cent of the total population of Jammu and Kashmir (2001 Census). The Jammu province consists of ten districts (Out of total of 22 districts of the J&K State): Doda, Poonch, Rajouri, Udhampur,
Jammu, Kathua, Kishtwar, Ramban, Reasi and Samba. The population of Jammu District is 1,526,406 and Jammu Division is 5,350,811 according to 2011 Census.

Religion is certainly a basis of identity articulation in a plural cultural situation, it also provides the individual with a plan for life from the daily ritual of worship, through the annual cycle of ceremonies, to the ritual observance of life cycle of ceremonies (Ahmed, 1981).

The Followers of Islam are divided into various sub divisions in terms of sects, namely “Sunni” and “Shias”. In J&K the Sunnis are present in majority i.e. 90 percent while 10 percent are the Shias. The Sunnis are the ardent followers of the faith in the Sunna or traditions. Another sect of Muslims the Shia differs from the Sunnis in terms of hereditary right of the descendants of Prophet to be only legitimate “Khalifa”.

Mohammad belonged to the family of Hashemites. His parents were Abdullah and Amina. Sura 93 of Qoran states that he became an orphan at an early age and passed his childhood and youth in penury. His affiliation to trading caravans took him outside Mecca and even Arabia. At about the age of 25 he tied the martial knot with a rich Meccan widow named Khadija who was several years senior to him. Khadija bore numerous offspring, of whom the daughter Fatima outlived Muhammad. Married to Ali, the Prophet’s cousin, she became through her sons, Hasan and Husain, the ancestress on numerous families of Shias.

Sunnis give credence of Ijma- Ul- Ummat (law laid down by general concurrence of the leading disciples of the Prophet, particularly of the first four Caliphs) while it is rejected totally by the Shias. Shias firmly believe that Imam is the single head of the Muslim community and that he is designated divinely. He is lineal descendant of the Prophet. Shias accord equal importance to the imamate and the Quran. Sunnis recognize Imamate but do not give it the importance and status as accorded by the Shias (Husain, 1998).

This work focusses mainly on the Sunnis as most of the castes are represented in this sect. Some respondents of Shia are also included in this study as shown in Table 1.2.
The Muslims emerged as a dominant community in the medieval period in the Kashmir valley and in the adjoining regions. The Muslims of Jammu region are mostly the converted Rajputs, the Nomadic Gujjars and those Kashmiris who have migrated to Jammu region and inhabit the adjacent Doda district. In Jammu, the Rajputs converted in largest number. The Rajput chiefs who embraced Islam first were those of Khokhar tribe (Singh, 1996).

The presence of caste like system of social stratification among the Muslims of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh has been recognized for a long time but there have been few systematic attempts to examine the working of this system in the local communities (Ahmad, 1978). The present work is an effort in this direction in the context of Muslims of J&K, particularly Muslims of Jammu.

Caste system is a distinctive system in India and Muslims are in no way away from it. Ideologically there may be no caste among Muslims but they have adopted it due to the influence of Hindu social organization and also because most of the Indian Muslims are converted from various Hindu castes (Bhattacharya, 1978).

Some differences on the basis of birth are known and are also listed among them. Hence caste system and even casteism prevails among Indian Muslims due to Indo Islamic culture. Thus, though most Muslims do not accept caste system, in actual practice, social stratification based on caste exists among them. Ghaus Ansari (1960), in his pioneering study on caste and social stratification among the North-Indian Muslims, places Muslim castes into three categories (i) Ashraf (ii) Ajlaf and (iii) Arzal. Ashraf includes the Muslim nobility that claim to be the descendants of early Muslim immigrants, Sayyad, Sheikh, Mughal or Pathan.

In the category of Ajlaf- Gaddi, Gujjar, Bakarwal etc are included. The third category of Arzal includes the unclean or ritually polluting castes such as Bhangi or Mehtar (Sweepers and Scavengers) (Hasnain, 2005).

The various features of caste system like endogamy, occupational specialization, status hierarchy and belief in ritual purity and pollution are found among Indian Muslims (Robinson, 2004).
Some of the common Muslim castes and their divisions in Jammu city are as follows:

**Sayyad:** Sayyad are divided into many divisions like Kazmi, Jafari, Rizvi, Alvi and Shah.

**Rajput Muslims:** Some of the common Rajput Muslims are Jaral, Malik, Manhas, Chib, Janjua, Gakhar, Manyal, Thakial, Bhatti and Chouhan.

**Kashmiri Muslims:** Common Kashmiri Muslims are Pandit, Lone, Akhnoon, Hanz, Katoch, Salaria, Waza, Kumar, Bhat, Rathur, Mir, Naik and Magaray.

**Gujjar Muslims:** Some Gujjar Muslims are Paswal, Sungo, Badana, Gors, Khatana, Kholi, Chachi, Kalas, Bajran and Dadhar.

**Lower Caste:** The lower castes among Muslims are Chamar and Bhangi. Some of these are severally stigmatized and excluded.

Most of these castes in J&K can be placed in the system of stratification. Some castes like Sayyad, Kazmi, Sheikh, Jafari and Hamdani consider themselves as higher than the Rajput Muslims castes that are of middle order. Gujjars and Bakarwals constitute separate caste communities who have now been given a status of Schedule Tribe (ST) in J&K state. Besides these, there are lower castes like Bhangi, Chamar and Chachi. These castes and many others servicing castes fall under the category of Other Backward Classes (OBCs). So it can said that, there is a segmenal division of society and hierarchy in Muslim caste system (Hasnain, 2005).

The distinctiveness of castes among the Muslims of Jammu region, who are mostly converted from Hindu castes is maintained through various features like endogamy, occupation and social interaction. In certain cases these differences of socio-economic and cultural dimensions are extended to public and political realms, where by the identity of the group acquires importance. This particularly happens in those cases where caste category is combined with ethnic, cultural and regional community. For instance the Kashmiri Muslims who originated mainly from the “Brahmins” still maintain caste endogamy at the social level, but identify themselves more as Kashmiris at the political level. Similarly the Gujjar of Jammu region maintained endogamy and other features of caste system. For them, caste community identity,
which is different from other Muslim groups, is of greater importance and becomes more meaningful in the contemporary situation of identity politics (personal communication).

The study analyzed different communities of Jammu city to explore caste based differences among them in social, economic and cultural spheres and also examined to what extent such differences become the basis of community identity, especially in the public and political realms.

It is conspicuous to note that the aspects of Muslim marriage and kinship have not received the continuous and scholarly attention as other aspects of their life. Marriage constitutes an important base out of which kinship relations grow and are sustained. The most remarkable features of the Muslim marriage and kinship life is the constant efforts on their part to strike a balance between the adherences to Islam on the one hand, and to adjust and adapt to the local socio-cultural milieu on the other. These adjustments and compromises have brought about, in other words a judicious synthesis of Muslim and Hindu world view by acquiring a typical indigenous character among the Muslim. Sometimes, however they create conflict and tensions, many of which have become a regular feature of their lives, especially in the changing situation (Hussain, 1994).

Various castes among Muslims in Jammu division follow kinship rules that are similar to neighboring Hindu castes. Among many of them, this is because of the conversion of people from Hinduism to Islam. Where such features are carried forward and the process of Islamization gets strengthen, the kinship feature described as un-Islamic is given up. It is possible that the degree of Islamization depends upon caste of the group as much as to the recent indicators of development like education and employment. This means that the caste placed lower in the Muslim stratification system tend to be more influenced by the customary practices as compared to Islamic practices. Conversely the caste placed higher in social hierarchy follow more Islamic features.

There is a tendency among the low castes to emulate the life style, behaviour pattern and manners of high castes, mainly with the motivation to rise in the social hierarchy.
This process is better known as ‘Sanskritisation’ and used to understand the upward social mobility among the Hindu. Thus, the process of ‘Sanskritisation’ among the Hindu castes has also subsumed the Muslim castes e.g. Qassabs/ Chiknas (Muslim butchers) add ‘Qureshi’ with their name referring to the Prophet tribe Quraish. Thus, on the lines of Hindu castes, the Muslim castes too have adopted the life style and behavior pattern of their higher castes such as Sayyad and Sheikh in the process of ‘Sanskritisation’ (Srinivas, 1962). This tendency should seem natural in the view of affluence, power and prestige commanded by the higher castes in the Muslim social structure.

Cora Verde de Stuers (1968) has referred to this process as ‘Ashrafiatisation’. The customs, habits and ritual of high caste Muslims serve as a ‘Reference Model’ for the aspiring members of low castes. She has drawn a distinction between ‘Ashrafiatisation’, which is the mechanism of status mobility and Islamisation through which Muslim groups attempt to distinguish themselves from Non-Muslim by purifying themselves (Robbinson, 2004). According to one estimate there are 30 to 45 percent Muslims of lower castes who have adopt Sayyad title in the recent past. Now it is very difficult to differentiate between the real and fictitious Sayyad (Singh, 2003).

In Jammu city, in some localities this process was found to be occurring a few years back for example Telis in Talab Khatikan locality used the title of ‘Malik’, which is a Rajput name. This research has explored the possibility of occurrence of ‘Ashrafiatisation’ process among the Muslims of Jammu city.

The Ashraf castes are: the Sheikhs, the Sayyads, the Mughals and the Pathans. All four claim higher status than non-Ashraf castes by virtue of their foreign descent. The first two, that is the Sayyads and the Sheikhs, intermarry and so do the Mughals and Pathans, but marriage between Sayyads or Sheikhs and Pathans or Mughals are not accepted socially. However, there is commensality between all four groups. There are eighteen non- Ashraf castes that follow specific occupations and relate to each other in a hierarchical pattern (Ahmad, 1978).

During interviews with the Muslims of Jammu city it was revealed that a large number of marriages among them are confined to their own caste or community. For
example, Gujjars and Bakarwals of J&K follow caste endogamy as they marry among themselves. The Bakarwals also have clan as gotra and lineage system. These groups are exogamous. However, some changes have come about in the present times (Khatana, 1992).

In any marriage alliance today, family background, education and employment of the marital partner are considered to be most basic criteria, many members of the Muslim community conferred that they would not consider caste and other primordial affiliations to be important in comparison to the education and job of the spouse, especially of a boy. However, besides modernization, the process of Islamization has also gained momentum in recent years. It is seen that as the process enhances, the traditional caste and kinship rules tend to break. Therefore, as the process of Islamization is strengthened, the customary rules that are closer to the Hindus decline. In this sense, both the processes, modernization and Islamization, in their own ways oppose caste system. And as long as the opposition target remains the caste system, the two would only reinforce each other.

Thus, the changes in the social status among various Muslims Castes, especially the lower ones are not only the result of change in aspects like education and employment, but are also efforts to move up in the social hierarchy i.e. to be like the higher castes. Therefore, once the person of a lower caste is better educated and employed he/she seeks a marriage alliance in the higher social group. In this sense caste remains an important base and kinship rules start expanding and covering dimensions cutting across caste and community affiliations.

Marriage alliances are thus formed that go beyond traditional rules of caste endogamy and kinship rules giving rise to new forms of kinship networks. In such networks, religion is important as it gives space to hitherto prohibited alliances. For example, in some Muslim communities customarily cousin marriage was not allowed but Islam provided that scope. This can be observed among the Meo Muslims of Rajasthan and Haryana. The Meos were converted to Islam in the fifteen century but they continued with their traditional Rajput practices. After independence, they have awakened to new sense of identity. They began giving up Hindu practices and took to Islamic
ways. Meos had adopted more of Islamic practices in the last seventeen years than they had in 450 years (Chauhan, 2003).

Social classes acquire new meaning as marital relations are formed on the basis of position and income; and castes affiliations remain important base, as the desire to be placed higher through marriage and kinship remains strong. It means that a marriage with the economically well off, politically influential and socially higher person is sought for. This leads to building and fostering of new and different kinds of kinship networks. The marriage proposal need not be essentially initiated by the parents. The young boys and girls, who come in contact with each other in office or elsewhere, accept each other to marry and approach their parents (Hussain: 1976).

This study has attempted to understand such types of kinship networks by probing various forms and configurations of marriage alliances taking place among different Muslim castes of Jammu City.

**Conversion among the Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir**

In the twelfth century Kashmir was predominantly a Hindu society with “not a space as large as a grain of sesame without a tirtha” according to Kalhana who wrote the famous *Rajtarangini*. However, at the turn of the sixteen century we see Islam having replaced Hinduism as the mass religion of the valley.

The Kashmir valley is one of the most prominent Muslim majority areas in South Asia with not less than 94% of the Muslim population according to the earliest available census reports. It is also worth noting to see the Sufi saints initiating the movement of Islamization from the capital city, *Shar-i-Kashmir* (Srinagar), and making it a strong hold of their mission. There was a colony of Muslims in Srinagar before the establishment of Sultanate and all the prominent Sufi missionaries focused their attention first on winning the people of *Shahr* and establishing a large number of *Khanaqahs, madrasas, mosques, fatawa* and legal institutions in the city. These are the phenomenon that are well known to the historian of medieval Kashmir.

By the end of fifteenth century the writ of Islam ran large in Kashmir owing to large scale conversions. Islam became a normative culture and all those who wanted to
improve their position or who wanted a membership of higher culture, embraced the new religion. The masses entered into the fold of Islam because their leaders embraced the new faith or because they regarded the Muslim saints particularly the Sufis, spiritually more powerful to cure their mundane problem; or they felt that Islam would elevate their social and economic position without demanding much from them; or because the new religion enjoyed the position of reference group culture. It was only after Islam gained a foothold in the society that the process of Islamisation got a momentum with the spread of a network of Khanaqahs, madrasas and mosques together with the efforts of the preachers who settled in the different places of the valley (Wani, 2004).

The Muslims inhabiting a small hilly tract of land popularly known as Duggar Des are called as Dogra Muslims, being mostly converted from Dogra Hindus.

Most of the Muslims of J&K are converted, it is because of this reason that most of the Muslim castes still have their names that signify their cultural and caste affiliations. For instance, Kashmiri Muslims have caste names like Jargar, Mattoo, Dar, Bhat, etc. and Rajput Muslims continue with the castes manner like Manhas, Chouhan and Chib etc.

The prevalence of caste like features among Muslims in J&K is mainly because of their conversion to Islam from Hinduism. However, they are slowly and steadily giving up these features. Muslims do not constitute a homogenous community; one finds a lot of variation among different Muslim communities. For instance the Rajput Muslims follow clan exogamy to a certain extent. Among some of the Muslim caste groups even though the inter caste marriage have started taking place, many of them do not give their girls, but take girls in marriage from other castes. It was reported by members of Kashmiri Muslim castes that they do not give their daughters to the Gujjars, but have no problem in accepting them as a brides. Some form of hypergamy, whereby the girl is from lower status group than the boy is accepted.

More changes have, however, come about in the ritual and observances related to marriage and religious matters than on rules. In the case of few Muslims, it was
noticed that even though cross-cousin marriage has started taking place in the recent years, they follow the rule of clan (*gotra*) exogamy quite rigidly

The Bakarwals, one of the pastoral communities of J&K state are identified as goat and shepherders. They perceive themselves in the middle rank of hierarchy. But others place them in lower rank. Endogamy at the community level is always maintained among them (Singh, 1996).

**Kinship among the Muslims**

Man is a social animal. At every step in his life he realizes the importance of society and its different groups that lend towards his existence. These groups help him in the development of his personality tying him in bonds of affinity and compassion and equip him with human values. Kinship is the most important of these bonds. It incorporates even strangers into a group to make it more homogeneous, helpful and efficacious for man. Hence the importance of kinship can never be denied in any society (Husain, 1998).

Kinship represents the classification of all who are considered to be related and encompass all the social usages and patterns of behaviour among the relatives. In this regard the kinship system provides the most useful index of social organization. It gives rise to series of structural relations and levels of interactions in the Muslim community (Mondal, 1994).

The extended families are generally designated as *parivar*. But generally the term *parivar* indicates an extended family i.e. an agnatic kin group of three generation depth made up of patrilinearly related men, their wives and unmarried children (Ibid: 118).

Besides the agnatic kin group, there are also the affinal and uterine kin clusters, which are of fundamental importance for structural integration in the Muslim society at micro level. The affinal and uterine kins are commonly referred by the village Muslims as *Kutumb* or *mehaman*, who are behaviorally distinct from the agnatic kins, the relations among the *kutumbs* are characterized by distance, formality and respect.
whereas the relations among the agnates are informal, face to face and intimate (Ibid: 119).

Influence of Hindu culture on Muslim community came from different directions, in different forms and at different rates. A large number of Hindu rituals, for instance, those related to child birth, death and marriage, etc were to a greater extent accepted by the Muslims as social usages. Mujeeb (1967) also observes that, “There are no accepted traditions which justify and provide a legal basis for actual relationship between Muslims and Hindus, though many practices borrowed from the Hindus which became a part of the ceremonies of marriage, child birth and death were furnished ex-post –facto with a legal basis”.

Supporting the same viewpoint Yasin (1958) says, “In spite of jarring elements of political dissensions and in spite of the corrosive influence of religious antagonism, centuries of constant association and the growth of a common language and culture had brought the two communities near...” Actually the transfusion and adoption of these socio-cultural traits brought the two communities closer to each other. Commenting on the influence of Hinduism, Mujeeb (1967) remarks, “we would find that while the Muslim proclaimed his mission and trumpeted his intentions, Hindu influences moving silently and unobtrusively like the water of flood, surrounded him from all sides having only Small Island where the flag of Islam flew high and defenseless”. These new customs became so deeply rooted that even on the religious and sacred occasions their performance became common.

On the basis of the above facts, it may be pointed out that from the day Muslims entered the Indian territory they led their life very leniently and liberally. They did not follow the Islamic code strictly and embraced the local customs and way of life as well. Due to cultural contact various aspects of Hindu life – style were adopted by Muslim community (Ahmad, 1991).

Due to liberal and adoptive policies of the Muslim rulers and emergence of harmony and synthesis between the alien and native religions and cultures and favorable conditions for innovation, invention and discovery developed in different branches of learning.
As a result and the regular contacts and interactions between the two communities, a process of Hindu-Muslim synthesis started in the country. This process of synthesis resulted in the development of Urdu and Hindi as the languages of the commoners. Moreover, the synthesis is also evident from the buildings constructed and the Art and music developed in this period. This process of synthesis was also found in everyday life as reflected from rituals, manners and customs (Ibid: 22).

**Processes of Islamization**

As regards the change taking place in the Muslim communities, the Muslims are exposed to the influence of various processes. On the one hand they are being influenced by the process of Islamisation and, on the other by Westernization. A clash of values has set in. Islamisation tends to favour strict Purdah observance whereas westernization is opposed to it. The upper class families are more exposed to westernization process while the middle class families are under the influence of Islamisation.

The decay of traditional grip and with the replacement of customary law and practice with a more legal pattern religious beliefs are also becoming unimportant. The religious sanctions appeared to be less effective in regulating people’s behaviour. This trend is more obvious among the Ismaili Khojas. With the spread of education, improvement in economic condition and greater degree of mobility, their outlook has been rationalized and westernized to a greater extent. Only in the case of the poorer section of the Muslim community there is a greater attachment to religion and there is also a desire for social improvement and Islamisation. Changes are obvious in dress patterns, manners, rituals, life style, levels of social contact and patterns of social relationship (Ibid.:32).

The etymological meaning of the term Islamization is quite clear, but its sociological usage has been clouded by a certain amount of confusion. First, the term has been used to denote both a process of social mobility within the system of social stratification among Muslims whereby lower social groups seek to move up the social ladder by adopting the customs and characteristics of higher social strata as well as through the spread of Islamic shar’. Second, the process has been conceptualized as a
one-way transformation of social customs and practices along the lines indicated by the scriptural literature.

The conception of Islamization as a unilinear or one-way process of social and cultural change has been very widespread in writings on Muslim communities in India. Those who have written on the subject have been prone to argue that the changes subsumed under this process are likely to result in an increasingly rigid adherence to basic Islamic principles or elements of Shari’. Further, they have argued that this process would produce a growing tendency among the members of different Muslim communities to see the entire Muslim population in the country as a unified social category sharing and abiding by a common religious ethos and orientation. The evidence presented is neither the only process of social change taking place among Muslim communities in India nor is its transformative impact as unilinear and straight as has been commonly assumed. Firstly, Islamization, as Wright’s paper ably demonstrates, is competing with processes like modernization and westernization, which owe themselves to wider social forces. Second, Islamization does not always result, as is implied in its unilinear conception, in the widespread acceptance of elements of the Shari’at. Quite often, it results in the displacement of one set of heterodox practices by another set of practices which are equally heterodox. Furthermore, several customs and practices are able to successfully survive the transformative effects of Islamization and continue to persist either in their old or a slightly modified form (Ahmad, 1976).

**Area of Study**
The present research is conducted in Jammu City of Jammu District. The Universe of the study is Muslim dominated areas of Jammu City. The three areas which are taken for the present research are Bathindi, Talab Khatikan and Ustad Mohalla.

**Bathindi:** In Bathindi, there are mixed religious groups i.e. Hindus and Muslims. But Muslims are in majority. Gujjar caste is the dominant caste of this area and now a days they are selling their properties to the Muslim migrants from different part of the state like Kashmir, Doda, Rajouri and Poonch. Muslims constitutes 70% of the total
population. The name Bathindi is derived by climatic nature of area i.e. the cold Breeze (Waa Thandi) which is always observed in this area.

Talab Khatikan: In this locality various religious communities live like Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Muslims are in majority i.e. 80-85%. Among Muslims, Teli Muslims are in majority. According to the people residing here the name Khatikan originated mainly from Khatik caste which was living here before 1947. After that they left this area and settled in Pakistan. The property here is mainly custodian. Again people from different parts of the state are purchasing this custodian property.
Ustad Mohalla: This is a locality in the area under Amphalla. As far as the religion of the locality is concerned, there is also a mixture of all religions, i.e. Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christian. But the Muslims population is in domination i.e. 70%. The Muslims occupational castes are mainly present in this area. The name Ustad Mohalla is derived from the name of Mohd. Ghouse Khan, who was the Ustad of Maharaja Hari Singh. Maharaja was very much impressed by his work and he allotted this area to him, on his name this area is known as Ustad Mohalla and many occupational castes reside here.

Main Objectives

1) To trace the origin of caste and the process of conversion among the Muslims of J&K.
2) To study the nature of social stratification in relation to caste among the Muslims of Jammu city.
3) To explore the marriage and kinship rules and rituals among the Muslims of Jammu city.
4) To understand the analyses the formation of kinship networks.
5) To examine the effect of recent changes particularly in relation to the process of Islamisation and modernization on caste and kinship relations among the Muslims.

Hypothesis

1) Retention of castes among Muslims especially in the features like endogamy and caste titles/surnames forms an important base for cultural and community identity. As long as the base remains strong this identity will be retained and in certain cases will get strengthened. For instance, if Kashmiri Muslims marry within their castes and not with non-Kashmiri castes, then their identity as Kashmiri will remain intact. Conversely, if Kashmiri establish marriage alliance with Gujjar castes, their identity as Kashmiris would diminish. Therefore, more the tendency to maintain caste endogamy, the greater will be restoration of community identity.
2) The more people are educated, employed and are politically influential, the more they seek marriage alliances and establish kinship network in the higher social group. This group is usually a higher class and caste group.

3) The two processes of modernization and Islamization, though antithetical in many cases, tend to have a similar influence in relation to opposition to caste system considered essentially a Hindu religious phenomenon. Thus in situations, where the two processes, sometimes together and at other times independent of each other get strengthened, the rigidity of the caste system and the influence of customary practices would decline.

Research Methodology

To realize the objectives, the present research has been primarily based on empirical study. This study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative analyses. The thrust has been mainly on the former. Secondary data and information from previously conducted work has also been reviewed in order to relate issues in its historical and contemporary context. The secondary sources for the study have included documentary evidences mainly from the published material, such as, census reports, reports of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Directorate of Economics and Statistics Survey and Planning Department (J&K), Jammu Development Authority (JDA), SAP Library of University of Jammu, Regional Library, Weekly published journal of the concerning area if any, Archives at Hari Singh Palace and Internet.

The Data for primary sources has been collected directly through fieldwork conducted in few localities of Jammu City. From Jammu District few areas of Jammu city dominated by the Muslim population are undertaken for the present research.

The present research is descriptive as well as explanatory in nature. Descriptive research describes the events, phenomenon and situation, where as explanatory research is mainly concerned with causes or ‘why’ factor about some phenomenon. In this research, the distinctiveness of castes among Muslims has been described through various features like endogamy, occupation and social interaction. It has also analysed
the changes which are coming in caste and kinship patterns during the recent period. The research has also explained the conversion process that took place among Muslims of Jammu City.

**Universe of the Study**

There are many Muslim areas in Jammu City like Ustad Mohalla, Gujjar Nagar, Bathindi, Talab Khatikan, Sunjawan and Nagrota etc. These areas are selected on the basis of Cluster sampling method. Cluster sampling implies dividing population into clusters and drawing random or stratified sample either from all clusters or selected clusters. The ‘clusters’ in our research refer to these Muslim dominated areas, which form the Universe of the study from which the sample of the study is drawn.

On the basis of census classification and field visits, three areas are identified and included in the sample. These are Ustad Mohalla, Bathindi and Talab Khatikan. The Bathindi area is rural whereas both the other two areas have shown urban features.

**Sample Size**

These three areas Ustad Mohalla, Bathindi and Talab Khatikan are chosen because they are mainly Muslim dominated areas and have various castes.

The total number of Muslim households in these areas is approximately 3000 (information based on field visit) and one tenth of the total household i.e. 300 (3000/10) was included in the sample. So the sample size was 300 households. From each of the selected areas, 100 households were taken for the research.

**Methods of data Collection**

In this research the important variable is ‘caste’ and there are many castes in the given area ranging from 5-15.

For the selection of the households, a stratified random sampling method was used. This method “involves dividing the population in homogenous strata and then selecting simple random sample from each of the stratum”. In this research ‘strata’ refers to ‘caste’, and from each area or cluster a total of hundred households was
selected. In this sense, every strata or caste of the locality was represented in the sample.

The number of households from every caste was selected randomly in proportion to the total population of that particular caste.

Table -1.2: Major Caste

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Name of Mohalla</th>
<th>Name of caste presents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Bathindi</td>
<td>Gujjars in majority, and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Ustad Mohalla</td>
<td>Muslims occupational castes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Talab Khatikan</td>
<td>Teli (Malik) in majority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The technique for data collection included field survey with the help of interview schedule (See Annexure XI) and through observation. The major thrust of the interview schedule was to study the number of castes in the given area and the changes which are coming in kinship network and in caste features.

A few Case Studies were also be conducted to have in- depth understanding of caste and kinship network. The genealogy (See Annexure I-IX) of a few families was also drawn. Besides this, Focused Group Discussion was done with the heads of the households in a given area.

The data thus collected were coded, tabulated and interpreted for the further analysis using statistical techniques.

Table-1.3: Marital Status of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Unmarried</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Based Data

Out of 300 respondents 275 married (199 male, 76 female) respondent were taken and 25 unmarried (14 male, 11 female) respondents were taken.
Table -1.4: Qualification of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Total No. of male Respondents</th>
<th>Total No. of female respondents</th>
<th>Total Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Uneducated</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Primary to below high school</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>High school to below graduation</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Graduation and above</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>213</strong></td>
<td><strong>87</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Based data

The educational attainments of the respondents exhibit variations from Uneducated and up to graduation and above as shown in the Table -1.5 above.

Table-1.5: Sex Composition of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Numbers of Male Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Numbers of female respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Total Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Based Data

Out of total 300 respondents 71 percent of the respondents were males and 29 percent of the respondents were females as shown in the Table 1.6 above.

Significance of the Study

The study assumes importance in the sense that though plenty of work has been done on the Muslims at the national level, but as far as J&K is concerned, work in the field of caste and kinship among Muslims of Jammu has been done in peripheral/casual manner. It is conspicuous to note that the aspects of Muslim marriage and kinship have not received the continuous and constant scholarly attention as other aspects of life. As a result, there is hardly any reckonable full-length intensive study of the Muslim castes, kinship and marriage with few exceptions. The present research aims to bring out the various caste and kinship patterns among the Muslims of Jammu City.
The study also brings to light that Muslims in J&K are not a homogenous community and they are very much stratified on caste lines having definite kinship and marriage rules. This shows the influence of Hindu castes and customary practices on the Muslims and how they maintain and consolidate them in different situations as well.

The study also highlights the changes among Muslims to suggest that whereas on the one hand they are adapting to new and modern changes, on the other hand the religious dimension in the form of Islamization is being strengthened. The caste consciousness too has not declined and is very much evident at the social and cultural levels. The process of Islamization has only added to the consolidation of caste identity.