CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES OF DOWRY

INTRODUCTION

Due partly to the social upsurge and changes in attitudes manifesting themselves into various forms and ways, and partly to the accompanying social economic and legal measures, the woman in independent India has come to acquire a better status in the society, than ever before in any period of India's history with the march of time and progress. Since independence, the woman had gradually came to acquire considerable emancipation from the complexes and ills with which she had been suffering for long. Today's woman has to come to have better acceptability and respectability, better status of equality with men, better rights and privileges, better opportunities and avenues in all the spheres of national life, social-economic and political.

Eventhough our country is emerging in the emancipation and liberation of women in the recognition of her legitimate place in the family and the society, in the recognising and protection of her interests and privileges and in the gradual enhancement of status the systems of dowry, the ideologies and institutional practices and norms existing in society has contributed to much of their humiliation, harassment and exploitation. In spite of the legislative measures adopted in favour of women in our country after independence and inspite of the spread of education and women's gradual economic independence, countless women continue to be the victim of violence.
They are beaten, kidnapped, raped, burnt and murdered. Who are the women? who are victimised? who are their assailants? where are the seeds of violence against women sown? To answer these questions, both the personal and situational approach is required in the above said aspects. This research has, therefore undertaken to explore the problem in Indian social settings and situations in respect of Tamil Nadu.

This chapter comprises on following aspects.

2.1. Historical perspective and genesis of dowry.

2.2. Definition and origin of dowry.

2.3. Phenomenon of dowry.

2.4. Cause and effects of dowry.

2.5. Development of dowry practice.

2.6. Evaluation and reasons to select this topic.

2.1 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES AND GENESIS OF DOWRY

It cannot be ascertained when and how dowry system evolved. Dowry in modern times in India is not a chance event but a product of emergence and development of social forces over a period of time. Going back to the past tradition, marriage, to a Hindu is one of the twelve sankara’s (sacrament) enjoyed upon him by religion for purifying the body from inherited taints. It is a religious necessity rather than a mere physical luxury of the trio of dharma, artha, kama. The kama (gratification of sex) comes last and fulfilled through marriage. It is this underlying spirit of the Hindu marriage, which
creates an indissoluble tie between the husband and the wife. The manu, the
great law giver, while maintaining the form of marriage says, (1) The gift of
daughter after decking her with costly garments and honouring her by
presents of dowry to the learned in vedas and of good conduct whom the father
himself is called the Brahmana rite. (2) The gift of a daughter, who has been
decked with ornaments to a priest who divinely officiate at a sacrifice during
the course of its performance, the calling the Deiva rites. (3) The Arsha rite,
the father of the bride receives, cow and a ball or two pairs where the
bridegroom pays the kinman of the bride to marry her it is a Asura rite.¹

Dowry is of an ancient origin which has assumed an abnormal
proportion in latter times. Among the ancient Hindu, the customs of dowry did
exist though under different names. This custom of giving presents, at the time
of marriage is an universal phenomenon and continues to be so. Such type of
customs prevail in India, whereby parents of the girl give presents to the bride.
The rationale behind these presenting of gifts to girls the affection of the
parents towards the children, but in due course of time the said customs has
grown rigid and become associated with social status and family prestige
leading to a great social evil.

Marriage for a woman in the only Sankara (sacrament) performed
for her marriage enable one to fulfill dharma (religious and social obligation)
towards family community and society, Praga (progamy) and rati (sexual
pleasure and gratification).

Sharma, K. "Hindu law and usage", New Delhi, 1980.
The ancient Hindu textual law recognises eight forms of marriage. They are Brahma, Deiva Arsha and Prajapatya which are considered, as approved form and unapproved form are Gandharva Asura, Raksasa and Paisaca form. At present the only form of marriage which is prevalent is the Brahma form. Here the parents or guardians of bride offer her as a gift in marriage to the bridegroom without receiving any compensation from him. In such form of marriage, the parents or guardian of the bride give the damsel in marriage adorned with dress and ornaments to a bachelor who is well versed with the Veda's and is of good character. He is to be sought out and invited by the guardian of the bride to accept her when offered to him. In earlier times such form of marriage was necessarily confined to the Brahmana's only, but now Hindu belonging to any caste/class may marry in accordance with the Brahma form. This form of marriage is also known as Kanyadhan marriage, that is a virgin girl is to be given as a sacred gift to a boy of good pedigree and equipped with convertible qualifications for a progamy of quality providing and status. It is a marriage between two asymmetrical lein groups and is fundamentally a predict of a stage of historical development when private property alongwith a new Brahmanic ideologies came into existence to strengthen the postnatal social order.

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2 Jamile V., "Her gold and body", 1980.

3 Banerjee, N.V., "Studies in the Dharmasastra’s of Manu", New Delhi, 1980,

4 Chatterjee, H., "Form of marriage in Ancient India", Vol.II, Calcutta 1979,
Thus a new form of normative order was conceived found in the Dharmasastra. This had provided a bed rock for the sanction of hierarchial morphological order.\textsuperscript{5}

2.1.1 Evolution of Dowry and Social Institution

It is said that in the past vedic (classical) period, the different socio-economical and political forecast to bring about changes in the normative order of the society. Various forms of marriages, Brahma, Deiva, Arsha, Prajapatiya (approved form), Gandharva, Asura Raksasa, Panjatantra form (unapproved form) were conceived by the ancient sages. At present, the only form of marriage, which is prevalent is the Brahma form. Here the parents or guardian of bride offer her as a gift in marriage to the bridegroom without receiving any compensation from him.

According to Manu’s dictum, "Let me further, who know the law, receive gratuity, however small for giving her daughter in marriage, since the man who takes a gratuity for that purpose, is a seller of his offspring. In other words, the dowry in any form was not sanctioned by the ancient hindu - religious sculptures.

Marriage enables one to fulfill dharma (religious and social obligation towards family community and society) pooja, proamy and rati (sexual pleasure of gratification). It is in conspicuous for a woman to be in unmarried state on being married, complete the social religious and cultural expectations

for and of her. Thus a woman had been considering sexual solely in terms of male related role like daughter, wife, mother and widow with corresponding duties and obligations to her husband as well as the King.

2.1.2  *Idikasa Period* [EPIC Period]

In both Ramayana and Mahabarata, it was illustrated that in terms of Stridhana during the course of marriage by the parents of bride to the bridegrooms.

2.1.3  *In Mahabaratha*, Droubathi, Subathra all received costly ornaments, elephants, houses during the course of marriage.⁶

2.1.4  *In Ramayana it was termed as* "Kanyasulgam" *Rama told Barathan that once our country has been offered to your mother Kikeye as promised earlier.*⁷

Further Valmiki tabulated the things offered during the course of the Sita's marriage with Rama by her father Janaka.⁸

2.1.5  *Sanga Kalam* (Sanga Period)

In this period the following types of marriages were followed. They are love marriage, gifted marriage, kandharva marriage.

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⁸ Ibid.
2.1.5.1 Love Marriage

Even this type of marriage formed simple and natural, it was considered as unapproved form by the society.

2.1.5.2 Gifted Marriage

In this type of marriage, the bridegroom's parents approached bride's and seek marriage of their son by offering things to the bride parents. This type of offering called as 'Parisam'. Stridhanam\(^9\) was explained as that the bridegroom's parents voluntarily gifted things to the bride. This was found in Thodar, Irular communities in Tamil Nadu. Even in Foreign countries, this is adopted. In South Africa people follow gifted marriage. In Tibet the parents sold their daughter during the marriage.\(^11\) This type of selling was termed as BRIDEPRIICE. Even in some places there was a customary practice that the bride sacrifices herself to the bridegroom family after the marriage.

2.1.5.3 Kantharva Marriage

In this, the bride seek bridegroom's parents commit for marriage by offering things and wealth. But the parents not aspiring the wealth, but expecting good quality might refuse for the marriage. In this occasion, the bride elopes with the bridegroom and marry him. This type of marriage is referred in Puranaanuru "Magarpar Kanchithurai".

\(^9\) Kathirvel Pillai, N. "Tamil Mozhi Agarathi", 1990.


2.1.6 *Sangam Maruvia Kalam* (Later Sanga Period)

In this, the attitudinal changes have happened. Male dominated position was modified the person who possess the property. It was recognised by the society. Hence the landlord's while sending the daughter, to other's family to maintain the status, they offered gifts. In *Silapathikaram* Kannagi's marriage was conducted with a lot of gifts by her father.

2.1.7 *Samaya Kalam* (Religious Period)

During the sixth century AD, Tamilnadu was ruled by Pallavas, termed as "Samaya Kalam". During this period evidence of notes on "Parisam" was found in their "Pasuram".

2.1.8 *Dowry on the Islamic Period*

Dowry was considered as an essential feature under the mohammedian rule. In the medieval period, the mohammedian ruled our country. At that time, dowry practices prevailed and it was opposed generally. Akbar in his book "AYINI AKBARI" there was a condemnation of dowry. The practice of dowry was termed as "Mahar". In Tamil nadu 16th and 17th Century it was spread over by offering lot of money and things to the bride by the bride groom family members.

In 20th century it spread all over the people. Even in the low caste, the system of dowry expected by the bride's parents. The Government had offered various concessions to lower caste pertaining to their education employment etc., had been motivated for dowry.
2.2 Definition and origin of Dowry

Dowry means any property or valuable security given or agreed to the given either directly or indirectly.

(a) by one party to a marriage to the other party for the marriage.

(b) by the parents of either party to marriage or by any person, to either party to the marriage or by any other person.

According to Webster, New twentieth Century dictionary 1956, dowry means

(i) The money goods or estate which a woman brings to her husband in marriage, the portion given with a wife.

(ii) A natural talent gift or endowment, as part was his dowry.

Origin of Dowry

The dowry is a deep rooted evil in the society. It started as customary present, with love and affection. In olden days, it was customary to give some presents to the bride and bridegroom and his family at the time of marriage. The parents of the bride or their relations out of affection and good intention used to provide the couple something to fall back upon in case of need. The system started at a time when girls were generally not educated and even if they were educated they were unwilling to take up gainful employment. There was also less opportunity for them either to supplement the family income or they become financially independent. There was yet another reason
for such customary gifts. The daughter then was not entitled to a share in the joint family properties when she had a brother. Hence the father out of affection or other consideration used to give some cash or kind to the daughter at the time of marriage.

2.3 Phenomena of Dowry

Dowry as a modern phenomena has been compounded by certain other conditions of the economy and society. For example, some people it is a customary (or) religious practice and for others, it is to maintain (or) acquire a new status and prestige, still for some others it may be an instrument to accumulate easy money out of greediness for varied purposes like to marry their own daughters and acquire economic security for the parents who would have invested much money on placement of their son and now many think that after marriage their earning son may go and stay away and coming back them only in his old age. Other purpose may be to start and invest the money received in dowry in business at the cost of the bride’s father. All these tendencies are, in varying degrees very prominent among different social groups, who have different calculations in mind and articulation of the same through marital agreement (Table 1). There is a paucity of scientific investigation about a moral sentiment on social phenomenon like dowry. The study had endeavoured the dynamics of the phenomena in some details. Further it was found that there was a symbolic association between various groups of social and economic forces which have given shape and strengthened the phenomena of dowry. These forces had also helped to sanction and augment the phenomena is contemporary Indian society in general and in a metropolitan city in particular.
### Table 2.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Bride Price Fixed by the Society</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Computer Engineer, Scientist, Doctors, Lawyers and Professionals</td>
<td>5 Lakhs House hold articles, Gold 200 Sovereigns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>- do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Industrial Workers</td>
<td>Rs.1 Lakh, Gold 10 - 25 Sovereigns, House hold Articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Government Employees</td>
<td>Rs.2 Lakhs, Gold 50 Sovereigns, House Hold Articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Own Industries</td>
<td>Rs.10 Lakhs, House Hold Articles, Gold 200 Sovereigns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Private Employees</td>
<td>Rs.1 Lakh, Gold 10-25 Sovereigns, Household Articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Drivers, Labourers, etc</td>
<td>Rs.50 Thousand, Gold 10 Sovereigns, Household Articles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.4 Cause of Dowry

Dowry was not given for social prestige. It was an attribute of attachment, a symbol of reverential regard for their daughters. There is nothing wrong if a daughter is given rather bestowed with some gifts in cash or kind by her parents at the time of marriage, provided the same is within reasonable limits and not be an obstacle for others, because for parents both son and daughter are equal.

There are instances where a daughter at the time of marriage voluntarily denies not to take any sort of gift whether in cash or kind. But the
same daughter is forced by her parents to take the same because of social prestige, such dirty practice should be done away with. Some members of the family feel that if they give an enormous dowry to their daughters or sisters, people will praise them, such a feeling gives them satisfaction of being rich but at the same time it causes great dissatisfaction in many other homes that cannot be afford able. People think, by borrowing money, and spend heavily on the marriage of their daughter or sister, they will have a good social position and will command respect.

This unavoidable social evil is here to stay for sometime. The evils of which are intensifying because of the unequal distribution of wealth. Accordingly, under these circumstances, every-one looks for an extra source of money to place his family budget on an even keel. The dowry system, in an economically under developed country like India, is an antisocialistic measure, as it creates class difference between the rich and the poor. This evil system also promotes, unnecessarily, the consumption of luxury goods even by the poor. Things which poor cannot afford to buy for themselves are given as dowry along with their daughters. Dowry does not merely mean the property that a bride gets at the time of marriage, but it includes many things given before and long after the marriage. During the first year after marriage, the girls' parent send her gift or money at the time of every festival and religious occasion.

Dowry is generally given by the girls family to the boys family though in few cases in some hilly and tribal areas the system is reverse. Unlike the past, dowry today is not only given in cash or kind like ornaments,
land, house etc., but also includes such articles as Jewellery, Motor-car, Scooter, T.V., Radio, Refrigerator, Electric Gadgets for domestic use, Sofa, Almirah, Dinning Table, Carpets, etc. The amount of Dowry differ from caste to caste depending upon the education, employment, status, personality and promotion aspects of the boy and the economical and social status of his family.

2.4.1 "Effects of Dowry"

To meet the expenses of marriage people save not for any other purpose, but mainly for payment of dowry. It deprives the nation of such savings for promoting agriculture and industries. The Nation is deprived of a lot of hidden Gold and Silver, which could otherwise have been productively utilised in nation building. A recent survey conducted by PTI reveals that dowry generally includes 15 to 40 Tolas of Gold and Diamonds. The total amount being spent on dowry varies from family to family and community to community. Parents would welcome equal distribution of their property between sons and daughters rather than pay dowry. Because this system prevents women from demanding share in parental property, as they are hesitant to have their share twice, our modern youth will be deprived of becoming independent and self reliant if such a dirty practice of dowry continues. Because such practice debases them morally and deprive them of their creative and productive capacity.

The Dowry evils claims 50 lives of young married women in our country every day. The average dowry death was 12 per day in 1995. There are parents who own only one or two acres of land which they have to sell for their
daughters wedding. They curse this evil as hell for them and cannot escape its broad and dirty clutches. There are instances where the parents are not able to meet the demands of the bride-grooms which results, in the daughters remain as spinsters throughout their life. This social evil is accelerating its pace day by day when almost results in determining the status of women in society. This social decease is affecting not only the individual but society as a whole.

2.4.2 Dowry in Novels

Dowry system has been focussed in many novels. In social life, literature played a vital role in explicating certain matters which affected the society. G.N. Samuel in his text expresses that feelings and emotions of various periods became literature. It reflects, every period with will and evil.

Many authors had written novels focusing the dowry menace. They have pointed out the practice of dowry evils, etc. When contacted the authors, expressed that the novels have written based on experience with the individual and explicit the incidence.

2.5 Development of Dowry Practice

The fore mentioned brought out the following evaluation, with respect to development of Dowry practice.

1. Dowry is the traditional habit.
2. Customary act during the marriage.

4. It is inevitable, demanded by the bridegroom parents to conduct marriage of the daughter in social environment.

5. Justification to compensate the expenses incurred to their ward.

6. In the male chauvinist society, it is the price fixed to the bridegroom's education and employment.

2.5.1 Evaluation through Field Investigation

It has been conducted for the development of dowry practice. Two factor's are brought out during the course of field investigation.

1. Justification of Dowry

2. Personal life assessment.

Out of 100 male respondents six of them admitted that demanding dowry was wrong. They were unmarried respondents. Other's justified the dowry, further they accused bridegroom family members for initiate the dowry problems.

The following facts are brought out during the investigation by the male respondents:

1. 25 percent respondents attribute aspirations of the bride parents to wedlock of their daughter by any manner as the cause for dowry.
2. 20 percent respondents state that dowry gives social status to the bride's side.

3. 24 percent respondents opine that there is nothing wrong in accepting the dowry from the bride side without any demand.

4. 6 percent agree that dowry is social virus. 25 percent admits that, even after stringent act framed to curb the dowry system, it was considered to the traditional one.

100 female respondents were interviewed 5 of them supported the view to accept the dowry system by the bridegroom.

50 percent respondents expressed that in the male dominated society the female are ought to be bestowed and not able to oppose the dowry system.

The following are enumerated while interviewing the respondents.

1. 10 percent respondents says the dowry act should be dealt fairly and in unbiased manner.

2. 13 percent anguish that this social virus should be cured. The elders should take effort to eradicate the system.

3. 12 percent respondents admits for self analysis by female members required.

4. 15 percent respondents suggest that healthy feeling about the marriages would prevent the dowry.
2.5.2 Dowry - Socialistic Analysis

The analysis made on dowry problem referred the following conditions.

1. Persons responsible for dowry - role.
2. Place of dowry in love marriage.
3. Changing socialistic pattern and demographic variables conditions of the people.
4. The effort of Government, non-government organisations in eradicating the dowry system.

2.5.3 Person responsible for Dowry: Role

The following persons are identified for the cause of the dowry and their role was divided and analysed (1) Bride (2) Bride’s parents (3) Bridegrooms (4) Bride Grooms Parents.

2.5.3.1 Bride

Most of the unmarried girls expect their parent, to conduct marriage by offering dowry. One incident proved this cause. When my colleagues (Geetha lakshmi, 1995) invited for her marriage, I asked her, about the amount spent for the marriage and how her father managed those expenses? and if she thought it was right to marry with dowry. She replied with a smile and she justified by quoting the following reasons.

1. The amount carried would be taken care of herself.
2. To meet out the economical problem.

3. No family exists without dowry.

The attitude of the educated, employed girl aspiring to lead happy married life even by spending a lot of money, for which they seek better qualified, employed bridegroom. Even they neglect the day to day incidence of dowry harassments and death published in the paper and focussed in mass media. They are ready to challenge the consequences of the dowry evils.

2.5.3.2 Bride's Parents

The feeling of "offerings the dowry" is the customary one and tolerance of the evils of dowry by the Bride's parents are another cause of persistence of dowry system. Further they justify that if they are not willing to offer dowry, other family members are ready to give dowry for the marriage. How long they can keep their daughter at home? Such evil is better and solvable than to keep the daughter in the house they replied and they aspire for the good thing to happen. If any thing happened, it is not in their hands, God alone can it help, they expressed.

The bride's parents normally tackle the situation of dowry harassment of bridegroom by following the methods.

1. Non-interfering the daughter's life after marriage.

2. By advising their daughter to adjust with the family members of the bride groom.
2.5.3.3 Bride groom

Generally, well educated, employed male persons expect dowry during the course of marriage. For which they justify that they deserve their demand. College students expressed their view emotionally on dowry. But those who are in service gave their reply after thinking. They admit that they have already targeted for dowry during marriage by their parents. Based on interview conducted and discussions, some practical facts are elucidated.

1. Bridegroom did not hesitate to accept the dowry when demanded by their parents.

2. No one claimed that dowry as an offence

After marriage the cause of dowry problem raised only by the bridegroom in the following aspects:

1. Greediness
2. To compensate the amount of their expectation.
3. The expectation of fulfilling the dowry as promised by the bride’s house.
4. Instigation of the parents and family members.

2.5.3.4 Bride groom’s Parents

For leading a family life, both male and female member required a good amount of wealth. But traditionally, female members are expected to bring the wealth in terms of dowry in a social life. By this way, the male
community persuades dowry system to raise their status during their life time. The parents feel that seeking demand of their son was justified for some reasons like, to compensate the expenditure spent for their daughters, and they themselves offered dowry for their daughter’s marriage.

For Dowry harassment and death the family member’s and parents are somewhat considered responsible for the incident. This resulted in suicide, and murder.

The role of parent’s in forming dowry problem.

1. To compensate the expenditure incurred during the son’s education and employment.

2. Consideration of Additional Income to raise their status.

3. The opportunity to utilise such acceptance of dowry, as the society made the male as dominants.

4. Justification of expenditure incurred for their daughters and the same reciprocation.

5. Involvement in Dowry harassment, directly or indirectly.

2.5.4 Dowry in Love Marriage

Whether the love marriage helps to decrease and eradicate the dowry practice. This question was asked to both male and female respondents. Male respondents almost replied that it may help to decrease. To certain extent love
marriages minimise the dowry practice. But female respondents answered affirmatively. They anticipate that after marriage dowry may be expected by the bridegroom.

Nanjil Nadan in his "Vina-Niral Vidai" (Quiz Programme on love marriages in dowry practice). Yes, in present situation, everyone justifies their actions. Further it is to be considered to lead a happy family life.

More over in dailies, newspapers published on the love marriage ended due to dowry.

In Dinamalar, daily, new items published that one Mr. Nagarajan loved his wife and got married but after some time he sent his wife Nagalakshmi back home for demanding dowry.

In Chennai, a person migrated from Srilanka, loved and married a girl, but the family members did not allow him to keep her with them. However, the person took her to separate house with the help of the friends. For some period they had a happy married life. But on instigation of the parents, the person sent her out for demanding the dowry.

2.5.5 Demographic and Social Variables

By neglecting the customary practice in the society, some people and community have changed their attitudes to get a new life. They had opposed the system of dowry during the time of marriage in the following manner.
2.5.5.1 Neglecting the person who demand the dowry.

In Karnataka State Sagar district the bridegroom on the stage itself was not willing to tie the sacred knot by demanding the full amount of dowry as promised earlier. Immediately, the girl stood and told the visitors who came to bless the couple, that she was unwilling to marry such a bridegroom and left.

2.5.5.2 The person not aspiring for Dowry

In Chengalput district, Kancheepuram Town, one Mr. Mukhtar Hussain, who belonged to a muslim community, announced before the public that he would not accept the dowry, even the parents pressurised him to accept it, he simply refused it.

2.5.5.3 Kambala Community

In Tamilnadu, Ettayapuram Village, the people belonging to Kambala Community, offered full right to the bride to select her partner without demanding the dowry. Even now it continues.

2.5.5.4 Exceptional Brahmin Community

10 km away from Trichi Town there is a village called Kambarasampettai Agraaram. Here the marriages are conducted without demand of dowry. For the past 5 generations they followed this system, they replied.
2.5.5.5 Gujarathi Community in Chennai

In Chennai, so many families were living migrated from Gujarath State. Here they shared the marriage expenses mutually. Here the dowry system have not existed for the past 30 years.

Compilation

In vedap period dowry system originated among the society. Further it spread to the rulers in different forms. During the Idikasa period, by offering 'Kanyakalga' to marry a girl, a "Kanyadanam" by way of giving dowry to the bridgroom were present.

In Sanga Period three types of marriages were followed and "dowry systems" only occurred in gifted marriages.

In the 14th century, the Kings, Landlords, Zamindars, rich people had the practice of by giving the Parisam to get marriage.

During the Vijayanaagara King period, from 16th century to 20th century the price was fixed for the brides.

The influences of Islamias, Mughals, who ruled sometime in Tamilnadu, cultivated the dowry system.

In 1980's the system of dowry had spread to the lower caste community. The status in the life of scheduled caste due to concession provided by the Government, made the aspiration for equality with the rich people.

The factors of the evaluation on dowry during the field of study are furnished.
The role of the bride, bridegroom and their parents who are all responsible for the dowry system are analysed.

The fact that love marriages have not abolished the dowry system are corroborated.

Neglecting the dowry system by the socio-economic, demographic variables are presented.

The list of Organisations, Government Institutions, involved in solving the dowry practice, are furnished (Chapter III).

2.6 Evaluation and reason to select this topic

Even the dowry system found in the vedic period to 19th century, it was felt that, the dowry system had been practiced voluntarily. Nothing intentional prevailed among the society.

Starting from the 20th century, the attitudinal changes of the public and society were observed. It has showed that dowry has become a compulsory manner in fixing the marriage, by the various groups of society. The issue has suddenly acquired pernicious over tones in recent years. Although cases of dowry deaths are largely hidden behind the closed doors of the house, resulting in a general lack of awareness of the seriousness and extent of dowry death, there is some scattered data suggesting that the murder of a young wife or a daughter in law on the issue is far more prevalent than either the public or professionals realise.

Therefore this study has been undertaken, with a view to analyse this problem of bride burning and other deaths with a sociological approach and with an attempt to develop some theoretical model (Chapter 4 & 5).
REFERENCES


10. Indira, Status of Women in Ancient India, P.93.


