

# ATTITUDE OF COLLEGE STUDENTS TOWARDS THE DOWRY SYSTEM AND THEIR VIEWS TO ERADICATE THE SAME

Research  
Paper

## ABSTRACT

*The present study aims at investigating the attitude of college students towards the dowry system and their views to eradicate the same. The sample consists of 250 arts and science college students from Thoothukudi district. The scales for measuring the attitude of college students towards the dowry system, for measuring the views of college students to eradicate the dowry system and a personal information form were used for collecting the data. The data was analysed using percentage analysis, t-test, F-test and product moment correlation. The results revealed that there is a significant relationship between the attitude towards the dowry system and their views to eradicate the dowry system with respect to their gender, locality and community.*

## INTRODUCTION

Education moulds the character and personality of an individual. Education is the process that imports, improves and changes the information, knowledge, understanding, attitude, practices, skills and so on of the people for their effective performance in life as individuals and as members of the family, society, nation and the world. "Dowry is the payment in cash or/and kind by the bride's family to the bridegroom's family along with the giving away of the bride (called Kanyadan) in Indian marriage. Kanyadan is an important part of Hindu marital rites. Kanya means daughter, and dan means gift". The concept of exchanging money, land or other assets in exchange for a joining in marriage of two individual is called dowry.

In India, according to government figures there were a total of 5,377 dowry deaths in 1993, an increase of 12% from 1992. Despite the existence of rigorous laws to prevent dowry-deaths under a 1986 amendment to the Indian Penal Code (IPC), convictions are rare, and judges are often uninterested and susceptible to bribery. Recent newspaper reports have focused on the alarming rate of deaths of married women in Hamirpur, Mandi and Bilaspur districts in the state of Himachal Pradesh.

## NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Dowry harassment is a disease in society. It is a symptom of a deeper disease that relates to how our society gives a value to women. Now-a-days educated people are also demanding very high dowry, even though

the girl would be well educated and well earning. The world has entered the new millennium but it is a harsh reality that women in India are still being ill-treated in our male-dominated society. She is deprived of her independent identity and is looked upon as a commodity. She is not only robbed of her dignity and pride by way of seduction by men but also may become a victim of cruelty by her saviours within the four walls of her own house. However, her trauma does not end here, it may even go to the extent of forcing her to commit suicide or she may be burnt to death for various reasons, including dowry. This type of violence transgresses of caste, class, region or religion and it is prevalent in almost all societies in India. The system of dowry is a social practice, which on its own has claimed the lives of scores of women - both young and old, and has made life a virtual hell for many more. Unfortunately, education among women has not produced a reformative effect on their social outlook, nor encouraged any change in them conducive to social upliftment. Those parents who prefer not to take dowry for their well-qualified and settled male children, are in fact considered 'strange' by the society and doubts about 'the

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respectability of the groom's family' and the eligibility of the groom are usually raised. The present study makes an in-depth review of the dowry system in and around Thoothukudi city.

The future of India is being shaped, in the classrooms. Students have a great role to play in combating the social maladies in India that retard the country's development into a mighty nation. The social maladies are to be thoroughly understood by students and appropriate attitudes developed to work out strategies for their eradication. Generally, students are found too absorbed in their academic work to think in any way about social issues or measures to set things right. The investigator therefore intended to probe into the attitude of college students towards the dowry system and their views to eradicate the same.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- i. To find out the level of attitude of college students towards the dowry system with respect to their gender, community, and locality.
- ii. To find out the level of views of college students to eradicate the dowry system with respect to their gender, community, and locality.
- iii. To find out the significant difference between the attitude of college students towards the dowry system with respect to their gender, community, and locality.
- iv. To find out the significant difference between views of college students to eradicate the dowry system with respect to their gender, community, and locality.
- v. To find out the significant relationship between the attitude of college students towards the dowry system and their views to eradicate the same with respect to their gender, community, and locality.

### RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

- i. There is no significant difference in the attitude of college students towards the dowry system with respect to their background variables.
- ii. There is no significant difference in the views of college students to eradicate the dowry system with respect to their background variables.

iii. There is no significant relationship between the attitude of students towards the dowry system and their views to eradicate the same with respect to their background variables.

### METHODOLOGY

The Normative Survey Method was adopted for the present study by the investigators.

### POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The population for the study consists of arts and science college students of Thoothukudi District in Tamil Nadu. The investigators selected a sample of 250 arts and science college students of Thoothukudi district. The sample was selected by applying the simple random technique.

### RESEARCH TOOLS USED

For the present study, the following tools were used:

1. Scale measuring attitude towards the dowry system was prepared and validated by investigators.
2. Scale measuring views to eradicate the dowry system was prepared and validated by investigators.

### STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

For analyzing the data, statistical techniques like percentage analysis, t-test, t-test and product moment correlation were used.

### DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1

### LEVEL OF ATTITUDE OF COLLEGE STUDENTS TOWARDS THE DOWRY SYSTEM WITH RESPECT TO GENDER, COMMUNITY AND LOCALITY

Background Variables	Categories	No	Level of attitude towards dowry system					
			Unfavourable		Neutral		Favourable	
			No	%	No	%	No	%
Gender	Male	125	101	80.8	21	16.8	3	2.4
	Female	125	112	89.6	13	10.4	0	0
Community	OC	17	15	88.24	2	11.76	0	0
	BC	166	144	86.75	21	12.65	1	0.6
	MBC	28	23	82.14	5	17.86	0	0
	SC	38	31	81.58	5	13.16	2	5.26
	ST	1	0	0	1	100	0	0
Locality of Student	Rural	136	113	83.09	20	14.71	3	2.21
	Urban	114	100	87.72	14	12.28	0	0



From the above table, it has been found that 80.80%, 16.80% and 2.40% of male students and 89.60%, 10.04% and 0% of female students have unfavourable, neutral and favourable attitude towards the dowry system respectively.

It is revealed that 88.24%, 11.76% and 0% of OC students, 86.75%, 12.65% and 0.60% of BC students, 82.14%, 17.86% and 0% of MBC students, 81.58%, 13.16% and 5.26% of SC students and 0%, 100% and 0% of ST students have unfavourable, neutral and favourable attitude towards the dowry system respectively.

It is revealed that 83.09%, 14.71% and 2.21% of rural students and 87.72%, 12.28% and 0% of urban students have unfavourable, neutral and favourable attitude towards the dowry system respectively.

**Table 2**

**LEVEL OF VIEWS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS TO ERADICATE THE DOWRY SYSTEM WITH RESPECT TO GENDER, COMMUNITY AND LOCALITY**

Background Variables	Categories	No	Level of views to eradicate the dowry system					
			Low		Medium		High	
			No	%	No	%	No	%
Gender	Male	125	29	23.2	79	63.2	17	13.6
	Female	125	13	10.4	84	67.2	28	22.4
Community	OC	17	3	17.65	12	70.59	2	11.76
	BC	166	30	18.07	107	64.46	29	17.47
	MBC	28	3	10.71	18	64.29	7	25
	SC	38	5	13.16	28	7.37	5	13.16
	ST	1	1	100	0	0	0	0
Locality of Student	Rural	136	24	17.65	97	71.32	15	1.1
	Urban	114	17	14.91	72	63.16	25	21.93

From the above table, it has been found that 23.20%, 63.20% and 13.60% of male students and 10.40%, 67.20% and 22.40% of female students have low, average and high level of views to eradicate the dowry system respectively.

It is revealed that 17.65%, 70.59% and 11.76% of OC students, 18.07%, 64.46% and 17.47% of BC students, 10.71%, 64.29% and 25.00% of MBC students, 13.61%, 7.37% and 13.16% of SC students and 100%, 0% and 0% of ST students have low, average and high level of views to eradicate the dowry system respectively.

It is revealed that 17.65%, 71.32% and 1.10% of rural students and 14.91%, 63.16% and 21.93% of urban students have low, average and high level of views to eradicate the dowry system respectively.

**Table 3**

**DIFFERENCE IN ATTITUDE OF COLLEGE STUDENTS TOWARDS THE DOWRY SYSTEM WITH RESPECT TO THEIR GENDER AND LOCALITY**

Back ground Variables	Categories	Mean	SD	df	Calculated t-value	Table t-value	Remarks at 5% level
Gender	Male	56.56	9.803	248	2.31	1.96	S
	Female	59.104	7.437				
Locality of student	Rural	57.262	9.276	248	1.03	1.96	NS
	Urban	58.409	8.131				

S- Significant (Null hypothesis is rejected)

NS- Not Significant (Null hypothesis is accepted)

**Table 4**

**DIFFERENCE IN ATTITUDE OF COLLEGE STUDENTS TOWARDS THE DOWRY SYSTEM WITH RESPECT TO THEIR COMMUNITY**

Sources of variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Calculated F-Value	Table F-Value	Remark
Between Groups	345.94	4	86.485	1.124	2.408	NS
Within Groups	18835	245	76.877			

NS- Not Significant (Null hypothesis is accepted)

**Table 5**

**DIFFERENCE IN VIEWS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS TO ERADICATE THE DOWRY SYSTEM WITH RESPECT TO THEIR GENDER AND LOCALITY**

Back ground Variables	Categories	Mean	SD	df	Calculated t-value	Table t-value	Remark at 5% level
Gender	Male	66.76	10.203	248	2.85	1.96	S
	Female	70.32	9.572				
Locality of student	Rural	69.03	9.683	248	2.64	1.96	S
	Urban	70.41	10.234				

S- Significant (Null hypothesis is rejected)

**Table 6**

**DIFFERENCE IN VIEWS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS TO ERADICATE THE DOWRY SYSTEM WITH RESPECT TO THEIR COMMUNITY**

Sources of variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Calculated F-Value	Table F-Value	Remark
Between Groups	900.795	4	225.198	2.282	2.408	NS
Within Groups	24169.2	245	98.649			

NS- Not Significant (Null hypothesis is accepted)

**Table 7**

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTITUDE OF COLLEGE STUDENTS TOWARDS THE DOWRY SYSTEM AND THEIR VIEWS TO ERADICATE THE SAME WITH RESPECT TO GENDER, COMMUNITY AND LOCALITY**

Variables	Category	Number	Calculated r-value	Table r-value	Remark
Attitude of college students towards the dowry system & their views to eradicate the same	Male	125	0.993	0.159	S
	Female	125	0.977	0.159	S
	OC	17	0.953	0.606	S
	BC	166	0.992	0.138	S
	MBC	28	0.969	0.374	S
	SC	38	0.972	0.304	S
	Rural	136	0.985	0.159	S
	Urban	114	0.976	0.174	S

S- Significant (Null hypothesis is rejected)

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

1. The level of attitude of college students towards the dowry system with respect to their gender, community, and locality is unfavourable.
2. The level of the views of college students on how to eradicate the dowry system with respect to their gender, community, and locality is average.
3. There is significant difference in the attitude of college students towards the dowry system with respect to their gender. The mean scores show that female

students have more unfavourable attitude towards the dowry system than male students. This may be due to the fact that females only suffer a lot from the system. Dowry causes great economic burden on the bride's family. It lowers the status of women and damages their dignity. But, with regard to locality and community there is no significant difference in attitude towards the dowry system.

4. There is significant difference in the views of college students on how to eradicate the dowry system with respect to their gender and locality. When we compare the mean scores of rural and urban students, urban students show a higher level of views on eradicating the dowry system than rural students. The propaganda and publicity against dowry, creating public opinion and rousing social consciousness, encouraging inter-caste marriages, role of voluntary associations are very high in urban areas rather than in rural areas. Due to these factors, the urban students have a high level of views on how to eradicate the dowry system.
5. Since the students show an unfavourable attitude towards the dowry system, their views to eradicate the dowry system is neither low nor high. Here their position is like that of the cat on the wall. Both male and female students think that the dowry money and the utensils and other household articles that are given along with dowry help the newly married couple to establish their new home and to furnish it with necessary accessories. Practice of dowry helps to increase the possibility of marriage of ugly-looking, uneducated and aged girls. Meritorious boys of poor classes often find dowry as supportive of their education. It becomes possible for a lower class/ caste woman to marry an upper class/ caste boy through which she can increase her status. Further, a woman who brings rich dowry is given greater attention and importance than a woman who belongs to a poor family.

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