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**PERCEPTION AND PRACTICES OF YOUTH TOWARDS CROSS-
SECT MARRIAGES IN GILGIT BALTISTAN**

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ABSTRACT:

This study explores the perception of youth towards cross-sect marriages in Gilgit Baltistan. Through qualitative data analysis, eight in-depth interviews have been conducted with the youth of three different sects that are Sunni, Shia and Ismaili. The methodology which has been used in this research work is qualitative; data has been generalized through 8 in-depth interviews from the youth of Gilgit Baltistan during Covid-19. It has been analyzed that majority of youth was in favor of cross-sect marriages and they were supporting it as good source of socialization. Respondents' point of view was that girls have the right to choose their life partner according to their will as this right is given to them by Islam. It's just our stereotypical thinking that we have a negative behavior towards cross-sect marriages. However, on other side, there were some respondents who were not in much favor of cross-set

marriages but they have arguments that why they are not supporting cross-sect marriage. Reasons were their rigid beliefs, different cultural backgrounds and extremist family backgrounds behind it. But, people have to change their thinking patterns or rigid behaviors towards different sects or considering themselves as superior and rests as inferior. We need to try to accept diversity because it brings positivity in societies.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Marriage is the basic foundation of a family, it's the main institute of society which is responsible for the transmission and reproduction of generations. Marriage is legal contract between men and women that is regulated by proper laws, customs, rules, beliefs and attitudes that prescribe the rights and duties of the partner and provides a status to their off springs. But with the passage of time there is a huge reform in marriage world widely, like, exchange marriages, group marriages, polyandry, polygamy, tree marriages, common law marriages, same sex marriages etc. A marriage between two opposite sects is known as cross sect marriage. These differences are not only based on sect but also on different belief systems, different cultural systems, different norms, values, customs and traditions. Marriage is not just the union of two people but of cultures and experiences. The research work is based on perception of youth whether they are in favor of cross sect marriages or against it, what are their perceptions about cross-sect marriages? Whether cross-sect marriages should be appreciated or not? Is cross-sect marriages is an issue which our youth is facing because of our firm cultural patterns? Shall we promote cross-sect marriages or not? The main aim of the study was to explore the perceptions of youth.

Cross sect marriage is a serious issue in our society, especially for girls who are suffering more due to this problem. Our society is showing conservative behavior towards cross-sect marriages, there are different reasons behind it like, we all are considering our values, beliefs, norms and sect, superior than others. Apart from this people are giving much importance to sectarianism, that's why we don't have stamina of acceptance for others. The perceptions for cross sect marriages in context of Pakistan are not different than that of Gilgit Baltistan. We all are familiar that when a girl or boy shows his/her interests in cross sect marriages, what kind of reaction they receive by the society. In many areas of Pakistan and Gilgit Baltistan different constraints in the way of cross sect marriages are faced by people, because its acceptance is very rare. Especially when a girl shows her willingness for cross-sect marriage, society shows undesirable behavior and if they are not able to convince their parents for the marriage, they choose wrong paths like eloping, committing suicide and becoming drug addicted. Apart from this, some of them face harsh punishments like honor killings and forced marriages. In many areas of Gilgit Baltistan, parents give permission for love marriages but when it comes to cross-sect marriages, it is intolerable in the society. For that, we have to put forward this issue that if cross-sect marriages are not prohibited in Islam and when Islam has given this right to every man and woman to choose their life partner according to their will, then why our society is considering it as something unacceptable? (Israr, 2013).

This research work somehow addresses the issue that girls are suffering more, as compared to boys, though this issue is common issue in both genders, it effects females slightly more because of their less dominancy. As boys can go against society and they are not judged for that and can do whatever they want. The reason behind is patriarchy of men, who never face issues like women. Because of this patriarchy girls are not allowed to take their own decisions

especially when it comes to the selection of spouse. Being a part of region where the issue of sectarianism exits on its peak, it has been decided to do a research on such problem which needs to be addressed. As people of Gilgit Baltistan become too firm when it comes to sect in any matter of life. That's why if any one shows their intentions for cross-sect marriages they have to face difficult consequences, as society considers it as taboo. Many times because of the rigid behavior of parents towards cross- sect marriages girls are compelled to take wrong decisions. Our youth suffers mentally, physically as well as socially. Reason behind is, our society gives more importance to sectarianism, cast, beliefs, norms, values, traditions, customs and traditions, and consider themselves superior to others and nobody pays attention towards relationships, harmony, love and peace.

1.1. Problem Statement:

Unfortunately we are facing an issue that we have no acceptance for each other, especially when it comes to sects and casts system. We can evaluate many things and come up with the results that our values, beliefs, practices, customs, traditions are superior to others that's why the problem of sectarianism exits in our society, and also because of this we are not open to welcome diversity which leads to the distraction of harmony within cultures and sects. It is our moral obligation to overcome this issue in order to maintain peace within societies and for this, marriage within cross sect is best source of socialization to build relations with other sect and reduce the issue sectarianism and biasness. In addition, we are living in male dominant society where father, husband and brother are supposed to take every single decision for the female members of their family, and men are independent that they can do whatever they want and not answerable to anyone.

Talking about cross sect marriages, particularly in Gilgit Baltistan, people have become inflexible. The specific focus is on Gilgit Baltistan and the perceptions of its people towards differ-sect marriages and what are the historical backgrounds behind it that people are against different sects and marriages? When we look back into the history of Gilgit Baltistan we come to know that sectarianism emerged from the issue of division of power between two major sects of the Islam, Sunni and Shia when the residents of Gilgit Baltistan liberated their nation from Dogra Raj and got independence on 1st November 1947. Initially after the independence the danger of sectarianism was not much violent but with passage of time especially in last four decades, violence has emerged in the form of sectarianism. The institutions themselves like Masjid, Imam Bargah and Jamath Khana are busy in promoting sectarianism, other social organizations such as schools, hospitals, political parties, community based NGOs are also divided into the sectarian path and the only motto of such organizations is to serve their own sect. A Shia guy can't easily move into the area of Sunni and a Sunni can't easily wanders in the areas of Shia because they cannot risk their lives, there are chances of getting killed and many people are being killed. So, they cannot feel free while going to opposite communities (Mohallas). There was a time when people were used to marry in different sects, because they considered it as a good source of interaction and socialization. People from different sects not only got married but also attended each other's marriages, cross-sect marriages were also common at that time. But nowadays people cannot even attend a different sect marriage ceremony. All the cultural events and sources of social interaction are now vanished by sectarianis. (Israr, 2013).

Gilgit Baltistan is rich both in culture and population, Shekhawat (2011) addresses the historical reasons of the sectarianism in Gilgit Baltistan as addressed by Israr in his article that are mentioned above, he quoted 'people of Gilgit Baltistan are traditionally peace loving with the population of 870,000 throughout the Gilgit Baltistan but with the main Gilgit city, the majority is of Shia Muslims which is 54%, Ismail's 27% and Sunnis sharing the 19% of population'. Once people were used to live together they had no concept of sectarianism, they shared their love, culture, beliefs, built relations through cross sect marriages, that was all common at that time. There are many reports of inter-ethnic group marriages and inter-tribe and sect marriages that had overcome sectarianism. But things have been totally changed, now the entire population of Gilgit Baltistan has been divided on sectarian basis. Situations are getting worst day by day. The situation is becoming critical for the last two decades because of sectarianism. She addresses that the sectarianism based violence in Gilgit Baltistan is back to 1960s and 1970s where the leaders of different sects started campaigning of their sects.

Admin (2014) Baltistan is one of the traditional region, has its own norms, values and customs which are very deeply rooted in their culture and every member of society has to obey such rules at any cost and spend life accordingly. If any of them disobeys any kind of cultural norm he/she is boycotted from the society, and they apply such rules on marriages as well. They cannot marry in any other region that is why the marriages are inflexible and rigid that they cannot prefer different sect or cross cultural and ethnic marriages.

Through the literature it has been found that the sectarianism or different sect marriages are being set by our own cultural practices is not something which has been set by Islam. As in my research topic, sect is the most dominating variable so I have studied it through both perspectives, culturally and Islamically, that what Islam says about different sect marriages. Alnaslah (2012) stated, "Islam gives the concept of diversity and tolerance but unfortunately if anyone, a girl or a boy wants to marry someone from cross sect, they face many hurdles". In Quran, Surah Al Rum (Quran 30) is about marriages.

Verse 20; "Among his signs is that he created you from dust; then, suddenly you were human beings dispersing {throughout the earth. 21. And of his sign is that he created for you from your selves mates that you may find tranquility in them; and he placed between you affection and mercy, indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought. 22. And of his signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your language and your colors. Indeed in that are signs for those of knowledge". (Quran.30; 20-22)

Verse 20 focuses on the origin of individuals that everyone has been created from dirt. In verse 21, the importance of marriage has been highlighted and verse 22 highlighted the creation with colors and languages. When we look deeply into these verses, we may find a huge difference and can know that we are heading towards an opposite direction of what our religion is asking. When we talk about cross cultural and cross sect marriages within our society, we find this concept as prohibited and discouraged by our own society. The reason behind it is that we all are considering ourselves superior and others inferior. In verse 22 Allah almighty mentions that these verses are for people of knowledge, people who think, and who reflect upon the signs of Allah. And it's a sign from Allah that people from different sects, ethnic backgrounds can get married and have right to choose a life partner according to their

will. We may build a relation from different backgrounds. Marriage is one of the best institutions of socialization but today we make it more complicated by applying different restrictions on it. Islam is beautiful religion which clears every aspect of life but unfortunately we infer some different concept from it.

Ahmed (2014) in Pakistan arrange-marriages means the selection of bride or groom is from the side of parents and elder family members. In Pakistan the marriage does not only mean the relation between husband and wife but it's a bond between two families. That's why people prefer arrange marriages, parents prefer cousin marriages, and marriages with in same ethnic groups as parents' point of view is that their kids will get adjusted in their own families rather than any other group, family, community and most importantly other sect. That's why parents do not favor different sect, cultural and love marriages as well. According to the research in 2003 the ratio of arrange marriages in Pakistan was 89%. In Pakistan youth does not get support of parents for love marriage, they have no right to choose their life partner according to their will, only because of so called social norms, pressure of society and most importantly, members of society. Because of the social pressure, parents cannot allow their kids for love marriages or cross sect marriages and they are forced for arrange marriages. This thing tortures a lot, mentally and physically both.

Fatimah & Ajmal (2012) they found following factors behind any happy married life through their study and religious sect was commonly quoted on the top of the list among all the factors, then, compromise, love, satisfaction, care, trust, understanding, education, status, forgiveness, sharing, respect, sincerity and family structure were listed. Altaf (2011) addressed the issues of reason behind divorces in Pakistani society is a different cultural system, belief system and marriages within different sects. It's just a stereotype that cross sect marriages always lead towards divorce, because we noticed that the trend of divorce is increasing day by day in Pakistan, even marriages within same cultural background and within same sect. She stated that, now divorce rate is increasing in Pakistani society. She finds various factors behind it, one of the biggest reason is short temperament and lack of patience in both husband and wife, and they have no ability to compromise and sacrifice for their relation. Apart from it, there are many other factors like lack of trust, no respect for relations, non-acceptance for joint family system from women, issues with in-laws, forced marriages, social status difference, extra-marital affairs, second marriages by husband and many other factors. To stop the increasing rate of divorce, husband wife must have built relationship of trust, friendship, care, love and respect.

From above research it has been found that it's only our perception that we consider cross-sect marriages prohibited because of difference of cultural system, belief system and created by ourselves, whereas Islam completely allows man and woman to choose their life partners by themselves. The thing we have to do is to accept and respect of different cultures, beliefs and sects. It is the best form of interactionism and socialization as well. The gaps which have been found from all research are that, still there is no such work that has been done earlier in this area. There are many areas which are needed to be discovered as this is a broader issue and existing critically in Gilgit Baltistan. So, people need to pay more focus on this area openly

The main aim of this research is to know the perception of youth towards cross-sect marriages. Through this research work a platform has been provided for youth especially for

girls to express their views openly about cross-sect marriages, because this is a serious issue in our society and no one bothers to talk about this issue. Girls are facing this issue more commonly and being so suppressed that they can't share their views or perceptions openly with their parents. Through this research work it has been tried not only to know the perception of youth about cross-sect marriages but also try to make them understand that it is their right to choose a life partner according to their will and also try to enhance their knowledge and make them aware that how to speak up for their rights and to convince their parents in a positive way to show positive attitude towards different sects. Islam also teaches us equality and people are not considered superior or inferior based on their sects and casts.

Objectives of the Study:

- To know the perception of youth about cross-sect marriages.
- To know the practices of youth regarding cross-sect marriages.
- To see gender differences in choosing life partner from cross-sect.

2. METHODOLOGY:

The research design which has been used in this research work is Qualitative method that refers to taking in depth interviews. The sample size of research is based on eight in-depth interviews which have been conducted in the Village Sherqilla, Tehsil Puniyal District Ghizer, Gilgit-Baltistan.

2.1. Sampling Technique:

The sampling technique which has been used in this research work is convenient sampling technique. Reasons behind choosing this technique are that this research has been held during the pandemic. So, it was not easy to move into different areas for data collection. There was unavailability of transport due to the lock-down, and the data was collected from the nearest available samples. Data has been collected from every respondent by following all safety measures

2.2. Locale/Area of the Study:

The area of the study is Village Sherqilla Tehsil Puniyal District Ghizer Gilgit-Baltistan. Data has been collected from the respondents after taking proper consent. Data has been collected through primary approach

2.3. Data Collection Techniques:

Data collection technique which is used in this research work is 'in-depth interviews'. A proper interview guide line has been designed by keeping all the objectives and research questions in mind, that fulfills all dimensions of what the research work wants to explore.

2.4. Procedure:

Research producer is done through proper in-depth interviews from eight respondents of three different sects that are Sunni, Shia and Ismaili. The procedure of data collection was difficult than all the past research works, because of the Covid-19 respondents did not show their willingness to be interviewed, they feared the spread of the virus. The situations were equally hard for both the researcher and the respondents.

2.5. Analysis of Data:

Data has been analyzed in thematic way after collecting from in-depth interviews according to the requirement of topic.. It analyzed by developing eight major codes that clearly explained the perceptions of youth towards cross sect marriages. The responses of interviewees, literature and researcher's perception have been analyzed through proper theme designing.

2.6 Research Ethics:

Before conducting the interviews, the ethics and moral values were kept in minds. The questions were designed in a way that could not discuss/disturb their privacy and the interview was conducted with the consent of the interviewees. There was no such question that could hurt the feelings of the respondents. And the SOPs were properly followed.

3. RESULTS & DISCUSSION:

3.1. Demographic Information of the respondents:

Four respondents among them were male and four of them were female, having an age limit ranging from 20 to 30. Further, the sample has been stratified on the bases of their marital status, two of the interviewees were married and two were unmarried, belonging from all three sects, that are, Sunni, Shia and Ismaili, which exist in majority in Gilgit Baltistan. And the occupational status of respondents was both students and employees. The selection of both genders was based on their occupations, like among the female respondents, two of them were employees and two were students.

3.2. Perception towards Cross-Sect Marriages:

Marriage between the individuals of two opposite sects is known as cross sect marriage. These differences are not only based on sect but also because of different belief systems, different cultural values, norms, values, customs and traditions etc. 'Marriage is a union of two people involving plentiful cultures and experiences'.

The research work is based on perception of youth whether they are in favor of cross-sect marriages or not. When we talk about cross-sect marriages it refers to discuss about being a part different community. Though it's a good source of socialization but unfortunately in our society, we consider it as a forbidden act. Parents and society, both show a negative behavior towards cross-sect marriages because we cannot accept the diversity and do not respect each other's beliefs and values. Israr (2013) stated in his article that, sectarianism is the biggest issue which exists in Gilgit Baltistan. The religious institutions themselves (jamthkhans, imambarghas, and madrasas) are busy in promoting sectarianism. Apart from this, other social organizations such as schools, hospitals, political parties, community based NGOs are also divided into the sectarian path and the only motto of such organizations is to serve their own sect. A Shia guy cannot easily move in to the area of Sunni and a Sunni cannot easily wanders in the areas of Shia because they have threat of their lives, there are chances to be killed and many people have been killed. So, they cannot even imagine to go freely in the opposite sect communities (Mohall's).

Same issue has been highlighted by one of interviewee said that,

“We do not have the courage to pass from each other’s area like Shias are not allowed to move in Sunnis area and Sunnis are not supposed to go in Shias area”.

The perception of the interviewees was positive towards cross-sect marriages, everyone was considering cross-sect marriage as good source of socialization. They clearly define all the pros and cons that why society and parents are showing negative behavior towards cross-sect marriages. Because everyone has this point of view that why do we let our daughter or sister to marry in Sunnis, Shias or Ismaili, if they do not let their daughter or sister to marry in our sect. If they will show positive behavior then we will also show them a positive action. But no one is ready to take this initiative first. Cross-sect marriages were common in past but after 1987 conflict people make cross-sect marriages as issue of honor.

Perception of my interviewees towards sect marriages were,

“Iam in favor of cross-sect marriages there is nothing bad in cross-sect marriage. If you like someone from different sect then must marry him. But the problem is our society does not appreciate when we marry in cross-sect”.

Another respondent added;

“Cross-sect marriages have to be appreciated in our society because Islam is a vast religion and cross-sect marriages are allowed, but we Muslims lead the real meaning of Islam towards wrong path and it’s just our myth and stereotypical thinking patterns that cross- sect marriages are prohibited. It’s just our misperception but in real we all are humans and follower of one ALLAH and PBUH that what Islam teaches us”.

When we talk about Islam and cross-sect marriages, there is no such concept exists that cross-sect marriages are prohibited. But now unfortunately, we consider it as taboo while Islam teaches brotherhood. Alnaslah (2012) said that, Islam is having the concept of diversity and tolerance, but unfortunately if anyone a girl or a boy wants to marry someone from cross sect they may face hurdles. In Quran surah al rum (Quran 30) is about marriages.

Islam is vast religion beyond of this issues like sectarianism some of interviewees stated that,

“Yes in Islam there is permission for cross-sect marriages even in Islam there is permission to marry with AHL-E-KITTAB. If we are considering cross- sect marriages as prohibited then it’s our own developed superstitious mentality. Islam is a beautiful religion where diversity has its own beauty and importance. Islam teaches us brotherhood but people lead the true meaning of Islam in wrong direction. All such things have been taught by society so we need to go against of society”.

From all above responses it has been clear that cross-sect marriages are also a good source of socialization. And we can also reduce the issue of sectarianism it’s like bridge to connect people of different sects.

Other respondents said that,

“No doubt it’s the best source. When we look into our past we have many relations or marriages from cross-sect. We have relations within every sect. Only those past relations are now good source of socialization within different sects. Only such things create positivity in our society and reduce the negativity”.

“Yes off course, cross- sect marriage is an opportunity to know more about other communities and sects. We can reduce all misperceptions which we are having towards differ-sects. If we get married in cross-sect we can clear all such misperceptions we can try to understand each other”.

This all is because of lack of education otherwise there is nothing bad in cross-sect marriages. But these concepts exist in our society from the beginning. We make it issue of honor and forget that no religion is superior than humanity, love and care.

3.3. Gender Differences in practicing cross sect marriage:

Being a part of male dominating society, woman is dependent on man in every mode of life. One of interviewee said that,

“Our societies keep girls limited. Like we associate honor with girls, we limit girls only to domestic chores even not only girls are limited to take decision of their marriages but in other decisions girls are being limited too. Girls are only limited to homes they have to maintain the honor which is associated by society. There is difference between girls and boys in our society like girls have limited job sector, we keep too much expectations from girls and give them less reward. And such wrong expectations pay heavy consequences at last”.

Suicide and honor killing are the biggest issues which exist strongly in Gilgit Baltistan, Israr (2015) in his article highlighted the reasons behind the honor killing, he quoted a real example in his article that, 16 years old Norani residence of Gilgit was being killed and declared even by her own mother that she has committed suicide and closed the file. Later on some of the neighbors and social activists were suspicious that the case was not suicide it was an honor killing. Islam has given male and female equal rights to express their feelings or even to choose life partner according to their will. But in cultural perspective we set many limitations for women and they cannot go beyond from the limits.

Women have this fear in their minds because of this patriarchy that, they will never be able to convince their parents for love marriages. If they want to marry out of their sect, unfortunately most girls choose wrong paths like eloping, committing suicide, killing in the name of honor etc. So, girls need to try their level best in order to convince their parents. And parents should also show such positive behavior towards their daughters if they want to convince them.

Interviewee’s point of view was,

“The fundamental thing is we need to give space to girls that they can feel free to share their problems with their parents. Like, I have given a space to my sister that she can share her every critical problem with me without any fear. If we won’t give space to them they have the fear like if they share

such things with parents they will be punished, because of this fear they do not share anything with their parents, hide such issues from their family and at last get themselves into difficult situations and pay heavy consequences. They take wrong decisions which effect them throughout their life. The important thing which has to be done is we need counseling in our society because it has been decades that we came out from Stone Age. Society needs to be changed now if we introduce such things in our society then our society will be mature enough and then t we will not consider such things as an issue. Today I am on this level that I am giving space to my sister or daughter that she can share everything with me. After ten or fifteen years society will be going to change Insha'Allah”.

“Off course they have to convince their parents. Girls need to talk with their parents or family members rather than hide things from them, because by sharing such things you can also build a strong bond with parents and this will help to make them understand about theirr situation. So, it is good source to make relationship stronger with your parents and parents also need to support their kids.

To overcome this domination, first of all girls have to set their future goals regarding to their carrier. They should have to pay more attention to their education rather than such things and after this they have the right to choose a life partner more consciously. Apart from this the most effective outcome will be, if girls would be able to convince their parents then definitely there will be positivity come into our society, like girls will never take wrongs paths, youth will never involve themselves in negative activities. They have chances to convince their parents and even they have a right to convince their parents for the selection of spouse because they are going to live with a guy for their entire life.

One of interviewee code an important statement she said that,

“The reason behind this is that we are part of male dominating society they can do whatever they want to, and nobody is going to ask them why you have done this. But when it comes to women, men have totally control over the women, they even take all decisions of women’s life. Like people think that “ouratkakoimazhabnaihohai” so such of things make our society negative place to live.”

“In religious perspective Islam sets some limits for women and they cannot go beyond from the limits. I have not proper knowledge but according to my understanding this is because for the betterment of women and women cannot marry a guy from different religion. Apart from this society plays an important role like we are living in a male dominating society. We have patriarchy system where men have this right to do whatever they want”.

Nadim (2016) sectarianism is a part of Pakistan for last many decades. Number of lives has been destroyed because of not being allowed to different sect marriages. Most panic thing is that Pakistan is rapidly moving towards change. Within a community we all are living together (Sunni, Shia, Ismaili etc.) many times sharing same beliefs, culture, events etc. But when it comes to different sect marriages people become more rigid and partners force their

kids to marry with in their own community because of so called honor and at last this honor leads to many disturbance. For example, parents only reject their child's plan for different sect marriages but they forcefully tie their daughters' life with someone else.

3.4. Cultural Practices toward cross-sect marriages:

Cultural Practices are the important aspects to shape individuals life and life style as well. Because our culture has designed things for us that what we have to do or what we have to avoid. Simply, we can say that culture sets boundaries for us. Similarly, when it comes to cross-sect marriages we find that how people show a rigid behavior towards cross-sect marriages. Reasons behind are, our cultural practices, norms, values, beliefs, customs and traditions. Such practices will not allow our people to accept diversity. That is why we limit ourselves only to our culture and never try to go beyond from it and accept diversity.

Amin (2014) Baltistan is one of the conservative region. They have their own norms, values and customs, which are very deeply rooted in their culture and every member of society has to obey such rules at any cost and spends life according to his cultural norms and rules. If somebody disobeys any kind of cultural norms that he or she has to boycott from the society. They apply such rules on marriages, they can't marry apart from their region and apart from their cultural background. That's why there marriages are so inflexible and rigid so they can't prefer to cross-sect, cross cultural and ethnic marriages.

One of the respondent stated;

“Not only beliefs but social status matters a lot according to my perspective if a girl belongs to an upper class and a boy to lower or middle and both of them having different sects as well and they want to get marry so, there would be less chances of marriage. Let's suppose if they get married despite of all these differences later on they face many difficulties like girls face many issues while adjusting herself in a middle class environment as she was raised up in an elite environment. So here we can see issues are not only existing because of different belief system but of economic status as well. But if a boy belongs to opposite sect and good in his economic status and a girl belongs to lower middle class and they wants to marry with each other so, despite of the different belief system just because of social status the parents of girl will easily allow their daughter to marry with that guy who belongs to different sect but good in his economic status. So, in my opinion class difference is more of influence as compare to belief system because we are living in a materialistic world”.

Another interviewee depicted a true reality of our society that what's the perception of our parents towards cross-sect marriages and why they are showing a negative behavior towards cross sect she said that ,

“Actually we are paying much attention towards future consequences, we think that if we would be part of different society then we will not be able to adjust. like a Shia child has totally different background he raised up in totally different circumstances with different religious beliefs and same with marriages. If a Shia girl marries to a Sunni boy then she won't be able to perform her religious practices easily, she will not be able to go for majlis, her husband and in-laws will be resistance for her to perform religious practices. There are number of problems that an individual may face if they

marry in cross- sects and only because of this perception we lose many things unintentionally.” Apart from this people think that if you want to marry with in different sect it would be only possible if you ask from girl to convert her sect. if she leaves her sect for the sake of her husband and in-laws then girl from another sect would be accepted. While if a man marry a girl from cross- sect it would be dealt as proudly by our society that he married to a Sunni or Shia girl and she left her sect for her husband but when same thing has done by woman she only even shows her intentions for cross-sect marriages that people make it issue of honor and consider it as a shame full act”.

We noticed that our culture is the main thing which affiliated all these terms of shame and honor to individuals. So, before doing anything, first of all we should keep the perception of society in our minds then we execute our actions. We have to be careful about the consequences that what will be outcome whether it will be accepted or appreciated by our society or not. So, same with cross-sect marriages these are not accepted by society because it has been set by our own culture and society. We all are considering our sect or our beliefsystem as perfect and disrespect others beliefsystem.

One of interviewee said that,

If you talk about beliefsystem, there are many more things which come under the umbrella of belief. Beliefs is a single word but it covers many dimensions. Like we consider it as prohibited to clean home at night time, on Friday you are not supposed to clean home, it’s prohibited to throw water on fire. All these are our traditions customary rules. So, these traditions are with us from decades and they will pass on from generations to generations. Some beliefs define our customs, some define our religion and some are common. Like these customary beliefs are common in all sects. So, in our region beliefs are emerging whether it’s religious or customary. So, I don’t think that only belief system is main resistance, there are many other things as well.

Jalani (2017) In Islam, Sunni and Shia are the two sects having different cultural backgrounds, customs and most important different wedding concepts. Because of these all differences the number of cross-sect marriages are less because we cannot give respect to each other sects. Our perceptions are, Sunni wedding ceremony takes a shorter time period as compare to Shia wedding ceremony. No witness is required in Shia wedding, whereas its compulsory in Sunni wedding. Sunnis are more conservative than Shias etc. These are some claims which both sects implement on each other without any solid proof.

Though it’s true that it happens in many cases that after a couple of time different sect marriages lead towards failure, because husband wife cannot adjust themselves into each other’s beliefs due to different cultural backgrounds and this leads towards conflicts. But same thing happens within sect marriages as well as we found many cases within sect marriages, cousin marriages, tribal marriages. All lead towards failure despite having same cultural back ground. The reason behind is, there are other factors involve like lack of understanding, respect, love and care which causes divorce within sect marriages too. We

cannot claim that the chances of divorce and un-successful marriages are only found in cross-sect marriages. There are number of cases which we found in our surrounding that marriages within same cultural background also lead towards failure. So there is no proper guarantee of any relation that for how long it would be sustain.

Parents' point of view is that, if our daughter will marry in cross-sect then there are much chances of divorce. But it depends on the relations, like if we talk about divorce cases which are from same sect. On the other hand we have many examples of happy couples who marry in different sects. So, the possibility of divorce is in every relation. The thing we have to do is, give importance to each other, respect each other and try to adopt diversity, as cross marriages are not only source of socialization but also a good source of reducing misconceptions and sectarianism.

4. CONCLUSION:

The study concluded that, almost youth were in favor of cross-sect marriages, while there were few against it. They were giving more importance to inter-sect marriages rather than cross-sect. The reasons that made them so were because every person has some set of beliefs and cultural backgrounds that differ with the other person. Whereas, the positive point which has been concluded from the overall research work is that, both girls and boys showed their inclination towards cross-sect marriages and they were appreciating cross-sect marriages as good source of socialization and a step to a diverse community. Everyone's point of view was that, we should think beyond the cast and creed system and accept the diversity. With cross-sect relations we can bring a positive change within society by clearing the misconceptions we have about each other's cast and sect. Youth thinks that parents are showing rigid behavior towards cross-sect marriages because of our old cultural practices and different beliefs. They have witnessed the worst examples of cross-sect marriages and that is why they are against cross-sect marriages.

While conducting this research, we have noticed that youth is showing optimistic behavior towards cross-sect marriages and want to change the old trends of conservatism towards different communities, sects, beliefs and cultures. They think that we should have to take initiative in order to bring a change, to change the mind sets of people by positively convincing them for differ-sect marriages, accepting each other's beliefs or giving respect to each other.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Individuals must try to bring positivity in their behavior as well as society. They should try to accept the change and give respect to each other's values and beliefs in order to bring sustainability within communities.
- Try to increase the education level in individuals. We can change old firm cultural patterns by giving priority to education, as knowledge is power. It's our right to raise voice against any injustices of the society.
- In order to bring harmony in societies we should try to reduce sectarianism, cast system, sect system and class system because, all of these things are created by humans. So, we must try to bring a positive change in society that will lead towards prosperity.

- Apart from this we can also arrange counseling sessions for parents to overcome their conservatism towards different sects and cross-sect marriages. We can introduce such courses within schools that will build love and respect towards different sects, cultures and beliefs.

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