CHAPTER 3

SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF INTER-CASTE MARRIED COUPLES

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Introduction

As observed, the previous chapter dealt with review of literature and research methods of the study. In the first chapter it was noticed that the marriage institution is very rigid in nature which is primarily based on caste endogamy. But it was also observed in the last decades, the endogamous nature of caste is losing, changing its significance and there have been ways of coming out of the social menace. The increasing number of inter-caste marriages gives tough blows to the rigid institution of caste.

In this chapter an attempt is made to understand the phenomenon of inter-caste marriage. The present empirical data is collected from total 50 couples (100 respondents) presently residing in Kolhapur city. Here an attempt is made to analyze the socio-economic background of inter-caste married couples.

3.1) a) Caste of inter caste married couples

The different castes that comprise the total sample and the total respondents of males and females from each caste who have been married inter-caste by violating the age old traditional structure of endogamy. This information can be observed from the above table.

Table No.3.1

Caste

Sr.no.	Caste	Male	Female	Frequency	Valid percentage
1	Brahmin	9	13	22	22.0
2	Maratha	16	12	28	28.0
3	Koshti	1	2	3	3.0
4	Vaishyavani	3	0	3	3.0
5	Mang	3	4	7	
6	Chandalkayasthaprabhu (CKP)	0	1	1	1.0
7	Soni	4	2	6	6.0
8	Rajput	0	1	1	1.0
9	Bania	3	5	8	8.0
10	Khatri	4	6	10	10.0
11	Lohana	4	3	7	07.0
12	Arora	2	1	3	03.0
13	Bhandari	1	0	1	01.0
	Total	**50**	**50**	**100**	**100.0**

The following data reveals that 13 different castes are represented in the sample and that the members of these different castes have married inter-caste by violating the norms of marriage. It can be observed that Maratha males and Brahmin females were the dominant among the total respondents of inter-caste marriages.

While taking the case of ritually lower caste, mochi, females have taken the lead. The following are the important characteristics of each caste.

i. Brahmins:

Brahmins are the upper most Varna in the caste system. They are traditionally hindu priest or saint. They are found all over India. But the Brahmins residing in Maharashtra speak Marathi and there are many sub-castes in Brahmins.

ii. Maratha:

Marathas are found most particularly in Maharashtra. It is a one of the dominant caste .They speak Marathi and belong to the Kshatriya varna of the Varna system.

iii. Koshti:

Koshtis are a hindu caste mainly found in Maharashtra. They are Kshatriyas who served as soldiers in the armies of the Peshwas and Tipu sultans kingdom. They claim to be the descendants of Kush, son of Lord Rama and are Kushwanshi. They speak Koshti language but those settled in Maharashtra speak Marathi.

iv. Vaishya vani:

Vaishya vani are traders and merchants. They are commonly known as 'vanis' and sometimes ' Kudali Vanis'. They speak Marathi and Konkani. They are a sub-caste of the vaishya varna.

v. Mang:

The Mang community is an Indian caste. They are listed as a scheduled caste. They are historically associated with low status and are

considered as ritually impure and performed professions such as scavenging and all other degraded works. In Maharashtra they are Marathi speaking people.

vi. Chandal Kayastha Prabhu (CKP):

The CKP's have traditionally placed themselves in the Kshatriya varna, next to Brahmins and also followed the sacred thread ceremony. The CKP's were historically a liberate caste and share rituals with the upper caste communities. The mother tongue of this community is Marathi. They played an important role in the establishment of administration of the Maratha Empire. CKP's are a sub section of 'Kayastha' community.

vii. Soni:

Soni is a hindu caste found in India. They are goldsmiths in Gujarat. They still follow their traditional occupation. They belong to the Vaishya varna. They speak dialects like gujarati and kutchi. They follow hindu religion. They are also found in United Kingdom in huge numbers.

viii. Rajputs:

Rajputs are said to be of warrior class i.e kshatriya or vaishya varna. The cast of Rajputs is of doubt. Though they are soldiers or warriors but they have been established as a separate Rajput community. They vary from princely lineages to simple cultivators. In history there is no mention of the term Rajput. There are three clans of the Rajputs namely Survanshi, Chandravanshi and Agnivanshi and other Rajputs like Muslim Rajputs, Sikh Rajputs, Sindhi Rajputs and Punjabi Rajputs.

ix. Bania:

The Baniya popularly known as Baniya, Vani or Vaniya is a occupational community of money lenders, traders, merchants, dealers in grains or in spices. These community comes under vaishya in the varna system. They mainly speak Gujarati, Marwadi, Hindi and also Marathi. Here the Banias are referred in jain community.

x. Khatri:

Khatri is the cast from the northern Indian sub continent. Khatris in India are mostly from the Punjab region. Khatri is the Punjabi word for Ksahtriya or warrior cast. The Khatris are found in other states too. They follow hindu and sikh religions. They speak Punjabi and hindi languages.

xi. Lohana:

Lohana are known as 'Luvana' traditional Indian cast larely occupied as merchants. They are mainly found in Gujarat. They considered being of vaishya varna. They follow Hinduism. They speak Gujarati, Kutchi, Sindhi and Hindi.

xii. Arora:

Arora is the community of Punjab which is related to Khatri community. They are Punjabi and sindhi speaking community. They are mostly businessmen engaged in trade and Industries. They follow Hinduism as well as Sikhism. They are found in Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Jammu, Rajasthan, Gujarat etc.

xiii. Bhandari:

The bhandaris are a community that settles in the western coast of India. Bhandaris are included among OBC's in Maharashtra.

They speak Marathi and Konkani. Their traditional occupation was of sea faring.

b) Caste combination in inter-caste marriage

Out of the total 50 couples (100 respondents), from the table given below it is observed that 5 brahmin males married Maratha females One rahmin male married a mang female ,one Brahmin male married to bania female and 2 brahmin males married to khatri females.Total 9 brahmin males underwent inter caste marriage. 11 maratha males married Brahmin females, 2maratha males, married soni females, 3 maratha males married to bania, khatri and lohana females respectively. 1 koshti male married Maratha female. 1 vaishya vani male married Brahmin female, 2 vaishya vani males married Maratha females, 3 mang males married Maratha, koshti and rajput females respectively. 2 soni males married mang females, 1 soni male married CKP female and one soni male married khatri female. 3 bania males married Brahmin, Maratha and mang females respectively. 4 khatri males married Maratha, koshti, bania and lohana females respectively. 4 lohana males married Maratha, mang, bania and arora females respectively. 2 arora males married khatri females. 1 bhandari male married bania female.

The caste combination involved in the inter-caste marriage represented in the sample can be observed from the table below

Table No.3.1.B

Caste Combination in enter -Caste marriage

| female → Males ↓	Brahmin	Maratha	Koshti	vaishya vani	Mang	CKP	Soni	Rajput	Bania	Khatri	lohana	Arora	Bhandari	Total
Brahmin	0	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	9
Maratha	11	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	0	16
Koshti	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Vaishya vani	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Mang	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
CKP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Soni	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4
Rajput	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bania	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Khatri	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	4
lohana	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	4
Arora	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Bhandari	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	19	12	2	0	4	1	2	1	5	6	3	1	0	50

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3.2) Age at the time of marriage

Marriageable age according to Hindu marriage Act, 1955 is minimum 18 for females and 21 for males. Though, the marriageable age is 18 and 21 respectively but in case of inter-caste marriages these marriages are performed at a fairly advanced age. It is observed by many researchers that inter-caste marriages take place at a mature age.Kannan also reports that majority of his respondents were mature when they contracted such marriage. Reddy and Ranjana also reported that inter-caste marriage takes place at a fairly advanced age. The following table and graph will make it clear.

Table No.3.2

Age at the time of marriage

Sr.no	Age	Frequency	Percentage
1	18-22	20	20%
2	23-27	60	60%
3	28-32	16	16%
4	33-37	2	2%
5	Above 37years	2	2%
	Total	**100 %**	**100 %**

This table makes it clear that most of the inter-caste marriages take place at the age of 23-27 which is a mature age. The total number of marriages which take place at age of 23-27 is 60 (60%) where as the age after 33 marriages are very few like 2 (2%) of the total inter-caste marriages of the sample. The age of 18-22 also records 20 (20%) inter-caste marriages followed by the age of 28-32 which is 16 (16%). The above graph will clearly show the age at the time of marriage.
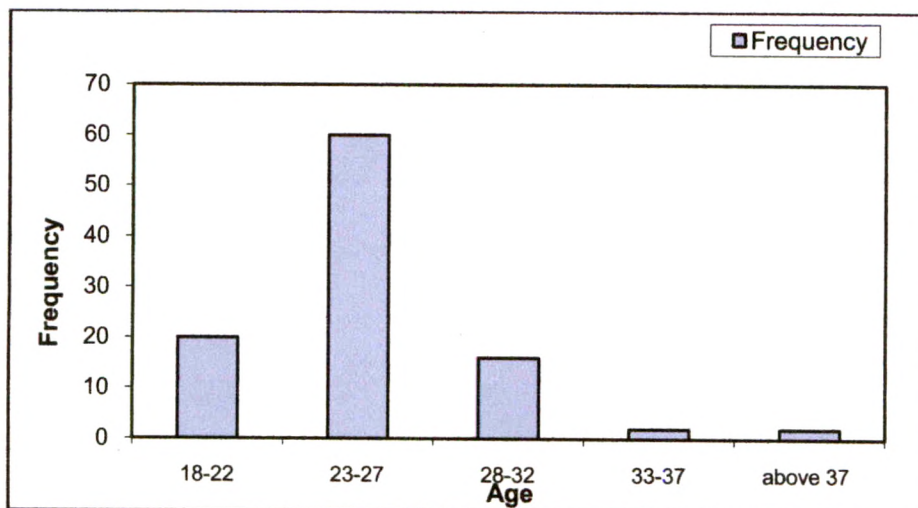
Diagram No. 3.2

Age at the time of marriage

3.3) Household Type

The following table will show whether respondents belonging to joint family go for an inter-caste marriage as compared to nuclear family respondents.

Table No. 3.3

Type of household

Sr.no	Type of household	Frequency	Percentage
1)	Joint	40	40 %
2)	Nuclear	60	60 %
	Total	100	100 %

This above table clearly depicts that the respondents belonging to nuclear family is 60 (60%) which is more as compared to respondents belonging to joint family which is 40 (40%). This means that joint family is still powerful tool for protecting the norm of caste endogamy. Respondents belonging to joint family did not inter marry much breaking the caste barriers as compared to nuclear family respondents.
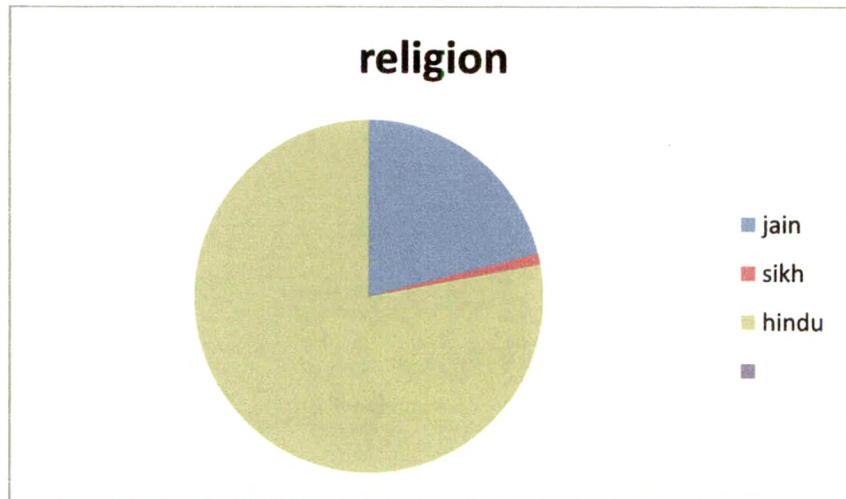
3.4) Religion

An inter-caste marriage means marriage of individuals belonging to different castes. This means that there is no change is religion. This sample consists of respondents belonging to three religions. This is presented in the following pie-chart.

Table No. 3.4

Religion

Sr. no	Religion	Frequency	Percentage
1)	Hindu	78	78 %
2)	Jain	21	21 %
3)	Sikh	1	1 %
	Total	**100**	**100 %**

The following table as well as pie-chart shows that the present research work of inter-caste marriages focuses on the three different religions.

Diagram No. 3.4

Religion

3.5) Mother tongue

Language in which a person is born is mother tongue. I[....] is an important factor of analysis of inter-caste marriage. The difference in language points out the vital difference in cultural background of the couple the following table explains the concept clearly.

Table no 3.5

Mother tongue

Females → Males ↓	Marathi	Hindi	Gujarati	Marwari	Kannada	Punjabi	Total
Marathi	30	00	00	00	00	00	30
Hindi	01	01	00	00	00	00	02
Guajarati	06	00	01	03	00	00	10
Marwari	02	00	02	00	00	00	04
Kannada	00	00	00	00	02	00	02
Punjabi	01	00	01	00	00	00	02
Total	**40**	**01**	**04**	**03**	**02**	**00**	**50**

Table no. 3.5 (a)

Linguistic classification of the couples

Language	Males	Females	Total
Marathi	30	40	70
Hindi	02	01	03
Gujarati	10	04	14
Marwari	04	03	07
Kannada	02	02	04
Punjabi	02	00	02
Total	50	50	100

From the above tables it is shown that 30 Marathi speaking males married 40 Marathi speaking females one Hindi speaking male married Marathi speaking female whereas 6 Gujarati males married Maharashtrian females and 3 Gujarati males married Marwari females out of the total 4 Marwari males 2 married Maharashtrian females whereas the other 2 Marwari males married Gujarati females. Out of the total 2 Kannada males both married Kannada females. From 2 Punjabi males 1 married Maharashtrian female and 1 married Gujarati female.

3.6) Educational status of the respondents

In the early 20th century, social reformers in India were influenced by the modern education in the west which had the modern values like freedom, equality, fraternity, democracy etc and then they were the pioneers of important social changes in the society. The traditional social structure was examined and attacked by them which had its roots in the caste system.

In short it can be said that the western modern education can produce agents of social change. By introducing education, it can produce individuals who may question the existing tradition on the basis of rationality. It cannot be denied to the fact that education helps an individual to think logically. It also helps to expand one's knowledge and experience. In this connection of our sample, the level of education is an essential factor.

Table No. 3.6

Educational status of the respondents

Sr. no.	Education	Male	Female
1	Up to secondary	1	1
2	Higher secondary	7	5
3	Diploma	7	0
4	Graduation	12	16
5	Post-graduation	11	12
6	Professional degree	12	15
7	Other	0	1
	Total	50	50

The table no 3.6 shows the educational status of the respondents except all only one male and female had secondary education 12 males and 16 females completed their graduation But there were maximum respondents with higher education such as professional degrees. Professional degrees means professional in their field like doctors, lawyers, professors, architects, manager's etc 12 males and 15 females had perceived professional degrees. 11 males and 12 females had completed post graduation .There were 7 males having higher secondary education where as 5 females. 7 males had education up to diploma. Female respondents are highly educated as compared to male respondents. This factor is very important factor. Thus, the following data suggests that higher education is a positive factor responsible for making a decision for inter-caste marriage.
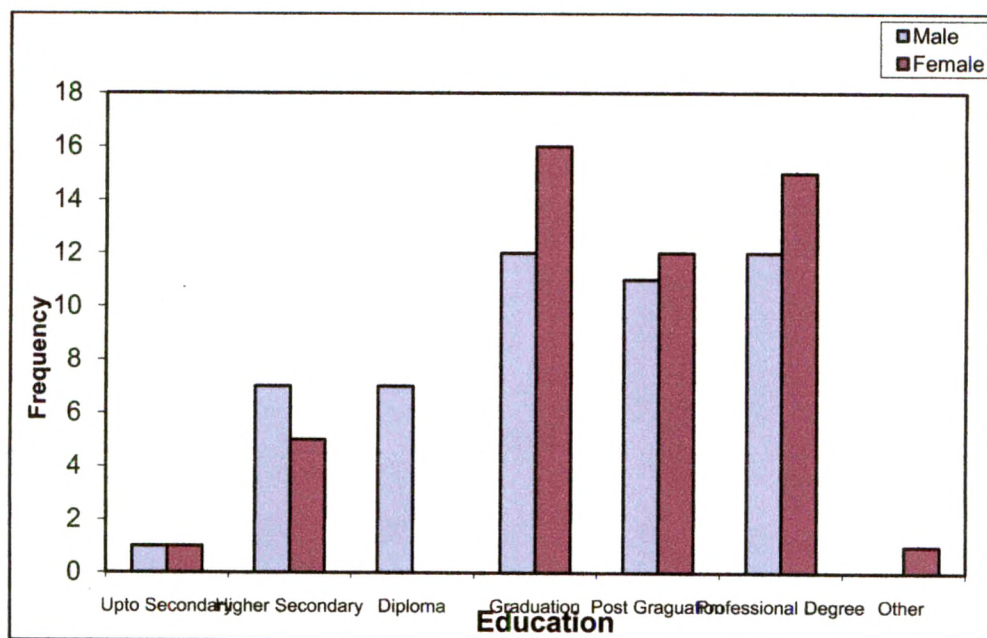
Diagram No. 3.6

Educational status of the respondents

3.7) Respondents economic position at the time of marriage

As it is a fact that, deciding to marry inter-caste might involve risk of losing support of their respective natal families. So it is obvious, that the newly married couple needs to be financially independent at least either of the partner is needed to be independent economicallybefore marrying. Let us look, at the data of the present study in this connection.

Table No .3.7

Sr. no	Economic position	Male	Female	Total	percentage
1	Employed	47 (87%)	23(46%)	70	70%
2	Unemployed	03(13%)	27(54%)	30	30%
	Total	50(100.00)	50(100.00)	100	100%

The following table makes it clear that majority of the total respondents were financially independent at the time of their marriage, out of the total 100 respondents only 30% were unemployed i.e. 70 % of the respondents were employed out of these 87 % males and 46 % females were both economically self sufficient at the time of their marriage.

One more interesting fact was that there were three couples who had not a single earning partner at the time of their marriage. It was surprising for the researcher that even though there is no earning member how did they decide to marry? But while enquiring the couples answered that in these cases the marriage of the females were fixed as soon as their parents understood about their affair so it was but natural the males to take up a quick decision to marry the female. These couples stayed at other places after marriage and then when came back out of total 3,2 couples were accepted by their parents but the remaining one male member was accepted by the females family as they decided to accept both bride and groom and accommodated them and gave financial assistance to them.

As the data clearly shows that the majority of the males i.e. (87 %) were economically self sufficient and had no financial issues. Thus, finally the data supports the fact that economic independence at the time of marriage is a favourable factor for inter-caste marriages.

3.8) Respondents Background

The following table will show the rural urban background of the respondents

Table No. 3.8

Respondents Background

Gender	Rural	Urban	Total
Male	03	47	50
Female	10	40	50
Total	**13**	**87**	**100**
percentage	**13%**	**87%**	**100%**

The data reveals that 13 percent of the respondents have rural background and the majority of the respondents that is 87 percent have urban background. Thus, it can be said that inter-caste marriages are not confined to urban areas. The fact is that still the number of inter-caste marriages in rural areas is very less but they do take place. The reason behind this is clear that rural areas are still very rigid in nature and the caste hidden social structure of the rural areas is main point why inter-caste marriages are in a lesser number as compared to urban areas.

The data further reveals that, there were only 3 respondents out of total 50 male respondents from rural areas who had married urban females and not surprisingly after marrying migrated to urban areas. Whereas out of total 50 respondents, 10 rural female respondents had married urban males thus the data of this study shows that rural females have come forward for contracting inter-caste marriages.

3.9) Educational status of the respondent's parents

A well-educated family affects the children who are born and brought up in it. It is education that broadens the knowledge of the individual and it is also natural that the children brought up in an educated atmosphere are in a better way, to take up various roles –

economic, social and political. This is not necessary that these educated individuals are more tolerant towards inter-caste marriages than the less educated ones. Thus, the data presented will make it clear.

Table no.3.9

Educational status of the respondent's parents

Sr. no	Education	Male		Female		Total
		Father	Mother	Father	Mother	
1	Illiterate	03	07	01	03	14
2	Up to primary	01	06	01	07	15
3	High school	14	20	17	26	77
4	diploma	04	03	10	02	19
5	Graduation	20	11	16	07	54
6	Post-graduation	08	03	05	05	21
	Total	**50**	**50**	**50**	**50**	**200**

Out of total 200respondents parents only 14 were illiterate parents and the rest were literate parents, 15 had primary education, 77 had high school i.e. higher secondary education,19 had perceived diploma education, 54 parents were graduate and 21 were post graduates.Thus, the education of the parents is a favourable factor promoting inter-caste marriages.

3.10) Occupation of the respondent'sparents

As education, occupational status of the parents is also important. The parents that are well educated are naturally practicing

better occupations and therefore raising the average monthly income of the family. The table will explain the occupation of the respondent's parents.

Table no .3.10

Occupation of the respondent's parents

Sr. no	Occupation	Male		Female		Total
		Father	Mother	Father	Mother	
1	Agriculture	08	01	01	00	10
2	Salaried job	20	07	28	08	63
3	Business	22	06	21	05	54
4	Domestic work	00	36	00	37	73
	Total	**50**	**50**	**50**	**50**	**200**

The data presented above clearly shows that fathers were the main earning members in the families. Maximum numbers of parents were engaged in jobs i.e. 63 out of the total number of parents. While 54 parents were having their own business and only total 10 parents were engaged in agriculture and the remaining 73 parents (only mothers) were engaged in domestic work. The data clearly shows that parents were more engaged in modern occupation than traditional occupation like agriculture.

3.11) Monthly income of the respondent's family

Average monthly income of the family determines from which class i.e. lower,middle or upper class the respondent lived in and

contracted inter-caste marriage. Monthly income depends on the occupation of the parents.

Table no. 3.11

Average monthly income of the respondent's family

Sr. no.	Income	Male	Female	Total
1	1000/-5000/-	05	06	11
2	5001/-10000/-	21	20	41
3	10001/-15000/-	10	11	21
4	Above 15000/-	13	14	27
	Total	**50**	**50**	**100**

The following table illustrates that the majority of the respondents belonging to income group 5001/- 10,000/-contracted inter-caste marriage. Total 41 respondents out of 100 belonged to this group. The increasing number of inter-caste marriages is highest among the 5001 to 10000 group which can be taken as middle class group. The least number of inter-caste marriages take place between the income group 1000-5001/- which can be taken as lower class group.

3.12) previous instances of inter-caste marriages in respondents family and reactions of the family member at that time of marriage.

It is important to understand the previous instances of inter-caste marriages in the respondent's family because this might have a negative or positive effect on the respondent's case. The following 2 different tables will make it clear.

Table no. 3.12

Previous instances of inter-caste marriage in respondent's family

Previous instances of inter-caste	Yes	32
marriage	No	68
Total		**100**

This table shows that only 32 respondents had previous inter-caste marriages in the family the majority of the respondents i.e. out of 100, 68 respondents had no family history of inter-caste marriage and they were the one to initiate by performing inter-caste marriage.

Now, let us take another table to clarify the further doubt what were reactions of the family members at that time of marriage.

Reactions of family members for	positive	20
previous inter-caste marriage	Negative	12
Total		**32**

The data was collected only from those who had previous instance of inter-caste marriage in their family. The result is clear that 20 cases had positive reactions and only 12 had to suffer and get their new life started on their own and were not even taken home, whether premarital love or not and if no,reasons.

It is generally believed by the people that inter-caste marriages are love marriages. In general it is observed that two young partners a male and a female meet each other, they start developing intimate relations among them the love is blossomed and then lastly they decide to tie a knot together which is marriage.

There has also been researches show that love is not the only factor that leads to inter-caste marriages. Kannan (1963 pp.53) in his study notes that 'inter-caste marriages are not invariably brought about by the parties themselves. There are examples of such marriages which were arranged and celebrated by the parents or relatives and not the result of the initiative on the part of the parties. There have been cases though care when the persons who are so united did not even know each other before marriage inter-caste marriage therefore need not be indiscriminately identified with love marriage. He found eleven cases where love was not the main reason for inter-caste marriages.

Another scholar Deshpande notes that (1972 pp.43) "people generally think that inter-caste marriages are love marriages but in the present work in many cases it was found that love as a motive did not operate in its true form. It was infused with one or more latent motives. Love was not necessarily an end in itself; it was a means to satisfy some other motives. In the name of love, respondents tried to secure the fortune of the partner,sex model,social recognition, support for primary needs contact with a good caste, stability in life,etc. for some love was a means to tackling their own personal problems like dowry,poverty,scandal and defamation before marriage or hiding some physical or mental defect etc".[3] Following cross table will clearly depict that if premarital love was not a prime factor then which reasons led the couple to take this decision. But the present study brought out very clearly that the love factor is dominant in eventually leading inter-caste marriages. The

Table no. 3.13

Whether Premarital Love or not and If, no reasons

		Not applicable	Second Marriage	Family background	educational achievements	To abolish Caste	Nature	Any other	Total	Percentage
Whether premarital Love or not	Yes	86	00	00	00	00	00	00	86	86%
	No	00	03	05	02	01	01	02	14	14%
	Total	86	3	5	2	1	1	2	100	100%

The cross table showed that 86% respondents had love as a prime factor for contracting inter-caste marriage but there were 14% respondents who did not have love as a main factor for inter-caste marriages. This shows that inter-caste marriages are increasing in a positive manner where individuals have taken decision to marry outside their own caste for other reasons. One of the female respondent who belonged to a lower caste married inter-caste to abolish the caste of her own.

3.14) First time met

This refers to the place where the couple met for the first time and developed intimacy later on. The following table will show the various places where the couple had first come to know each other.

Table no.3.14

Place where first met

Sr. no.	Places where first met	Frequency	Percentage
1	Not applicable	14	14 %
2	College	48	48 %
3	Office	08	08 %
4	Neighbourhood	14	14 %
5	School	02	02 %
6	Social get together	14	14 %
7	Any other	00	00 %
	Total	**100**	**100 %**

It can be observed from the above table that college is one of the important places where couples had an opportunity to come together. Total 48 respondents that are 24 couples reported had met for the first time in college. Bambawale also observes (1969 pp.39) that, 'the college campuses are meeting ground of the younger generation males and females who would otherwise be restricted from mixing freely. In India the college life in fact is considered as the spring time of freedom a release from the tighter control of the society , symbolized by the family.'[2] Even associations in the colleges that are based on common interests have also contributed to the ultimate choice.

Offices or same work place is another factor that brings people together. There are total 8% respondents reported that is 4% couples who had contracted inter-caste marriage as they met each other in the same office and got closer to each other. One of the main reason for this factor is females economic independence, their education background in

addition with financial independence i.e. by working in an office all ultimately leads to the couple to come nearer to each other and forget the caste barrier's and marry each other.

Common neighbourhood gives ample of opportunities to come together especially when the couple stays in the same vicinity. There were total 14 %respondents i.e. 7 couples who had met for the first time in the common neighbourhood. These 7 couples lived nearly either in the same area or in the same building or adjacent bungalows etc. Thus, they got ample of opportunities to mingle with each other and develop intimate bonds and ultimately contract a marriage.

There was only one couple (2 respondents) who met first time in school. It was a long period which they had enjoyed before marriage.

Social get together of various clubs, organizations etc are common places where people of different castes, communities come together. There were total 14% respondents that is 7 couples who met in social get together organized by clubs,associations,social associations ,etc. they come together in a club for a common pursuit. The common interests, education and other factors lead such couples to come close to each other and finally marry.

Thus, college, office , neighbourhood, school , social get together have all been the factors responsible to come together and develop close and warm relationship between them finally leading to inter-caste marriage.

3.15) Duration of courting

Courting is a colourful period before marriage where the young to be couple meet each other and discuss their future. It is a blissful time to

enjoy for both the young couple. The period starts when one of the partners expresses his/her liking towards the other and it is accepted by the later partner. The following table will briefly explain the period or duration of courting.

Table No. 3.15

Duration of courting

Sr. no.	Duration	No of respondents	Percentage
1	Not applicable	14	14 %
2	Upto 6 moths	14	14%
3	7 months to 1 year	16	16%
4	1 year to 2 years	04	04%
5	3 years to 4 years	26	26%
6	5 years to 6 years	12	12%
7	7 years to 8 years	12	12%
8	9 years to above	02	02%
	Total	**100**	**100 %**

The table shows that duration of courting has continued till 9 years in one case. 'Not applicable' indicate those couples who had arranged marriage. The maximum no of respondents had the courting duration of 3-4 years i.e. 26 %. This means that love was not the only factor for inter-caste marriages but the couple did take enough time period to know each other discuss the expected the problems of inter-caste with each other the following table also can be explained in a very simple manner with the help of a simple bar diagram.
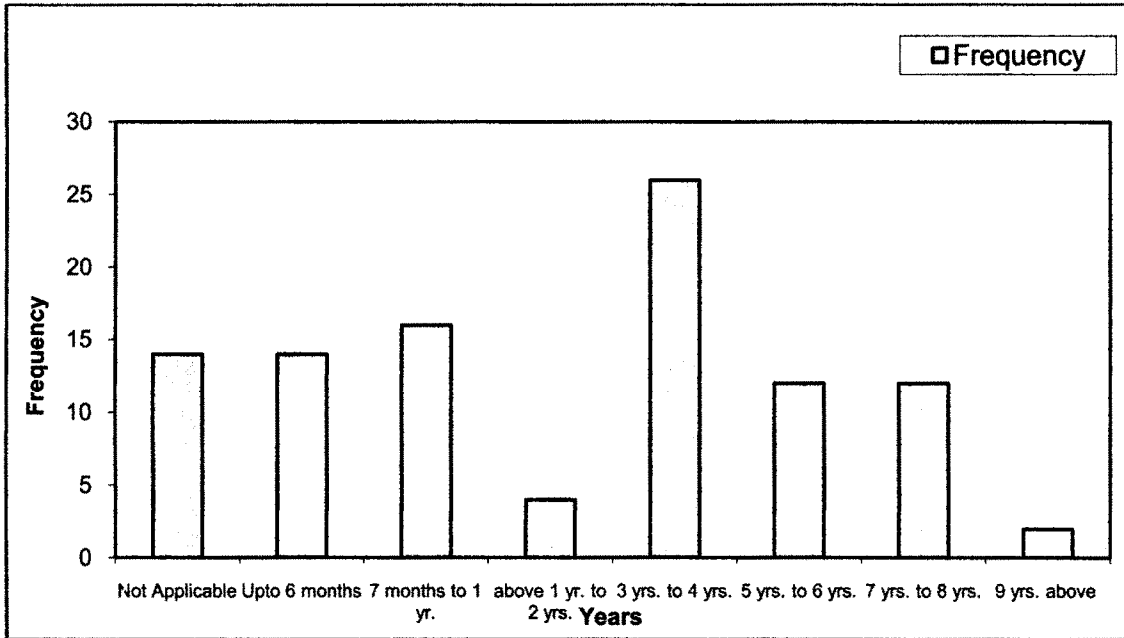
Diagram No:- 3.15

Duration of Courting

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