

Traditional Marriage Institution and Practices among The Monpa Society of Arunachal Pradesh

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Abstract

The traditional marriage system of the Monpa community of Arunachal Pradesh represents a significant socio-cultural institution that governs kinship relations, social organisation, and cultural continuity. This study aims to critically examine the structural patterns, customary laws, and rituals practice associated with the Monpa marriage system. Using a qualitative research approach, data were collected from both primary and secondary sources such as personal interview, studies, historical records and scholarly articles. The study analyses various types of marriage, formalities of obtaining a bride and role of mediator. The research further identifies the impact of modernization, changes on traditional marriage practices. Despite this transformation, the Monpa marriage system continues to adapt while preserving its core cultural principles. The study emphasizes the importance of documenting indigenous marital tradition to ensure cultural sustainability and contribute to the broader discourse on tribal social institutions in the northeast.

Keywords: Monpa community, traditional marriage system, tribal culture, social institutions, cultural continuity.

1. Introduction:

The Monpas are one of the major tribes among 26 tribes in Arunachal Pradesh. They mostly live in the Tawang and West Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh and are followers of Mahayana Buddhism. The Monpas are known for wood carving, thangka painting, carpet making and weaving. They manufacture papers from the pulp of the local *Shugu tree*. The traditional Monpa society was administered by a council of ministers known as *Thukdri*. The members of this council are known as *Khenpo*, literally Abbot. The *lamas* (Monks) also hold high positions in the society. All judicial power was wasted on the lamas of the great Tawang Monastery. They used to deliver all kinds of justice relating to civil and criminal cases. Although Monpa society was based on autonomous administration in different villages in their internal affairs, they were bound under the theocratic rule of Monastic authority. Each village is headed by *Tsorgan* assisted by a few officers called *Chupon*. The Monpa people are known for their unique culture and traditions. They have rich cultural traditions including a unique traditional marriage system. The marriage system is one of the universal social institutions. It

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is closely connected with the institution of family. Marriage is an institution of society which can have very different implications in different cultures. In Monpa society, marriage is an accepted form of union between man and woman. Through marriage, family is formed and family is the smallest social unit in Monpa society. There are several kinds of marriage systems prevalent in the Monpa society like marriage by negotiation, cross cousin marriage system, Exchange marriage system etc. Generally, marriage is performed through a mediator (*Prinpa*) in the Monpa society. Through a mediator, marriage is done and the date of marriage is fixed. A grand ceremony is organized by the groom's parents if their marriage proposal is accepted by the girl's family.

2. Statement of the Problems:

The Monpa is one of the major tribes of Arunachal Pradesh and inhabits Tawang and West Kameng districts of Arunachal Pradesh. Due to the penetration of modern culture and Western culture, the traditional marriage institutions and practices among the Monpa society seem to be disappearing. Oral tradition is the only source to reconstruct the history of the Monpa, but through the medium of language it becomes unreliable with the passage of time and changing situations. There is a possibility of losing its original form. Therefore, It is necessary to maintain written documents and preserve them carefully in order to keep the sources available for future generations.

3. Research Objectives:

- i. To examine the customary law regarding the marriage system of the Monpa community.
- ii. To examine the types, functions and manner of celebration.
- iii. To understand the ways to obtain a bride and groom and pride price payment.

4. Review of Literature:

There are limited written sources dealing specifically with the traditional marriage institution and practices of the Monpa Community. However, several scholars have made significant contribution to the understanding of tribal society culture, and social institutions of Arunachal Pradesh, which provide valuable background for the present study.

Tomo Mibang and M.C Behra, in their work *Marriage and culture: Reflection from Tribal Society of Arunachal Pradesh* (2006), discussed various forms of marriage systems of different tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, including the Monpa tribe. It highlights customary laws, and social-cultural significance of marriage, though it does not exclusively focus on the Monpa Society.

Tribal Studies: Emerging Frontier of Knowledge, written by Tomo Mibang and M. C. Behra, published by Krishan Mittal in 2007, examine broader social life of the tribal people of Arunachal Pradesh. But the book offers limited ethnographic details on Monpa marriage practices .

S. Mahalingam, in *Tribal cooperative system*, provides information on social economic of tribal community of Arunachal Pradesh, including the Monpas

Pema Deki Mize, in the article “*Aspects of Marriage Rules and Regulations in the Monpa Community*,” discusses customary norms, restrictions, and traditional laws regulating marriage.

The article provides valuable insights into indigenous legal practices governing marital relations.

R.N. Bagchi, in the *social- cultural profile of the Monpas of Kalaktang*, analyze the social tradition of the Monpa society in West kameng district. His work includes references to marriage pattern and kinship structure prevalent in the region.

Tsering Yangjom, in her study *socio-economic system of the Monpa, submitted to Arunachal University*, examines social institutions, economic activities, and customary laws of Monpa society. Although her research provides valuable information on Monpa society and marriage institutions, a comprehensive historical analysis of the traditional marriage system particularly focusing on customary law, ritual practices, and changing pattern in present context remains limited. The present study attempts to fill this research gap by examining the traditional marriage system of the Monpa Community from a historical perspective.

5. Research Methodology:

The present study is ethno-historical in nature and is based on both primary and secondary sources. An intensive field study was carried out for this research. Secondary data were collected from books, journals, articles, library materials, and relevant internet sources.

Primary data were collected through personal interviews, phone calls, video calls, and direct interaction with villagers. Interviews were conducted with elderly persons from different villages, as they had personal experience of traditional marriage practices and had witnessed their own marriages in the customary way. Some senior citizens who had earlier served as mediators were also selected as respondents.

Special attention was given to the collection of primary data. Personal interviews and observations were conducted in several villages of the study area. Door-to-door surveys were carried out, and group discussions were held with friends and community members to gather information on traditional marriage institutions and practices among the Monpa society.

6. Discussion of the Study

Traditional Marriage Institutions and Practices among the Monpa Society Marriage is one of the most important social institutions in Monpa society. It is a legally and socially recognized union between a man and a woman and forms the foundation of family life.

The meaning, purpose, and forms of marriage differ from one culture to another. Although marriage exists in all societies, its customs, rules, and practices vary according to social and cultural traditions. Marriage may be understood as a socially accepted process of choosing a life partner, and this tradition is common in both tribal and non-tribal communities. However, each community follows its own distinctive system and customs related to marriage.

Arunachal Pradesh is home to more than a hundred tribes, each possessing unique culture and traditions. Every tribe follows its own traditional marriage system with specific norms and procedures. The Monpa community is no exception and has developed its own distinctive marriage institutions and practices.

The Monpas are predominantly Buddhists and possess a rich cultural heritage. The family forms the smallest social unit in Monpa society. Nuclear families consisting of married couples and their unmarried children are common, while joint families are relatively rare. Family life begins with marriage, and through marriage the Monpas maintain their social structure and cultural continuity. The marriage practices of the Monpa community therefore reflect their unique social values and traditions in comparison with other societies.

7. Ways of Obtaining a Bride or Groom:

In Monpa society, marriage is generally arranged by the parents through a process of negotiation. These negotiations are carried out with the help of a mediator, usually a respected and prominent person from the community. This mediator is known as the *Phrinpa*, also called *Barmin* (where *Bar* means middle and *Min* means man), who acts as an intermediary between the two families.

According to traditional practice, specific procedures and formalities must be followed while arranging a marriage. Marriage proposals are not made directly but follow an established sequence of steps. Generally, three customary stages or methods are followed while approaching a marriage proposal in Monpa society.

7.1.1 Krungchang:

The term *Krungchang* is derived from two Monpa words: *Krung*, meaning to discuss, and *Chang*, meaning alcohol. It therefore, refers to a discussion held over alcohol and represents the first formal step in arranging a marriage.

At this stage, after consulting their son, the boy's parents visit the bride's house with three *palang* (bottles) of alcohol to initiate the marriage proposal. During this visit, they discuss the possibility of marriage between their children and express their interest in having the girl as their son's bride. The conversation is informal and conducted in a polite and friendly manner.

Through this process, the boy's parents formally convey their wish to the girl's parents. If the girl's family does not accept the proposal, the matter is kept confidential and the boy's parents do not disclose to others that they had approached the girl's family for marriage.

7.1.2 Sherchang:

Sherchang is the second stage in the process of arranging a marriage and is performed after receiving a positive response from the girl and her parents. The term is derived from two Monpa words: *Sher* (to ask) and *Chang*(alcohol). This stage is often considered equivalent to an engagement ceremony.

At this stage, the groom's parents visit the bride's house with seven bottles of alcohol and *khadas* (traditional white shawls). The khadas are placed around the necks of the bride's parents and other family members as a sign of respect. The marriage proposal is formally presented through the *Phrinpa* (mediator), also known as the *Barmin*.

The mediator carries a palang of *Ara* (local wine) as a symbol of negotiation, and the mouth of the bottle is smeared with *mar* (ghee), a ritual known as *Kargyen*. He conveys the proposal to the bride's parents and seeks the consent of the girl before any decision is made.

If the proposal is rejected, the decision is politely communicated and kept confidential. If the girl accepts, she serves alcohol to the groom's parents and the mediator, indicating her consent. The groom's family then considers the marriage formally confirmed and later returns to complete the final confirmation.

7.1.3 Tikchang:

Tikchang is the final stage of the marriage proposal process. The term is derived from two Monpa words: *Tik* (confirmation) and *Chang*(alcohol), and therefore refers to the offering of alcohol to confirm the marriage. This stage takes place after the acceptance of Sherchang by the boy's family.

At this stage, members of both families gather and offer alcohol to relatives as a sign of agreement. The two families jointly decide the arrangements for the marriage ceremony. The girl's parents formally assure the boy's parents of their consent, and this communication is carried out through the mediator. The mediator plays an important role in guiding the discussion and ensuring mutual understanding between the two families.

7.2 Marriage Celebration:

The wedding date is fixed by the Lama (monk) after selecting an auspicious day. On the chosen date, the groom's parents make all arrangements for the ceremony. Traditionally, the wedding involves bringing the bride from her parental home to the groom's house, and the main celebration is organised by the groom's family. In rare cases, the bride's parents may organize the ceremony if the groom is invited to their house.

All relatives and family members from both sides are invited to the celebration, which is usually held at the groom's residence. The house and its surroundings are decorated using traditional methods.

Everyone wears traditional attire, especially the bride and groom, who must be dressed in full ceremonial costume.

During the ceremony, the bride is accompanied by a close friend known as *Baksar Nomleng*, while the groom is accompanied by a friend called *Makpa Puna*. Two singers are also selected to perform ceremonial songs. When the bride leaves her house, the mediator and singers place a *Jadar* (colourful cloth tied on a stick) on her back while singing a traditional song that symbolises the bride being taken to her new home. They then make three ceremonial rounds before beginning the journey.

Relatives and villagers accompany the bridal party to the groom's house, carrying the bride's belongings along with grain and household items. On arrival, the groom's parents place new *Shingka* (traditional dress) around the necks of the bride's parents and offer khadas to the bride and groom. Guests are welcomed with tea and wine, and white flour is placed on their shoulders as a mark of blessing.

The bride and groom then sit together on a traditional cloth known as *Naambu*, on which a design called *Yumbrin* is made using barley grains. The groom sits on the right side and the bride on the left. Both drink three cups of wine, after which the Lama blesses them for a happy and prosperous life.

Following the blessing, the mediator narrates the traditional story of *Phrinpa Taam* and sings ceremonial songs. Song competitions are held between the bride's and groom's sides, creating a festive atmosphere. The groom's family organises a large feast, usually involving the sacrifice of an ox or pig, although this may also be performed later. Portions of meat are distributed according to custom, with special shares offered to the bride's family, the Lama, and the mediator.

A separate meal is prepared for the bride, groom, mediator, and close relatives. When the bride serves drinks to the guests, they offer money as a token of affection. Dances and songs continue at the groom's house, and the celebrations traditionally last for three days. During this period, the bride's parents¹ remain as guests in the groom's home. On the third day, a farewell ceremony known as *Shay Chang* is held, and a farewell song called *Gailazukso* is performed, wishing the couple a happy and prosperous life.

Traditionally, Monpa wedding celebrations lasted for at least three days. In recent times, however, the duration of these ceremonies has gradually become shorter.

7.3 Bride price (*Dongzen*) and Gift Exchange between Groom and Bride's Parents:

The payment of bride price, known as *Dongzen*, is prevalent in Monpa society. It is usually paid in the form of meat (*Shazoh*) and grain (*Broozoh*). The groom's parents ask the bride's parents, through the mediator, about the bride price they are required to pay.

According to *Shazoh*, the groom's parents had to pay 200 kilos of meat or 200 silver coins (*Ngoikyang*) to the bride's family. According to *Broozoh*, the groom's parents had to pay 200 kilos of grain, such as millet or rice, for nearly two bags. According to *Phongdi*, the groom's parents had to pay 400 kilograms of rice or wheat. These payments may also be given after the marriage celebration. However, most people pay the bride price only during the celebration. Sometimes they pay more than the prescribed amount if the parents are sufficiently rich.

It should be mentioned here that there was no fixed customary law regarding the exact amount of bride price that must be paid. Sometimes the groom's parents even refuse to accept the bride price. This payment was given to the bride's parents in recognition of nurturing their daughter till marriage.

In addition to these payments, one new branded *Shingka* (traditional dress) placed around the neck of the bride's mother, and 20 silver coins were given to the bride's father. Brothers and sisters of the bride receive three coins each, and relatives also receive three coins each from the bride's family members. Rich people usually give precious ornaments, silver coins, utensils

¹ Pema Chozom (Age 64) is a permanent resident of Kokhem Village, Tawang District, Arunachal Pradesh. She was personally interviewed on 17/04/2024

and items such as therpo (water storage tank). Relatives from both sides offer grain, utensils and other items to both the bride and groom during the wedding ceremony.

Wedding ceremonies in Monpa society was very expensive. Therefore, during earlier times poor people could not arrange a grand wedding ceremony. They arranged the ceremony in a simple way. However, most of the time weddings were organized according to their capacity. In return, the bride's family offers food called *Puitiaah*, packed in *Baikur* (local tools), to the groom's mother as a token of love. The bride price is very high in Monpa society. However, it is not fixed that one must pay such a high amount; mostly the bride price is given according to one's capacity.

7.4 Types of Marriage Prevalent in the Monpa Society:

The Monpa society is patrilineal, and descent is traced through the male members of the family. The society is also patriarchal, and the property of the father is inherited by the eldest son and the youngest one. There are certain types of marriage prevalent in the Monpa society. There are no strict rules and regulations regarding the marriage system in Monpa society. A flexible and transparent system exists in society. Different types of marriage prevalent and practiced in Monpa society are as follows.

7.4.1 Polygamy Marriage:

Polygamy is practiced in rare cases. In fact, it is not socially acceptable. However, under certain circumstances, a man or a woman may have more than one consort. This kind of Polygamy marriage is acceptable under certain conditions, such as when the first wife agrees to allow the husband to marry another wife, when the first wife is barren, in the case of divorce, or when the first wife dies or abandons him, or when the wife does not remain loyal to him.

There are only a few people who have more than one wife in Monpa society. If a husband marries another woman with the acceptance of the first wife, then the second wife is called *Chumgmo* in the Monpa language. Earlier, people used to have more than one wife, but only those people who possessed large amounts of *Khrai* (which means property, such as agricultural land, forest land and house buildings).

In this kind of marriage system, disputes often occur in the family regarding property, relationships and bias between children of different mothers. Earlier, it was acceptable in society, but in such cases the first wife held a higher status in the family than the second and third wives.

7.4.2 Polyandry Marriage:

This type of marriage was prevalent and common in earlier times. Usually, two brothers married one woman, sharing common interests with mutual understanding. Both husbands took equal responsibility to look after and care for the wife and children without any discrimination. However, there were no special rituals or ceremonies performed for this type of marriage.

At present, cases of polyandry are hardly found in Monpa society. Moreover, contemporary society does not accept this kind of marriage.

7.4.4 Widow Marriage:

Widow marriage is acceptable and is not ignored in Monpa society since very early times. If a husband dies, the widow can marry another man. A woman has full rights to remarry after the death of her previous husband. Society even encourages and welcomes this form of marriage².

This kind of marriage is also acceptable for men. If a man's wife dies, he can marry another woman. There are no customary laws which state that a man and a woman cannot marry after the death of her husband or his wife. However, if a husband marries another woman after the death of his wife, the property of the previous wife will be inherited by her children, and if the present wife does not have any children, then all the property of the father will also be inherited by the children of the previous wife.

7.4.5 Love Marriage:

Love marriage is the most common and most important practice among the Monpa society. The first and foremost thing is to seek the consent of the child while arranging a marriage. Without the consent of their child, parents do not usually force marriage. Both the girl and the boy have full rights and privileges to choose their life partner according to their wishes.

Love marriage is the most common, favorable and is considered to be a happy form of marriage in the long run. Although arranged marriages were prevalent in earlier days, most of the time parents now agree with the wishes of their children. This type of marriage is generally acceptable and preferable all over the world because both partners have no issues in marrying each other, they love each other, and as human beings everyone should have the right to choose their partner according to their wishes and preferences.

Love marriage should be encouraged by both families of the girl and the boy irrespective of caste, creed, religion, or economic status, whether rich or poor.

7.4.6 Cross-Cousin Marriage:

In Monpa society, there are no restrictions on internal caste marriage. Therefore, cross-cousin marriage is acceptable in the entire Monpa society. A boy or a girl can marry his or her mother's brother's daughter or son, or father's sister's daughter or son. This kind of marriage is still practiced among the Monpa society.

It is believed that cross-cousin marriage brings more happiness and better understanding between the couple. This type of marriage is also practiced to minimize the bride price if a boy does not have sufficient Khrai (property such as cultivation land, forest land and other assets). In such cases, the bride does not expect much dowry.

7.4.7 Arrange Marriage:

Arranged marriage is another type of marriage which was prevalent earlier and is still practiced sometimes in the Monpa society. It is also socially acceptable and considered a good form of

² Tsering Lhamu (Age 87) is a permanent resident of Kokhem Village, Tawang District, Arunachal Pradesh. She was personally interviewed on 20/04/2024

marriage in Monpa society. It is arranged by parents with the due consent of the son or daughter, whom they are supposed to engage after puberty.

The eldest son in a family, after attaining maturity, selects his suitable life partner. After the selection, he communicates his decision to his parents. Arranged marriage is also practised in cases where a son or daughter remains unmarried even after attaining the proper age for marriage. Parents decide to engage their son when they feel that he needs a partner to help in household work and to take responsibility for managing the family property of his father. The son or daughter accepts the proposal of their parents in fulfilment of their wishes.

However, the situation has now changed in society. This kind of marriage is rarely practiced today. Most people now prefer love marriage.

7.4.8 Marriage by Exchange:

This is one of the most unique types of marriage systems that was prevalent in earlier days among the Monpa society particularly at Surbin village of Tawang district. Marriage by exchange is not a common custom in Monpa society. However, such cases occur when the bride price is not fulfilled by the groom's parents and the marriage ceremony is also not solemnized.

Sometimes it also occurs when the bride's parents are not satisfied with the groom's conduct towards their family, with whom their daughter is married, and if he is not capable of handling household responsibilities. In such cases, they may ask for the exchange of a brother or sister in marriage with the same person. However, this remarriage is conducted only after consulting their daughter. This kind of marriage practice occurs only in rare cases.

7.5 Age of Marriage:

There is no customary law or tradition that fixes a specific age for marriage among the Monpa society. However, most engagements are arranged after the attainment of puberty. In earlier days, many people got married at a young age, especially girls, who were often engaged earlier than boys. During earlier times, boys and girls usually got married between the ages of 14 and 18. Adult marriage was also prevalent in olden days.

At present, in Monpa society, child marriage is very rare. It is believed that couples should not be of the same age because it is considered to bring bad luck or an early chance of separation. Generally, boys marry women younger than themselves. Old-age marriage has also been prevalent in Monpa society since early times. If a man or woman is sixty years of age or above and without a spouse, or if they have already been divorced earlier, then sometimes marriages occur between elderly partners. There is no fixed upper age limit for marriage, either before or after. Old-age marriage is still practiced, but child marriage is completely avoided in present Monpa society.

7.6 Role of Phrinpa (mediator) in the Marriage

The mediator plays a crucial role in marriage, from the beginning of the marriage proposal to divorce. Marriage in Monpa society is conducted through a mediator. The mediator presents the marriage proposal before the bride's or groom's parents. It is necessary to have a mediator during the engagement and while proposing marriage.

The mediator initiates the marriage and helps to settle disputes in cases of divorce between husband and wife. It is the duty of the mediator to maintain a cordial relationship between husband and wife in case disputes arise, as he is the person who arranged the marriage between them. At first, the mediator convinces both parties of the bride's parents for marriage, and finally he has to settle disputes as well. Therefore, the mediator is a very respected person in society. The mediator acts as a bridge in the relationship between husband and wife in the future. During the marriage celebration, one portion of meat is given to the mediator as his fee. He is also treated with special food and wine. It is the responsibility of the mediator to manage the marriage process from beginning to end.

If he conducts the marriage successfully, then other people also choose him as a mediator in future. There may be many mediators in a society or village but mediators are chosen based on capability of resolving disputes, experienced in managing and settling social conflicts politely³.

7.7 Divorce:

Divorce is common in Monpa society. Divorce is not limited only to Monpa society, it occurs in every human society in the world under many circumstances. Divorce in Monpa society is very simple. Anyone can ask for divorce for certain reasons. However, divorce mostly occurs in the following cases:

When the wife does not remain faithful to her husband, or when the husband is not loyal to his wife.

1. In cases of domestic violence by the husband.
2. When the husband and wife are not satisfied with each other.
3. When the opinions of the husband and wife differ.

Although divorce is simple, there are certain customary practices to be followed while obtaining a divorce. If the husband wants to divorce his wife because of her misbehavior, such as careless behavior towards household work, neglect in taking care of the children, or disloyalty towards her husband, then the husband can divorce his wife. In such cases, the wife has to pay double of all items such as grain, meat, animals, and coins, which were given at the time of marriage as bride price according to customary law, as compensation. Then the wife has to leave the house.

If they have children at the time of divorce, the children are shared between them on a gender basis. According to the traditional laws of Monpa society, the father keeps the sons and the mother keeps the daughters. However, if the mother has an infant son, she may keep the son with her for a few years, but later the son is taken by the father and nurtured by him. In most cases, the father usually keeps the son with him.

If the husband has an illicit relationship with another woman or if he marries another wife without informing the first wife, then the wife can ask for divorce because of his wrongful act.

³ Karma Dorjee, (Age 76), mediator of Muktur Village, Tawang District, Arunachal Pradesh. He was personally interviewed on 19/04/2024

The wife can also ask him to leave the house. He has to return all the things that were brought by the wife during the time of marriage from her parents. All the property will be inherited by the son. The mother and her children stay in the house, and the father has no right to claim the property. All the property will be inherited and used by the son and mother throughout their lives.

If the wife has no male child or any child, then she can continue to live with her husband as his first wife. But if she does not want to live with him, then she may receive only some part of the property from her husband.

Mostly divorce happens because of unfaithfulness and misunderstanding between husband and wife. Sometimes divorce happens because of dislike of the wife by the husband's parents, and sometimes by the wife's parents. The husband can marry another woman only if his first wife accepts the other woman as a second wife, but generally the first wife denies acceptance most of the time.

In such cases, the first wife usually holds a higher status than the second wife. She enjoys more property from her husband, and even her children receive a greater share of the father's property.

7.8 Changes in marriages:

Everything has changed in society with the influence of Western culture, modern education, and modern materialism. Our culture, traditions, and practices have also been neglected or ignored. People have adopted new ways of life. In the perspective of the marriage system in Monpa society, many changes have been adopted. Because of the influence of Western culture and modern materialism, people are abandoning the old traditional marriage system.

Nowadays, marriages are not performed properly according to the traditional system and customary laws. For instance, the processes of obtaining a bride and groom, bride price, gift exchange, and marriage ceremonies are not being followed according to old traditions. People have discarded the old traditional system of bride price, such as paying *Broozoh* (grains), *Shahzoh* (meat), *Betang* (coins). Instead of these, they now offer money and other items as bride price. Market products such as whisky, wine, and beer are offered instead of local alcohol (*Aarah*) while going to the bride's house for the marriage proposal. The processes of obtaining a bride such as *Krungchang*, *Sherchang*, and *Tikchang* are sometimes not followed. Marriages are not conducted through a mediator; instead, negotiations take place directly between the two families of the bride and groom.

Marriage celebrations have also changed. According to tradition, marriage celebrations were earlier held for three or more days, but nowadays marriage celebrations are usually completed in one day. Marriage ceremonies are now held in restaurants, hotels, and halls, whereas earlier ceremonies and celebrations were held in the groom's house. The role of the mediator is decreasing. Forced marriage and arranged marriage are not acceptable in modern times in Monpa society. Polygamy and polyandry are now rarely seen in Monpa society. Nowadays child marriage has completely disappeared from Monpa society, and girls get married only after the age of eighteen.

Cross-cousin marriage is also no longer practiced by the Monpa people. Our religious teachers, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, stated during his visit to Tawang in 2007 that cross-cousin marriage should not be practiced. At present, only love marriage and monogamy are socially accepted. Exchange marriage, polyandry, forced marriage, arranged marriage, and polygamy are disappearing. In the present context of Monpa society, only love marriage is being given importance.

8. Conclusion:

From the above discussion, we gain knowledge of the traditional marriage institutions and practices among the Monpa society. We have learned about all the processes and rules of the traditional marriage system, including the ways of obtaining a bride and groom.

Especially, the younger generation of today should know about our traditional system because our identity lies in our culture. However, with the changing times, Monpa society is also changing its traditional practices. People no longer follow the traditional rules and systems of marriage. Many practices have been replaced in the traditional system. Instead of Chang (local wine), people now prefer modern liquor for marriage proposals and other purposes. They no longer perform rituals in the traditional way. Nowadays, marriage celebrations are held in hotels and other places instead of the groom's house. Due to the impact of modern materialism and lifestyle, people prefer to practice simple marriages. They celebrate their marriage ceremonies by giving money instead of meat and food grains. It has now become a new tradition to give money instead of articles, animals, and food grains. Bride price is no longer compulsory nowadays. In many cases, people do not even celebrate a full marriage ceremony; they only engage after consulting both families.

It is good to adopt new practices that are suitable for changing situations, but at the same time we should also know and preserve our traditional culture and practices. We should not forget our culture and traditions. Culture is our identity. Our culture determines which community we belong to and from where we come. Our culture is what we inherit from our ancestors and what we pass on to the coming generations. We must preserve our culture and traditions in order to protect our identity. We should teach the younger generation about our culture and practices. Therefore, while observing the changing circumstances of the modern world, we should also look back and protect our culture and traditions.

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