

An Ethnographic Study of Marriage System and the Runaway Brides of Kalash

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Abstract: The current research is an ethnographic study of traditional marriage practices and wife elopement cases that occurs amongst the Dardic speaking Kalasha community of Hindukush Mountain in District Chitral Pakistan. The society under study follows a segmentary system of patrilineal descent and the lineages is defined by strict rules of exogamy, prohibiting intermarriages between agnates related within seven generations of a descent of a common ancestor. Historically, marriage system was very stable in the past but now in contemporary times incidents like wife elopements have created antagonism and feuds between lineages of ex-husband and abductor. Compensations are paid to regulate the marital stability and the second suitor must pay compensation in double as bride price to the previous husband. The data for the current study has been taken from a PhD research survey conducted in 2008-09 from 825 households through anthropological techniques including participant observation, case studies and in-depth interviews from 75 respondents (both male and female of age 15 and above in Anish and Brun village of *Bomburet Valley Kalash*). The study concluded that there has been a shift in the form of marriage and wife elopements practices among the local community.

Key words: Bride price • Dowry • Exogamy • Feast • Ritual • Patrilineal • Wife elopement

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is one of the universal social institutions established to control and regulate the life of mankind. It is the approved social pattern whereby two or more persons establish a family' [1]. The marriage tradition generally transforms the roles and responsibilities of two individuals and is closely associated with the institution of family. The institution of marriage has different implications in different cultures however; its functions and forms may differ from society to society and at present in every society it is used to regulate family system. Johnson H.M. (1960) [2] is of the opinion that marriage is a stable relationship in which a man and a woman are socially permitted without loss of standing in community and to have children while to Westermarck, (1981) [3] marriage is a durable connection between male and female lasting beyond the mere act of propagation till after the birth of offspring. In this regard Malinowski (1929) [4] argues that marriage is a contract for the production and maintenance of children while Lowie,

R. (1978) [5] describes marriage as a relatively permanent bond between permissible mates.

Anthropological scholarships and studies recognize marriage as way to describe how different societies organize and understand the consequences of a natural urge of mating. The work of the scholars as mentioned above concludes that marriage as a more or less permanent association of males and females for the purpose of giving social sanction to bear children, forming a family, satisfaction of biological and social needs. Being a permanent and recognized social institution, the structure and forms of marriage vary from culture to culture and society to society and due to this variation, several different types of marriages, each of which is based upon numbers of individuals united by the marriage bond and the kinship relations between them exist in the world. Each type contributes to the formation of one or more social groups, in which it occurs and each may influence directly or indirectly the ways in which other social groups are formed [6]. Marriage practices often serves as a space for traditional identity for any

group or society especially when they are coexisting in a shared geographical space. Every society has its own unique wedding traditions which are very sacred to them and any sort of defiance can cast negativity and misfortune for the couple and the extended family. The current study has been framed in the context of marriage and the shift that has been found in the form and nature of marriage system in the society under study.

The Argument of the Study: Research studied conducted on the area [7, 6] indicate that the people of Kalash are superstitious with regard to holding and practicing new ideas. In this regard, they are generally adhering to follow the marital rules and rituals as exist since centuries. The research community is patriarchal in nature and they observe polygynous marriage system (where a man can keep more than one wife at a time). Marriage is based upon tribal rules and most of the tribal marriage features exist in the locality. According to Wynne, M. (2001) [7], Kalash words for marrying do not refer to relationship between parents but specifically to the transformation of girl into wife. In Kalash language a woman's marriage is referred to as "*ja thi aau*" she became a wife, for male it is "*ja kai aau*" he became a husband. The act of getting married for man in Kalash is referred to "*as janik*" and the parents give "*dik*" their daughter in marriage "*jadek*".

The current research is based upon the information collected ethnographically during a PHD survey of 825 household in the year 2008-9. The study of traditional marriage practices as exist in the research locale has been taken into consideration along-with a change with regard to wife elopement cases that occurs amongst the Dardic speaking Kalasha community of Hindukush Mountain in District Chitral Pakistan. The research community is historically following a segmentary system of patrilineal descent and the lineages is defined by strict rules of exogamy which prohibits intermarriages between agnates related within seven generations of a descent of a common ancestor. The stability in the marriage system was due to the strict rules that have been laid down by cultural traditions since centuries old practices. However, due to modernization and cultural exposure of the area, in contemporary times incidents like wife elopements cases (which were previously prohibited) have been occurred and such cases have created antagonism, rivalries, conflicts and even feuds between lineages of ex-husband and abductor.

With such change, the mechanism of compensations have been designed which is paid to regulate the marital stability and the second suitor must pay compensation in

double as bride price to the previous husband. However, the shift in such relations is a threat to the stability and survival of the old cultural practices as well the identity of the culture. The current research is thus part of the larger work which is focusing upon changing pattern of marriage and wife elopements practices among the local community and their impacts upon the larger cultural patterns.

Objectives of the Study: To analyze and compare Kalash traditional wedding with an indigenous Kho (chitrali wedding) in the area.

To observe the impacts of bride price in matrimonial decisions-making process.

To observe the freedom for females to exercise the right of choice for the spouse.

To highlight cultural and religious complications rose due to Muslim - Kalasha Marriages.

MATERIALS AND METOHODS

According to Bailey (1978) [8] and Naz (2009) [9], methodology refers to a structure and procedural rules whereby a researcher shifts information up and down the ladder of abstraction in order to produce and organize the increased knowledge. Methodology provides an overall framework for organizing concepts, definitions, hypothesis, evidence and their explanation in a manner that certain facts could be derived to explain a situation. It includes approaches that facilitate systematic inquiry into a problematic situation and it is similar to the underlying logic of a research project [10].

The researcher has predominantly utilized a descriptive approach in the current study which according to Bialy (1978) [8], "attempts to describe phenomena in detail (to describe what happened)". This method makes efforts in a systematic manner to examine and analyze phenomena of marriage and elopement cases and its impacts upon mate selection decisions as well as antagonism arises from marital relations under conditions that actually exist among the natives of Kalash under study. Further, this method was adopted because it is not mere a description, rather it represents in fact a collection of information and evidence on the basis of previous literature or theory, careful summarization of data obtained through interviews, observations and other anthropological techniques and analysis of results to draw meaningful conclusion and generalization to advance knowledge and it also expresses data qualitatively.

In this regard qualitative and descriptive approach has been adopted towards the events and issues related to the traditional marriage practices of Kalash valley. The research includes both Muslims and non Muslim i.e. Kalash residing in the exotic valley of Hindukush mountains. The Kalash valley comprise of three beautiful valleys of Bomburet, Birrir and Rumbour where the non Muslims of Kalash are residing along with the Chitrali Muslims. The data was collected from 825 households through anthropological techniques including participant observation, in-depth interviews and case studies. The case study method was used for data collection through participant observation, which according to Young (1956) [11], "is a method of exploring and analyzing life of a social unit—be that a person, a family, institution, culture group, or even an entire community" from 75 respondents (both male and female of age 15 and above in Anish and Brun village of *Bomburet Valley Kalash*). The data has been classified, sorted and the results have been given in the form of separate heading (for each category) and conclusion have been drawn in logical manner. The details of the ethnography and other field information are provided in descriptive form in the following pages:

Marriage Tradition and Economic Exchange: Studies of the previous scholars [1, 12] indicate that marriage is both a social and economic institution as well the biological base for family formation. The bride price or bride money concept exist in many of the world societies, however the nature and shape of the custom vary from society to society and area to area [10, 13]. Similarly, the same tradition exist in the research community as the ethnographic details indicates that bride price "*mal'zuk*" is an amount of money, property or wealth paid by the groom or his family to the parents of a woman upon the marriage. The bride price is the gift that has the purpose to maintain the permanency of the two groups' social relationship by compensating the loss of one object, the daughter or her ability to work, by another object, money or most often livestock.

The bride wealth may also be seen as custom of maintenance for the wife in the event of the breakup of marriage and family maintenance in the event of the husband not providing adequately for the wife in his will. Another purpose performed by the amount was to provide a disincentive for the husband to divorce his wife; he would need to have a certain amount to be able to pay to the wife. The bride price or bride wealth system constitutes an important role in the distribution of family

property and the arrangement of exchanges and alliances among families in many societies [14]. This institution specifies that a prospective husband, usually with the help of his relatives, must provide a substantial sum of money or highly valued goods to his future wife's family before a marriage can be contracted. In many patrilineal societies including Kalash the payment is also made for the rights to assign children to their father's family rather than to their mother's [15]. The dowry and bride price is also pre determined before marriage according to the economic and social status of the bride and the bridegroom.

The information indicates that the institution of marriage for Kalash has been subjected to numerous transitional changes as the impact of modernization increased. In past the matrimonial decision were arranged by the parents who were regarded as the ultimate authority to invite bids or proposals. Those who bid more, win the hand "*baza*" of the bride. According to Naz, S. (2009), the bride price consists of gun, trunks and 40 to 50 animals including goats and sheep's and big cooking pots. It is stored in the adjacent room of the house, which was conferred at the first meeting of both the parties. Each member of the boy's lineage contributes to the preparation, by bringing some gift with him to help the member of their lineage, so that in future if they need their help; they are helped in the same way. This economic cooperation is limited to the close members of the family, but if there is a matter of honor then the entire lineage gets involved in the economic cooperation.

Bride wealth is known simply as *mal*, or property and consists of ceremonial wealth objects and live stock including grains, biscuits, cheese "*chamani*", oil, sugar *sakhor* and tea "*cay*" etc [7]. Parkes state that in late 1970 the normal expectation of bride wealth includes "at least sixty articles (*soren*) would be given during the early stages of the marriage, a third of which should be major wealth object. Parkes (1983) [16], added that bride price also includes the cost of feast arranged for the wife's lineage food items given to the wife's household or household's of her lineage in the event of funeral, gifts of grains, cheese, live stock that are given to the households of the wife's lineage and items that are requested, by distant affines. To date this amount is fixed as standard, however a gift of cash is now included in the bride price ranging from 5000 to 10,000 depending on the economical prosperity of the bride groom and his lineage. The terms of the bride price contract depends on a very careful consideration of the possession of the parties, their

respective social position and reputation and of what the man's household can materially provide to balance the women's promise to increase the size of "hive". The price of the bride also known as "*kauk- Kauk*" literally child- child is basically the price of generation [14].

The second form of economic exchange associated with wedding tradition is dowry commonly known as *jhes* in the subcontinent. Dowry is a transfer of wealth, usually flowing from a woman's parents or family when she is to be married in the form of money, land or other goods. Often, the husband brings various forms of wealth to a newly created household and a dowry is thought of as the wife's donation, to the household or the husband also see [16]. Dowry can also be viewed as inheritance for the woman, though this is usually in cultures where both men and women are heirs. In other cases, such as in socially stratified societies, a dowry gives a woman the security of knowing that after she is married she can still enjoy her usual lifestyle and in the case of divorce, avoid poverty and discomfort. If the husband and wife are to be divorced, the wife is able to get back the dowry that her parents had given. Usually, a woman with a greater dowry is able to find herself a rich husband, while a woman with a smaller dowry is able to only find herself a poor husband.

In Kalash community there are two stages when a girl receives *Jhes* from her parents i.e. when she visits her parents first time as a married woman and second time after child birth she receives gifts from her parents for her husband and in laws. According to tradition there are three types of dowries *Coomon*, *Gajom Merat* and *Serik Dyek*, but receiving *jhes* from their natal families seems to be expected but it is not necessarily required. For some families it is just given once. The ceremony takes place after the birth of the first child, because it is only then the marriage is expected to be securely established. Natal families organize a small feast and call their daughter and her In-laws to come for a feast. It is a way of honoring the daughter and her new family and establishing equality between in laws [7]. It also contributes to woman's dependence in important emotional and material ways. The study of Parkes (1983) [16], indicates that the normal quantity of *jhes* given in 1979 was 5-10 Sheep, 15-20 *Muti* (one year old goat), 1-2 cows or bulls (presented by maternal uncle), Several woven goat's hair rugs, blankets which are used in bed, 1 *Tohon* (Trunk), 1 valuable metal cup etc. Besides, the information indicates that some wealthy families sometimes also give their daughters cash of Rs. 5000/- or more, one or two walnut trees, or apple or apricot trees depending upon their economical position.

The amount of *jhes* given during my field work was the same. However china, ceramic, glass utensils, clothes, sweaters, jackets and tennis shoes are also included in the *jhes*.

Traditional Weddings in Kalash: The marriage traditions for the Muslims and the Kalash are entirely different. The wedding of Muslim couple is identical to the rest of the Muslims of the Northern area and Chitral. It is arranged and celebrated by following the Islamic values. Marriage within family and clan is entertained and preferred. The matters are decided amongst the elders. The Muslim girls are not allowed to exercise their will regarding the bridegroom. A bride price is paid by the bridegroom in the form of liquid or solid property as agreed by the parents of the bride. For the acceptance of the marriage proposal the economical and social aspect of the bridegroom are critically analyzed. It is through marriage that the man and woman can have a legitimate sexual relationship. Any such contact without the bond of marriage is disallowed by Islam and is regarded as adultery which is a punishable offence.

Marriage is a festive occasion in Muslims wedding, celebrating the union of two individuals. The wedding preparations are long and tedious, while festivities continue for many days. According to Islamic teachings a man and woman enter the bond of marriage through a marriage contract (*nikkah*). The *nikkahnama* is prepared by the lawyers of both bride and bridegroom side. The groom represents himself and utilizes the assistance of two witnesses' *gawah*. The brides maternal or paternal uncles or her brother may presented as her lawyer *wakil*, while father being her *wali*, the one who give her in marriage. The alimony or *mahr* is paid at the time of *nikkah*. *Mahr* is the husband's responsibility and may be paid in cash, property or any movable objects to the bride himself. The amount of *mahr* is not legally specified, however, moderation according to the existing social norm is recommended. The *mahr* may be paid immediately to the bride at the time of marriage, or deferred to a later date, or a combination of both. "And give the women (on marriage) their *mahr* as a (nikah) free gift" (Quran 4:4). After expresses '*ijab*' willing consents to enter into marriage and the other party expresses '*qubul*' acceptance of the responsibility in the assembly of marriage ceremony. The contract is written and signed by the bride and the groom and their two respective witnesses. This written marriage contract "*aqd-Nikkah*" is then announced publicly. Then the prayers are said by all the attendants for the couples happiness and prosperity.

Dress is considered to be an Integral part in *chitrali* wedding. The bridal dress includes two silken *shalwar kameez*, a heavily embellished *duppata*, a *chaddar*, shoes with golden embroidery and an embroidered cap, a head band, a burqa and gold jewelry. The groom is dressed traditionally in *shalwar kameez*, a colorful waist coat, *chitrali* cap and shawl. For the reception of marriage party, the girls relative and other people of the village gather together to celebrate the wedding. Dowry is not an essential aspect in Chitral like other parts of Pakistan especially Punjab and Karachi. The parents decide the amount after considering his financial position. No false display of wealth and prosperity is pretended. If they can't afford the dowry they just send their daughter in single pair of clothes. However for those who can afford the minimum items of dowry includes, 4 to 5 embroidered bed sheets, 2 quilts, one or two boxes of clothes, footwear, gold or silver jewelry that includes 4 to 6 bangles, one necklace, few rings, a *tikkah*, one or two cows (optional) other items includes caps, head bands, embroidered cuffs, neck pieces hand bags, cutlery sets with cases and knife sets. After the engagement (*mausak*) the date for wedding is decided.

In the *kho* culture, marriage relationships are always sought by the family of the prospective husband, not by the family of the girl. They send a trusted confidante with the proposal (*mozaro dik*). If the girl's father agrees then the father of the boy along with respected elders of the family goes for the *vechik or maskik i.e.* to ask for the girls' hand. It is considered very bad to break the engagement and in such instances the matter is resolved by the involvement of *jirga* and at times imposes a punishment on the party breaking the engagement. The degree of punishment is influenced by the economical status and social standing of the family concerned. According to a respondent that mostly the girl's family if less privileged, suffers the severe consequences and at times they have to give another daughter or next to kin in matrimony to the aggrieved family.

For the ritual of *nikkah*, a small celebration is held. This is performed in the Islamic way as mentioned earlier in detail. The Qazi seeks the consent of both the bride and the bride groom and they say 'I agree'. Afterwards the Qazi recites few passages from the Holy Quran over a glass of sorbet request the couple to drink it. After that roasted liver is served to the bride and groom. Finally the Qazi prays for the health, happiness, love, long life and prosperity of the newlywed couple. Now the bride's family serves the feast to the couple and the guests. Fresh

cheese mixed with butter is put on the bread. The groom's father gives some token money as a gift to the person who serves the dish. It is believed that whoever in the couple will grab and eat the bread first will have an upper hand on the spouse. After the feast, it is time for the bride to depart. On the indication of the Qazi the bride dressed in her bridal clothes circles the fire place three times in a clockwise direction, while stirring a pot containing some mixture of wheat flour and water. On each circle she puts some of the mixture on her finger and dabs it on the central pillar of the house. Later the bridegroom takes her by the right hand and leads her out of the house under the shelter of the Holy Quran. The girl is not allowed to look back to her parent's home, because it is said that if she looks back she will not be able to adjust in her husband's house [17].

Types of Weddings in Kalash: The details obtained during field visit indicate that in Kalash community the customs and traditions of wedding are slight different. There are three modes of marriages practiced by the indigenous people of Kalash including arrange marriage (*Khaltabare*), Elopement or love marriage, Wife Elopement (the new trends developed in contemporary Kalash) which is the main focus of the study and which give rise to rivalries.

Arrange Marriage (Khaltabare): Arrange marriages were the traditional method of marriage in the past where the parents and elders have the privilege to decide the fate of their children. They were responsible for the choice of spouse, date of marriage and bride price. Such marriages were arranged at a very young age. Commonly the Kalash girls "*istariza gauk*" are given "*dek*" before their teenage, well before when they know the meaning of the word marriage and understand the extent of relationship, or even know their own preference for husband, or to the man sometimes much older than they are, or to be engaged to a man whose previous wife had eloped with a lover, or are promised into matrimony to a child of their own age. Age difference between the couple was not an issue. The parent's main concern was the prosperity of bridegroom for a sustainable and safe future of their daughter.

When a society perceive itself as distinct unit consist of only few thousand people, it is possible for any member to know and interact with a majority of others in his society. It is even possible to trace kinship connections to every individual. The affinal relationships created by marriage, links member of one group to the

members of other kinship network. In small societies the careful tracing of both consanguine relationships and marital connections are the major basis of social structure [18]. To keep and maintain the purity of lineage they do not allow or encourage their male child to marry outside their own ethnic group. This is a common practice in small and closed society because due to the small size of the group and lack of social mobility is compensated by extending the restriction on marriage. Thus all women with whom one can trace a family relationship or kin are prohibited [19]. Therefore the eligibility of arranging a certain union, an institution is required which can establish the "genealogical suitability". In order to avoid the defiance and marriage within the prohibited blood relations or complexity of lineal descents parents prefer to arrange the marriages during early childhood [20].

In case of intentional or unintentional violation the defiant couple is not physically punished or banished from the society disgracefully. They experience a social boycott "Bahira". They are prohibited from entering the holy places and participating in religious festivals. The immediate families though remain associated and interact formally, inherit the shame for generations. On the funeral of such cases the descendents are allowed to beat the tambourines. *Aspa-n* clan of Anish village Bumburet had suffered this condemnation but in those days due to less population and economic depression the rules were relaxed and on the basis of the sacrifice made to the goddesses to seek forgiveness for the crime committed by their elders and to salvage their family honor and prestige, were allowed to participate and attend the rituals and religious gatherings.

Elopement or Love Marriage: Another very common traditional marriage as noted from the field information is elopement or marriage by love (which is becoming a common tradition in many other communities of the country as well). Like Muslims the enormous difference in age is ignored because of the wealth and economical prosperity. In present-day due to frequent interaction, the young couples are capable of making decisions regarding marriage. In Kalash society parents do not strongly oppose the decision of their children nor is the family honor violated through their mutual understanding. Since it is a small society parents of both boy and girl are fairly aware of their children's intentions. If they have no objection to the attachment, they allow it to reach its logical conclusion. In case of objection and disagreement they convince their children to end the relationship. In case of defying parents will, the couple elopes to get

married. The parents initially disassociate themselves from the couple but this lasts for a very short period. The average age for love marriage and elopement is 14 – 15 years for a girl and 17 -20 for a boy.

In case of love marriage the friend of the boy acts as a mediator. Boy sends his friend to convey his feelings and love to the girl. It is on girl's discretion whether to accept or reject. If the girl confesses her love for the boy they start meeting at isolated pastures inside or outside the village. The girl is often chaperoned with her younger sister or friend. After some time if the understanding develops the boy proposes the girl and if she accepts the proposal they elope. Elopement mostly takes place in religious and social festivals. The *chalm-josh* i.e the spring festival which is held in the month of May is regarded as time for elopement, maximum number of young couples elope during the 4th day of festival. After few days of elopement the father or elder brother of the girl visit the husband's house to ask her whether she wants to continue living with the boy or not? Whether she has eloped by choice or the boy has forcefully taken her? If the parents have any apprehension about the boy or his family then they visit the very next day of elopement. It is very important for the girl to satisfy her parents that she has come on her own consent and wants to live with her husband for the rest of her life.

In a Traditional Kalash wedding the maternal uncle of the groom is sent to the girl's house with the proposal. If the girl's parents accepts the proposal, then the father of both the families meet formally to decide the details of wedding. Later the groom's family along with their relatives visits the girl's house for the formal announcement of engagement. The gifts are exchanged in form of cash, utensils and clothes. The engagement ceremony is very simple but dramatic when they reach the bride's home the groom kisses the hands of his in-laws and the esteemed relatives gracing the occasion.

Traditional Kalasha food i.e. cheese, butter, butter oil (*chamani*) is served with traditional wheat bread (*tusali*). Afterwards all the guests left for their homes except for the groom. He stays at the in-laws home for three to four days, to develop a certain level of understanding and acceptance with his new family. The in-laws depart him with gifts and 5 to 8 large loafs of walnut breads (*gellete*) for his family. When the girl reaches her puberty her parents sent few elders to the bride groom home to finalize the date and time of wedding. Both the parents make list of items which are included in the bride price. They very carefully calculate the number of items included. For this the bride relatives stays at the groom's residence where

they are received with great hospitality. Next day the boys family visits the bride's house along with the bride price, they are served with a lavish feast. They stay for the night and the relatives of both side dance and celebrate by consuming cheese, meat, butter, bread and wine. Next day the bride family along with their relatives visits the groom's village where the groom's family and friends receive them with great respect and honor. Here especial meal is prepared for the bride family and relatives. After having meal the ritual of hand kissing is performed by the members of both the families.

The wedding ritual formally starts with a prayer in *jistak han* (traditional sanctuary) in front of the god *Jistak* who is believed to be the protector of the family, married life children and fertility. Like every society Qazi the religious preacher solemnized the marriage ceremony. The Qazi along with the members of bride groom and a sacrificial animal preferably a sheep, or a goat and pure bread go to *jistak han*. Here they built a fire in the middle of the hall. Two male members wash their hands and one of them picks the sacrificial animal and the other after throwing the juniper leaves in the fire cuts the throat of the animal. Then he picks the blood in his hand and throws it in the fire and later sprinkles on the *jestik-han* emblem and in the end sprinkle it on the faces of bride and groom. Later he separates the neck of the animal, cuts small portion of ear to put in the fire, this ritual is termed as *saurus* means the purification of the animal. During the sacrificial ritual the Qazi and other guests participating pray to the god *jistak* for love, sincerity, longevity, prosperity, affection and fertility among the couple. After the formal ceremony of marriage (*shish-istangoce*) the bride is purified she washes her hands till elbow and hold five (*onjesta jasoon*) pure bread in her hands, the Qazi burned the juniper leaves and revolves it around the bride three times and throw them in fire. Later the qazi cuts the bread in small bite sizes and threw them in fire. He gave few pieces to the bride and requests her to eat the bread. This formally ends the marriage ritual and the couple is pronounced man and wife. Now the girl formally starts living at her in-laws house.

After few days the bride family visits her daughter's new home to see how well she is received and adjusted in her in-laws house. Her maternal uncle is special guest of honor. This is also a very festive occasion the whole village is invited for the feast. The villagers dance and sing all night long. Special dinner is prepared usually three male goats are slaughtered for the guests. The meat is served with bread, cheese and butter. Wine is served in the end. Upon the departure of the guests 3 -5 male goats

are given as gift to the bride's family. After a week the groom along with his new wife visits his wife village where he customarily visits each and every house of his wife lineage this visit is known as *duraatik*. He is entertained with cheese, bread and wine at each house. He stays at his in-laws for one night and then return to his own village.

In case of pregnancy occurring during the period of courting, the marriage is often solemnized and the girl leaves her parents house to live with the boys family. Marriages of such nature are not appreciated and favored but are tolerated and children born are considered legitimate. It is customary that the couple must sacrifice a goat in *jestk-han* and sprinkle the blood in the presence of family members and the villagers for the prosperity and success of the marriage. If the couple fails to comply "*sis~istongas*" in the *jestk-han* the child born without this ceremony is considered illegitimate and cursed.

Wife Elopement: The contemporary shift that has been found among the local community with regard to the marriage is wife elopement marriage which is the source of rivalries and antagonism among the people. Wife Elopement is the third type of marriage the wife abandons her husband and elopes with her lover. In case of wife's second marriage the husband claims the bride price which is now double the amount of initial payment known as *don dond*. If the initial payment comprised of 4 bulls, 20 iron dishes, 15 jugs, 3 kg of tobacco, 6 rifles, 2 kg of honey, 20 goats and 10 kg of wheat, the equivalent in pebbles* would be $4+20+15+3+6+2+20+10= 80$. The inventory is made with the agreement; of both parties the number of stones is doubled to establish the exact price of remarriage [14].

The husband will claim the rights of children. If the new suitor fails to fulfill the doubled inventory the wife is returned to the previous husband, who now possesses the right to keep her or to sell her off to the best bidder. Besides if a husband suspects his wife for adultery, he can sell her. Adultery on the other hand is looked down upon as everywhere else in the world, but is not considered a taboo in the Kalash society. The concept of honor of the family is not associated in events of violations of such level therefore there are very few honor killings and violence against women in this unique society. However there are a few instances of honor killing but they lead towards the involvement of Muslims. The people have declared those deaths as accidents and don't want to talk about them.

In past the Kalash were perceived to be polygamous [21] and the man with more wives was considered prestigious and these “multiplicities of wives were symbolic to social success and longevity” (Levi Strauss. C, 1969). But the Kalash males now limit themselves to a maximum of two wives. The permission for second marriage is recommended only in cases of sterility or when the first wife fails to produce a male child which is necessary to continue the family name. The wives often share the same roof and divide the portion of the house according to their requirement having separate stores [21]. The elder wife retains the symbolic privileged position but husbands are more inclined towards the mother of his heirs. Beside this bigamy is not appreciated and approved by the society. But the person concerned is not alienated from the society. It is left on the liking of the first wife that whether she wants to remain with the same man or leave him. She is partially a free woman and can marry any suitable suitor or return to her parent’s house. In case of having children she has every right to claim and keep them. If she plans to marry again the bride price will be paid to the father of the bride.

Complications do arise in cases involving intermarriages between a Muslims boy and a Kalash female. The Kalash girl has to change her religion leave her traditional Kalasha ensemble and embrace Islam. This may at times lead to the issue like inheritance, when the parents disassociate them from their daughter and her husband. But later after the birth of the grandchild they forgive the children and develop normal relationship. The Kalash families are received with equal respect by the bridegroom’s Muslim family and relatives. Though there are few instances of family disputes regarding property and inheritance which require the intervention of *jirga*. The cases which come to the *jirga* for resolution are very complicated in nature the following case is very unique and conflicting. A married Kalash woman had left her husband with a small daughter eloped *alas-in* with a Muslim. The jilted husband brought up the daughter in the Kalash tradition. The daughter now twenty one also married a Muslim and got converted to Islam. The Girl’s father was devastated and strongly objected to this marriage and broke off any relationship with his daughter. Now the father is dead, leaving his daughter “*chu*” and brothers “*baya*” as a legal heir to his property. The daughter and her husband claimed their legal share in her father’s property according to Islamic law.. The paternal uncles of the girl took charge of the deceased property. The case is now under consideration of the *jirga*.

However in actual fact two cultural and social values and code of conduct are contesting on the basis of religious ideology, ironically both the parties involved have a fundamental legitimate ground on the property yet both are victims. The case involved decision on two points:

- Whether the girl is entitled to inheritance under the particular circumstances after being excommunicated by the father on her getting married to Kalash Muslim.
- When the girl is entitled to inheritance under the common law of land, then who should bear the expenses incurred on the traditional funeral rituals following the death.

The claim of husband is that when his wife is a Muslim she is entitled to the property under the Muslim law. This issue was contested by the girl’s paternal uncles although the Kalash custom is silent on this subject. Moreover, they agreed to pay the expenses incurred by her paternal uncles on the funeral. The case was discussed in the *jirga* for three days but no mutually agreed decision was reached, whilst researcher was present there. The case was then to be heard by civil court of Chitral. The purpose of mentioning this particular case explains conflicts because of identity crisis emerging out of the relationships of persons belonging to two different cultural and religious groups. The whole thing was conducted with a detached approach without the tempers being lost of any side and in a very peaceful manner. To witness this is something very rare since we are aware of reactions regarding such situations in the so called civilized world.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the identity of any community is directly associated with its lineage “*Kam*” and it has been observed that the mothers have more dominant effect on the children. In contemporary Kalash Education and exposure of the youth to the outside world has led the youth to opt for love marriage through elopement because it safes them from the unreasonable demands and expectations of their elders and families, it is less cumbersome for boy’s family as they don’t have to pay an exuberant bride price that they might have to pay if a more traditional root of marriage is employed. In the idealistic view the youth is marrying for love and not for money.

Like any other marriage there are challenges, expectations and disappointments experienced by the couple as they experience life together. Some marriages are bound to fail not for the reason of elopement; the external and internal pressures of marriage support or lack of support of peer group and families may lead a couple towards separation. In a traditional marriage a couple is bound by customs, traditions and family to stay together therefore most couples stay in unhappy marriages and this may present an outward case of more successful marriage. In the case of elopement the couple decides more freely to leave a marriage rather than stay in unhappy circumstances. So the elders may say that it was bound to fail anyway.

The scarcity traditional culture can only be practiced and exercised if the society is living in isolation and have no level of communication with other alien groups. The traditional culture can only exist in a specific periphery or genealogical territory. But when the material environment is changed opportunities, beliefs, class structure and positionality, ideals and stance is also changed or deviated. This stage brings a contestation of ideology between the orthodoxy and heterodoxy. The orthodoxy tries to implement the old traditions and resist change, but the heterodoxy emerges and establishes a new rhythm of practice which is a refined form of old traditions according to the present demands and requirement.

The research study further reveals that people have to leave their cultural setting and in doing so they take their traditional culture in a specific time. But fortunately culture cannot be bounded by the elements like time and space [22] though it exist in an imagined space where people believe that they belong to the same space by utilizing technology, ideology, media. Further all these spaces interact and create a unique and distinguished cultural identity [23, 24]. Hence Kalash culture is also subjected to various changes parents are unable to control inter marriages amongst the Muslims boys and Kalash girls and vice versa [25-27]. Issues related to such acquaintances are tried to be resolved amicably by the intervention of the elders.

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