



Cultural Transformations in Banjara Weddings: Comparing Practices from the Second Half of the Twentieth Century to the Twenty-First Century

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Abstract:

The study highlights the changes that have occurred in Banjara's matrimonial practices from the 2nd half of the 20th century to the beginning of the 21st century. It will also examine how traditional customs, for instance, arranged marriages, Vaat-chit and Gol Khayer ceremonies, Dhavlo learning by brides, and Garatani Toderu rituals have helped in maintaining cultural identity and social cohesion. In addition, it will focus on acculturation due to education, globalization, and urbanization among others. The study shows that a shift is happening towards more modern types like Bollywood weddings, greater dowry demands, and the disappearance of folk music and dance patterns. The Banjara community, however, has shown great resistance and adaptability to such changes by fusing tradition with modernity. With these documentations, this research is therefore set to provide a comprehensive discussion on cultural adaptation and Indigenous practice retention that is being negotiated with regard to modern pressure and hence gives great insight into the socio-cultural dynamics within Banjara society.

Keywords: Golkhayero, Ghotu, Garatani, Haveli, Got

1. Introduction

Marriage is a deeply rooted cultural, religious, and social tradition in Indian societies that reflects a complex interplay between family expectations, societal norms, and regional customs. It is an important institution that symbolizes the coming together of individuals, families, and communities. Marriages within these societies are often arranged based on considerations such as caste, class or compatibility. Rich symbolism and collective identities are embodied in various rituals and ceremonies associated with marriages which differ widely among regions and communities. Understanding this intricate practice provides deep insights into the operation of kinship systems, gender roles, and cohesion within Indian society. In Hindu society, marriage is considered a sacrament rather than a contract designed to last for life (India - Mate Selection and Marriage - Family, Family, and Life - JRank Articles, n.d.).

The Banjara society, identified by lively arts and customs, is an important Indian ethnic group. Traditionally, the Banjaras have been wanderers with a rich cultural heritage that has influenced their marriage practices rooted in their culture. The objective of this research paper is to explore the changes in the marriage practices of the Banjara community over time by looking at present-day traditions and those practiced during the latter half of the 1900s. To this end, this study will examine shifts and continuities in ceremonies, decorum as well as social values thus providing a deeper understanding of how modernity and historical legacies affect Banjara matrimonial systems.

2. The Banjara Community

Banjara community, with nomadic traditions and a rich cultural heritage, occupied a unique socio-cultural, economic, and political space in the diverse geographic space of India. For many generations now, the Banjara people have wandered through India's vast sub-continent with their wild tales of trade, migration, and cultural interaction knitted into their wandering histories around its rugged terrains. It is a dynamic and evolving socio-economic and political landscape beneath their nomadic way of life which has been shaped by historical changes, globalization and social-political changes. The Banjara community is estimated to have a population size of approximately 10-12 crore across the country (Press Release: Press Information Bureau, 2023).

The word 'Banjara' can be divided into two words: 'Ban' meaning forest and 'Jara' meaning mover indicating wanderers of the forest. In Sanskrit, they are also referred to as Laman or salt traders in the English language which is derived from Sanskrit. Originally from Rajasthan state, the Banjaras spread across India. The Banjaras speak Goar Boli, which belongs to the family of languages known as the Indo-Aryan languages (Naik, 2000, 10-11).

3. Objectives

1. Providing documentation and analysis of the historical matrimonial practices of the Banjara community."
2. Identify and assess changes in these practices over time.
3. To find out why these changes took place.

4. Methodology

The research methodology of the study titled "Cultural Transformations in Banjara Weddings: Comparing Practices from the Second Half of the Twentieth Century to the Twenty-first Century" utilized qualitative methods from ethnographic interviews with Tanda Nayaks, Karbharis, Dhadis, Dav-san, and aged women. Participant observation and content analysis of historical texts have been used to trace the historical roots and cultural meaning of Banjara matrimonial practices. Thus, community engagement and stakeholder consultations became essential elements for its ethical representation of Banjara's perspectives. The interdisciplinary nature of the study aided in-depth comprehension of the complex dynamics that shape the evolving patterns of Banjara matrimony.

5. Historical Background (Second Half of the 20th Century)

The marriages of the Banjara were traditional and culture-bound entities. Usually, the matrimonial alliances were fixed by the senior family members, or the Dhadi (singer) would return after following and receiving consent from the society heads to express compatibility and social status. The pre-marriage rituals often called for sending a Dhadi to the bride's family altogether, culminating in a typical engagement ceremony, where Vaat-Chit and Gol Khayero were the most specific components. The 'Dhavlo' learning and practice of the bride-to-be carried so much intrigue in that it was an emotional bonding of a girl with her family.

The marriage was such an elaborate event characterized by all the complexities, traditional dressing, and high levels of community involvement. The customs post-marriage included the various celebrations and rites of passage whose objective was to integrate the bride into her new family and instill in her new social status.

6. Pre-Marriage Rituals

In the Banjara community, the bridegroom's family would first send a Dhadi to the bride's family. The Dhadi would evaluate the status, character, and suitability of the bride's family for a marital alliance. Similarly, a Dhadi from the bride's family would be sent to the bridegroom's family for the same purpose. After the findings of the Dhadi were agreeable, then the bridegroom's family, along with a couple of village elders, would pay a visit to the bride's family. The visit was a part of the matrimony proposal

process. On such occasions, male elders would wear a turban tied to their heads, and similarly, ladies would tie up their hair, as leaving hair open was considered inauspicious.

After this, the bride's family would return the visit to the bridegroom's family. If everything went well, the Vaat-Chit ceremony was performed, and this would start the formalities for the extension of the relationship.

The Panchang of the two families was matched with each other not only of the bride and bridegroom but of their parents also, termed as Samadhi-Samadhi (male parents) and Samdhan-Samdhan (female parents) to ensure a successful relationship. On the occasion of the Gol Khayer ceremony (engagement), five people from both sides were sent to buy jaggery. They would leave their villages and meet somewhere in between the villages, sitting under some tree. They bought five kilograms of jaggery and the purchasing expenses are generally shared by both houses. With the getting-together, a relationship was formalized. The Nayaks (village heads) from either side would recite some phrases, which were recognized as quite old phrases and are called Kasalaat, and elaborate the conditions of the relationship upon the members assembled.

7. Saying of Kasalaat (Betrothal) as follows

Panch Panchayat Raja Bhojer sabha
Panchare lakh, anpachare savalakh
Sag-sagayi parakan kide, kide doyi baat
Upar kanta paramal mare
Mayi beto dudalor Nayak
Doyi ghoder kan barobarar Nayak
Ang khade khana, lar khade khopara
Doyim rach mitor Nayak
Von toon ma doyi khan rajeer Nayak.

Translation

This assembly is like the assembly of king Raja Bhoj
Which exceeds a lakh people
The settlement is carried out
After thorough examination and discussion
There is a fruit in the centre of the thorns
O! Chief, the ears of two horses are of equal size
We did enjoy the sweet dish in the past
In future too
We would enjoy the same sweetness
We are two relatives
One is a wooden ladder
Another is a leather ladder
The wooden ladder will break into pieces but the leather ladder remains forever
O! Chief, raindrops fall from the sky
There is flora and fauna everywhere
Both are satisfied by eating sweets.

Kasalaat practice holds great social significance among the Banjaras. It is not there to enjoy or for fun, but it binds two families further for more growth and development, creating harmony in the world. The horse, meals, coconuts, wooden and leather ladders, and green vegetables are all symbols holding deep meanings (Naik, 2000, 21-22). Then, the quantum of Karar, a token of appreciation to be given to the bride's family from the bridegroom's side, would be finalized, which used to be about Rs. 400-500 at that time. Afterwards, the jaggery exchange started with the Nayaks, followed by the Karbhari, Daav, and

others. If liquor or toddy was available, it would be provided; colour would be thrown on the participants. The process outlines how engagements were traditionally fixed among the Banjaras throughout the twentieth century.

8. Marriage Ceremony

The bridegroom's family used to offer the bride's family Karar money after the dates of the marriage were fixed, usually in the range of Rs.400-500. This money used to be spent on purchasing jewellery and ornaments to be worn by the bride. If the bridegroom's family happened to be too poor to give the money, it is said that they used to present a bull or cow and refer to it as Deju Denu. Sadi Tanero would be done immediately after fixing the date for giving Karar. Sadi Tanero ceremony corresponds to the Vadai (baptism) worship. The bridegroom and his brother would have hot needle marks on their right arm. This ceremony also includes a goat sacrifice. On that night the entire village could be fed.

9. Vadayir Kadi (Baptism song)

Koli Aava Koli Jaava
Koli mayi jog samaava
Dholo ghodo hansalo
Paataliyaa Asavaar
Munge avadaa mogaraa
Talli avadaa baan
Guru baba sadaa Jaan

Translation

Clan comes and goes
Goodness will flourish in the clan
Thou art the rider of a beautiful white horse
You have a beautiful bow
And a smart arrow
Baba's blessing on you forever.

O! Son, your world is full of obstacles like hills and valleys. Many people were born here and disappeared. You have the blessing of Baba, be successful in life. Ride on a white horse through this valley of life. Meditate always on Baba. He will protect you. The name of Guru is quite essential for understanding the mysterious power of the world and salvation from the mundane world (Naik, 2000, 24).

The next morning, the Vetadu (bridegroom)Valayer ceremony was conducted right after the Vadai Dag (Baptism) ceremony. They used to tie a Ghungadi, which is a large thick shawl of jute in front of the door, like a mandap, on which there was a Kalash. Four people used to hold a saree tightly and from underneath that saree out would come the bridegroom. Once he came out, he wasn't allowed to go back. To fulfil this purpose, the women have invented the following folk song:

10. Folk Song

Yadiro hatako bapuro hatako na mano pantiya
Chaale chalavo ghodo bhido pantiya
Nangarima khado nangarima suto
Nangari jagayo sari rataye yadi
Angacha tar sasuro zular
Hat jod bidalo delara
Panchamelu baman

Translation

The bridegroom went with an embroidered bag on his shoulder

To the bride's wedding shamiana
He wore red cloth
Proceeded to the bride's house
There is a well in front of you
Take a holy bath
O! Brahmin, like the bridegroom
In front of you is your father-in-law's party
Salute them with Ram Ram
O! Brahmin, like the bridegroom
In front of you is your mother-in-law's party
Salute them with Ram Ram (Naik, 2000, 25).

The bridegroom was dressed in a dhoti, kameez, and a red khola. In the evening, the bridegroom, with his leriya, or assistant, would depart for the bride's village. Upon reaching the village, they would be kept outside the village until the parents of the bride came to escort them. They would go straight to the village temple where the Nayak would present the bridegroom with a pot of water. Then, with the blessings of God, they would go to the bride's house. A special dinner would be waiting at the bride's place that consists of sweets, generally lapsi, a sweet dish. The bridegroom would have to spend a month or two at the bride's place and would be looked after well, especially by his mother-in-law. Till the wedding, he was served fruits, coconut, and ghee, among others, as a way of ensuring he maintained high spirits. He was also supposed to seek daily blessings from a minimum of five houses in the village. One of the most amusing of the entire tradition was the bridegroom standing up and showing respect each time, he happened to have a visit from the brothers-in-law. If he failed to do so, he was made to bend for hours, sometimes with a child placed on him, highlighting the relationship dynamics between brothers-in-law. The marriage function would kick-start at the bride's house after a month or two. The wedding pavilion (Daglo) was prepared from aak plants. Ghota, "a healthy drink" was prepared during the night. The Ghota was made from cloves, cardamom, nutmeg, poppy seeds, buds and jaggery, the wet mixture was packed in the earthen pot overnight. While serving Ghota the following proverbs were recited by Nayak.

Panch Panchayat Raja Bhojer sabha
Sagal kacheri pacharu jagat eketi ek savai ra Nayak
Gol chha mitho mitho lung, elaichi, jaifal
Ghaldine khas khas dodara Nayak
Gol chha mito mito mel dine panch lota
Vetadu hubo jane ti ghota do maane ti ra Nayak.

Translation

This assembly is like the assembly of king Raja Bhoj
Where everyone is wiser than others.
Jaggery is sweet, cloves, cardamom, nutmeg
O! Chief, Added the poppy and bud in it
Jaggery is sweet, we kept five pots of it.
O! Chief, the bridegroom is standing with grace, let us serve him Ghota with respect.

The same night, the bride learned Dhavlo. It is a peculiar method of crying and singing at the same time, indulged mainly by the banjara women folk, expressing their love, affection, happiness, sorrow, difficulties, and so on (Lal, 2009, 291). On the next morning, food was prepared for the entire village to feed, and that was called Telo Ferero (Serving Food). The meal was served with lapsi, pulses ghugari, lentils, and rice, with Ghota. After two to three days, the clay pots were brought from Kumhar's (Potter) house, and the wedding pavilion was decorated with aak plants. Mehendi brought from the market was ground in a mortar at night, and applied on the bride and bridegroom. Both the couples took a bath that night.

In the morning before the oil bath, the Garatani Toderu (Breaking of the blue bead feet ornaments) ceremony takes place. Young girls of the community wear ornaments made of beads of blue, yellow, and red colours. This foot ornament indicates the virginity of the girls. During the marriage ceremony, when the bride is moved out of the home, the assembled young women ceremoniously break this Garatani i.e. the "feet chain". During the ceremony, the bride sings:

“Matte Todoyo Satona,
Māri Je Yādiro Hāteya Geratiyo Jato
Matte Kadoye Bhayero Māri Jainaye
Bapur Hātero Mugalo Jo Mootiro Bhooriya
Māri Jo Huśna Yādiro Petiro Mato”

The bride laments and pleads with her friends not to break the beads (of feet chain). Do not remove my nose ring, gifted by my father. Do not disturb my hair, neatly combed by my mother. I am afraid of becoming a foreigner to my folks. Then, the young women reply that for a girl a permanent home is her husband's and not her mothers'. They also express their apprehension about the manner of treatment the girl would receive from the members of the husbands' home (Naik & R, n.d., 3). After that, the bride and the bridegroom are given an oil bath. This bath was taken on a wooden stand called Kakoti, on which they were seated and bathed. The surrounding of Kakoti was covered with earthen pots, which were tied with threads. In front of Kakoti, two wooden tools (Sotta) used for pounding grains were kept, and these were decorated with Biba seeds, shells, and turmeric. After the oil bath, Tilak rituals begin wherein the brother of the bride applied Tilak to the bride and bridegroom. Tunes of traditional songs were sung by women on this occasion. Rather than going in the circle of a fire as the Hindus do, brides and bridegrooms held hands and walked seven times (Sath Phera) around the Sotta placed ahead of Kakoti. Two to four days afterward, Got is performed in which a goat is sacrificed, and blood is shown to the bride and bridegroom. After the sacrifice, the Nayak recited a Kasalat. Bangles were worn by the bride that night, and she was made to wear Chotla which was a traditional Banjara women's hairstyle. Chotla included Topli and Ghugri. Only after wearing the Ghugri, the girl was considered married as a mangal sutra was not used. The next morning, the girl was taken out of the house. She was dressed in a Phetiya (skirt), Kanchali (blouse), and Chatiya (veil) embroidered with silver coins. She also wore Kashe and Vakadi (anklets) on her feet, Kasotiya on her wrists and Bhuriya on her nose. The bride was made to stand on a bull and perform Haveli, which was akin to a farewell where she wished well for her father's house, her relatives, and the village. Leaving the village caused her great dismay.

11. Haveli Folk Song as follows

Chhuta mat jayes haveli
Marej nayak bapuri haveli
Tarej rajema ahoj khadi
Achoj peedi haveli ahinya
Tarej rajema ahoj vodi
Ek ghadi lagavat
Das ghadi laged virena ahinya

Translation

This is the home of my dear father
Let it not be isolated from me
Here I have eaten well
Here I have drunk well
Here I have dressed well
Here I have enjoyed the best
Everything here is overwhelming with wealth
This is the home of my dear father
Let it not be isolated from me

Whenever I come here
Let this home be overfilled with plenty and pleasure
In this dear home of my dear father
Let this home family grow higher like a Banyan tree
Let it spread wide like a tree
Let this tanda enjoy like a chestnut tree
Whenever I come here, let there be pleasure and plenty everywhere:
A fisherman has spread a net
In the transparent lake
Beautiful pretty fish are there in the net
My condition is like those fish
O! Father, I am like a coconut, not to be sold
The act of chewing a pan
Shows thirty-two teeth
O! Handsome brother
You wear golden earrings
And a golden chain around your long neck
O! Marwadi brother
Make me your wand in your hand with the magic
O! Mother, thou art wearing
A silver necklace and golden earrings
Give me a chance to be your belly
Like a child for a moment
O! Maiden friends, you are wearing
Gaudy skirts and jingling anklets
And wearing bangles made of stag horns
O! Friends, thou art wearing silver
Necklace and golden rings
Give me a chance to be among you for a moment.

This song describes the sorrows and the broad-mindedness of a Banjara woman. She requests her parents and kith and kin with folded palms to save her. Of course, separation is inevitable for her, but she prays for the well-being of the entire family and prosperity for all. She tells her parents that she will bring flowers and not grass. This oath is uttered while proceeding to her husband's house (Naik, 2000, 28-29). After Haveli, the bride's farewell was done. If the bridegroom's village was nearby, they would leave before sunset. The women used to sing songs on the way and used to escort the bride and the bridegroom. The bride carried some necessary items from her father's house and they are known as Tangadi. These necessary items included 5 Tukari, 5 Ghagro, 5 Kanchali, 1 Daatala, 1 Kharpani, 1 Kotali, 1 Lota and 1 Thali. All these things were placed on the bull which was tied in goni. In the evening Tangadi would reach the bridegroom's village. The whole of them would assemble at the temple in the village and later they would proceed to the bridegroom's house.

12. Contemporary Marriage Practices - Pre-Marriage Rituals

In the Banjara community, the bridegroom's family would visit the bride's house with mediators, generally relatives. Once the match is found, the process of negotiations starts. First, the bridegroom's family visits the bride's home. It is called "Ghar Deken Jarecha" (going to see the house), but they go to see the bride. Then the bride's family visits the bridegroom's house. First of all, both families would check the horoscopes of the prospective bride and bridegroom before the meeting. If they match, then the discussions will proceed further. Then if everything is fine and both parties are happy with the match, both the families get together well. Banjara does not believe in the 'Chat Mangni Pat Byah' kind of marriage. Generally, Banjaras take about six months to one year to get married after initial discussion. This gives adequate time to both the families and the bride and bridegroom to know each other. The date

is fixed for the engagement ceremony. Traditionally, the Vaat-Chit and Gol Khayer(engagement) used to take place on different days. Nowadays, it happens on the same day. The ceremony is carried out in the bride's residence. The family of the bridegroom gifts toe rings, anklets, nose rings, earrings, an engagement ring, a sari and lehenga with a blouse, rice, kumkum, and five types of fruits placed on the bride's lap.

The dowry system too has entered the Banjara community. They do discuss the quantum of dowry on the day of the discussion, though it is not openly called as such. The quantum of gold and silver, vehicles, and cash (Hunda) that will be given to the family of the bridegroom from the bride's family is decided. It is on this discussion day that the amount of Karar is also finalized. This differs from village to village, though now it ranges from ₹ 70,000 to ₹ 100,000. Then, the Kasalat ritual is conducted where the leaders of both villages participate.

This is followed by the distribution of sugar to all, who have to put it in their mouths. This custom is called 'golkhayer'. Next, the women of the village fill the lap of the bride with five varieties of fruits, coconut, betel leaves, and betel nuts. The brother of the bride puts a tilak on both the bride and bridegroom and waves rice over the heads of the couple. Then, there is the ring ceremony. Nowadays, engagement and marriage take place within a day's interval. Anyway, The bride-to-be is taught the Dhavlo by the village women headed by the village Nayakan. It goes on for a week or so under the moonlight. After the coaching, coconut and jaggery are given to all of them, which is brought by the family of the bridegroom.

13. Marriage and Post-Marriage Rituals

Nowadays, the marriage performed by the Banjara community is based on two days' proceedings at the bridegroom's place. The first day they set up and decorate the wedding canopy—mandap. The second one is the wedding day: aki kal. On the first evening, they call the whole village to enjoy a feast. They worship their deities, and the Vadayi daag (Baptism) is marked on the bridegroom's arm. On this day, the bride is taken out from her house, and then her family takes her to the bridegroom's village. The important point is that the bride's parents do not accompany her that night; they come the next morning. When the bride's party reaches the bridegroom's village, it is called 'Tangdi agayi'. They stay at the village temple, and water is sent from the bridegroom's house. The women from the bridegroom's house come to welcome the bride with an aarti. After that aarti, everybody shifts from the temple to the marriage place where food is served to the people. Then, dinner is followed by dancing and singing from both families and all of the guests.

The turmeric ceremony, otherwise known as haldi, begins at around 2-3 a.m. when both bride and bridegroom are applied with turmeric by their family people. The next morning, Vetadu (bridegroom) is taken out and the wedding canopy is decorated. The clay pots brought from Kumhar, which are on the sides of the temple, are fetched by the bride and bridegroom siblings and brought back home to be filled with grains. The ritual is one of prosperity and is performed to ensure plenty of food within the home at all times.

Five people come with five pots of water to bathe the bride and the bridegroom. Here the Garatani Todero ceremony takes place just before taking a bath. After bathing, they are seated in the wedding canopy. The actual marriage ceremony is performed according to full Vedic rites. A yagna, or sacred fire, is prepared by the priest, who chants religious hymns. This is when the bridegroom ties the mangalsutra around the bride's neck and they take seven rounds around the sacred fire.

After the marriage, the bride and bridegroom seek blessings from the priest and all family members and then proceed to the village temple to seek blessings. Then there is a ritual called 'Got' where animal blood is shown to the couple. Once that ritual is done, the village Nayakan (The First lady of the village) comes along with other ladies to inspect the gifts given to the bride. After these rituals, the bride and her

bridegroom depart for the bride's village for seven days. They come back on the seventh day and return to routine life. The bride is then blessed by all the members of her in-law's family and the village elders.

14. Comparative Analysis of Matrimonial Practices of Banjara Community

The matrimonial practices of the Banjara community have changed tremendously over the years. The marriage ceremonies of the community, which were quite elaborate earlier and used to consume days, are now wrapped up within a few days. The marriage ceremonies are now performed at either the bride's or bridegroom's place. The Gol Khayer ceremony used to take place outside the village under the tree now it happens at the bride's house. Modern Indian marriage customs have influenced a lot over the years and have brought about lots of changes.

Prominent among these changes is the innovation of the Gol Khayero ceremony, which has been reduced to being a sort of Bollywood-style engagement-type ring-exchange ceremony, something that did not exist earlier. Another radical departure from the past in the Banjara community is the incorporation of dowry as part of marriages since the tradition of dowry did not exist earlier. Today, dowry is almost a prerequisite for marriage and it is not something that the community can view with pride.

The money spent on weddings has increased. It is all about elaborate arrangements and pomp, involving heavy expenditure. Starting from the Ghugri, the symbolic representation of marriage in the olden days, it changed to mangalsutra and applying sindoor. Folk songs and dances have been replaced by Bollywood music and dancing.

Even amidst such innovations, some customs have persisted with time. The Kasalat system continues, and the Dhavlo teaching remains an integral part of the teaching to the bride concerning emotional bonding with her family and keeping up good relations between the families of both the bridegroom and the bride. The visit to the village temple before proceeding to the bridegroom's or bride's house is still followed. The Garatani Todero, oil bath ceremony, and the haldi ceremony are still retained as part of the wedding rituals. The Got practice reflects the community's resistance to logical change and persists as well. While the Banjara community has initiated many changes, it has still maintained some of the traditional aspects. This placing of innovation with tradition in itself is a complex relation that the community shares with cultural evolution.

15. Factors Affecting Change

The Banjara community has evolved much with time, and there are visible changes in almost all aspects of life, be it marriage customs and ceremonies. Some main factors that are the contributors to change are education, economic change, and globalization.

Interviews conducted with Tanda Nayaks as well as individuals of the village show a unanimous opinion that greater education among people is what made them follow modern rituals and practices. The educated ones give the least importance to traditional customs and ignore the suggestions and customs followed by elderly people. Economic factors are another important reason. When compared with the Banjara living in villages, the standard of living is more elevated and per capita income is more significant among the Banjara who migrated to metropolitan cities like Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Bangalore. This economic gap has also been reflected in marriage customs, with an increased rise in the demand for dowry and expenditure on weddings since high-earning individuals are likely to spend extravagantly. This money has also brought arrogance into the community. The digital revolution has also powered globalization, which has had a deep influence. Exposure to global trends has led Banjara to adopt practices that mimic a Bollywood style of wedding, with a consequent decline of traditional folk songs and dances, like those performed with the dapda (Drum). Neo-Indianization and Westernization trends have influenced the community more and more, distancing them further from their cultural roots.

16. Implications to the Banjara Community

Though the expression of international trends through the Banjara community's bearing and outlook speaks of awareness and modernization, such changes have far-reaching implications for social cohesion, identity, and cultural heritage. This changing aspect towards materialism has undermined the sense of fraternity in a community that is otherwise known for its rich traditions and typical attire like Kanchali, Phetiya, Ghagro, and Tukri. Traditional practices—like the 'Pheri Mar' (Ghumar) dance—are on a steep fall as these practices are no longer practised by youngsters. Kasalaat, which was an intrinsic part of several occasions, is now forgotten except for a few elements that are still practiced. Ghota making and celebrating it is eliminated from everywhere. As such, one of India's oldest cultures stands on the verge of erosion of its distinct identity and heritage.

17. Conclusion

The research presents the account of the changing marriage patterns of Banjaras from the second half of the twentieth century to the present. The change in the traditional marriage pattern of Banjaras is discussed elaborately from rituals and strictness in social norms, slowly adapting with modernization, socioeconomic change and cultural integration. Arranged marriages and rituals like Vaat-Chit and Gol Khayer were very significant for social cohesion and the continuation of culture.

There has been a palpable move towards more flexible practices in contemporary times. At the same time, many of those customary elements remain in place and continue to be an example of the community's ability to weld together tradition and modernity.

The findings epitomize the resilience and adaptability of the Banjara community. They have maintained their cultural heritage but have also adapted to change wherever necessary, showing their dynamic interplay with tradition and modernity. This points out an evolution that provides valuable socio-cultural dynamics for the broader narrative of cultural continuity and change.

The Banjara matrimonial evolution reflects the nuances involved in a traditional society as it treads between cultural preservation and social evolution. The study provides valuable input into the discourse on cultural adjustment by showing that indigenous practices can be compatible with modern influences in a way that secures the preservation of cultural legacies for future generations.

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