ATTITUDES TOWARD LOVE

AMONG THE NEWARS IN KATHMANDU

A Thesis submitted for the partial fulfillment of the Degree of
Master of Arts in Psychology

Submitted to
Central Department of Psychology
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Tribhuvan University
Kathmandu, Nepal

Submitted by
Sujen Man Maharjan
2013
LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This is to certify that Mr. Sujen Man Maharjan has completed the thesis entitled ‘ATTITUDES TOWARD LOVE AMONG THE NEWARS IN KATHMANDU’ with his own efforts and hard work under my guidance and supervision. I recommend this thesis for the approval.

Prof. Dr. Shishir Subba
Supervisor
Central Department of Psychology
Date: 2013.11.22
Letter of Approval

The thesis titled ‘ATTITUDES TOWARD LOVE AMONG THE NEWARS IN KATHMANDU’ submitted by Mr. Sujen Man Maharjan to Central Department of Psychology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences as a partial fulfillment of Master’s Degree in Psychology has been approved.

Expert committee:

Prof. Dr. Shanta Niraula  Prof. Dr. Shishir Subba  Prof. Dr. Murari P. Regmi
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Note:

Signed hard copies are available for reference at the library of Central Department of Psychology, Tribhuvan University.
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SYMBOL NO: 280064
ABSTRACT

Psychological studies show that the attitudes toward love are heavily influenced by the cultural factors though love is universally found in almost all cultures around the world. The purpose of the study was to examine the attitudes toward love among love marriage and arranged marriage participants from Newar communities. The qualitative research approach using the data of 16 semi-structured interviews including 8 women (4 love marriages and 4 arranged marriages) and 8 men (4 love marriages and 4 arranged marriages) and 6 key informant interviews. This study indicates that Newars believe love is important for marital harmony and psychological well-being. Though the trend of love marriages are increasing, participants thought arranged marriage is still the best practice in which both couples and families have mutual understanding and consent. They strongly expressed that the love that develops after marriage is more mature and long-lasting. Newars believe in fate including the areas of love and marriage though they also think one's karma (action/effort) is equally important. Privacy was highly emphasized in matters of expressing love and affection for the partner. Public display of affection was considered unacceptable. Sex was said to be important part of marital relationship which often helps to maintain the relationship. Sexuality however has been portrayed as sacred in art and religion while it is treated as profane in practice in Newar culture. Sexuality helps to increase the intimacy and helps to form secure attachment and commitment. Love has direct connection with mental health and psychological well-being. There is a limitation to the study of this kind which has limited sample coming from certain socio-economic background. It only represents their subjective attitudes on love in relation with the marriage. Finally, the study shows that the practice of marriage in which the individuals select their partners rather than sole family arrangement is likely to increase further among Newars.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Newars are the indigenous inhabitants of the Kathmandu valley with distinct identity, language and culture. Although the Newars are spread throughout the country in different regions, the majority of them are still concentrated in the Kathmandu valley, the capital of Nepal. Newars stand out distinctly with a high level of cultural achievement as represented by the urban civilization (Nepali, 1965). Newars speak Nepal Bhasa, a Tibeto-Burman language with rich ancient and modern literature going back to the fourteenth century (Shrestha, 1999). The complex institutional social networks (guthis and kinship) dominated by feasts, rituals and ceremonies around the year bind the Newars together in their community.

For Newars, love is a private emotion between two persons and to be seen expressing it is taken with great deal of shame and embarrassment in the society. Love gradually develops in arranged marriages. However, the openness and expressiveness of such affection is still limited between partners. Newars consider their mind, emotion, and self as sacred and moral (Parish, 1991). Interpersonal attraction and emotional bond between prospective husband and wife were not considered important part of the marital relationship until recently. Most of the marriages still today are arranged by families rather than solely one's personal choice and decision. However, arranged marriage following romantic affairs is becoming more common and accepted among Newars.

The dramatic socio-cultural changes taking place rapidly due to globalization and exposure to mass media is affecting lives of Nepalese including the area of marital relationships. As a result, this has led to great increase in the participation of individuals
in the selection of their own spouses in both urban and rural Nepal (Hoelter, Axinn, & Ghimire, 2004). People are now shifting more and more from purely arranged marriage to love marriage or love-then-arranged marriage (Ahearn, 2001). Newars have not remained exception to this development. Marriage practices and attitudes toward love are changing.

In this context, the present study attempts to explore the attitudes toward love among Newars. This research reports on an in-depth study of the attitudes of Newar participants and key informants from communities in Kathmandu. The research questions (see below in this chapter) are the basis of the enquiry on the notions of love among Newar participants.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

The current study employs phenomenological inquiry. Phenomenology aims to explore and clarify situations lived through by persons in their own descriptions. With this approach, rather than trying to bring down a phenomenon to a convenient number of identifiable variables and control the context in which the phenomenon is studied, researcher aims to remain as faithful as possible to the phenomenon and to the context in which it appears in the world (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2008). It uses a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher identifies the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as described by participants. The researcher attempts to interpret data from the perspective of the participants at the same time as knowing that it is not easy to give a “true” account of a perspective other than one’s own. Researchers using phenomenological approach are interested in showing how complex meanings are built out of simple units of direct
experience. This form of inquiry is an attempt to deal with inner experiences that are not discussed or revealed in everyday life. By applying this approach and gaining access to inside perspective, this study allows understanding of the attitudes towards love in a specific cultural context among Newar participants.

1.2 Newar Ethnopsychology¹

Ethnopsychology is the study of cultural concepts of self, mind–body divisions, emotions, human nature, motivation, and personality (White, 1992; Kohrt & Maharjan, 2009). In other terms, ethnopsychology is the cultural psychology of specific social group distinct from others (Shweder & Sullivan, 1993).

Among Newars, there is also a complex division of the self into mind, body, and spirit with intergenerational connections (Parish, 1994). For Newars, the nuga is the seat of morality, desire, emotion, and thinking and this is where divinity and god dwell. The bibek filters the processing of the nuga before behavior is manifested. Bibek is “an abstract entity encompassing the cognitive power to assure one acts responsibly” (pp. 197-198). Parish's descriptions illustrate the significance of brain-mind and heart-mind in relation to the ijjat (social self and social status). Lajya is the construct used to characterize an individual's ability to filter their behaviors and maintain their ijjat (p. 199); it is the result of proper bibek functioning. Lajya can be glossed as social anxiety, embarrassment, or shame (Shweder, 1999). Individuals with insufficient lajya do not tailor their behavior to the social situation and do not act within the proper caste norms. Individuals without lajya lose their ijjat resulting in loss of personal social status and the

¹ Based upon the works of Parish (1994) and Kohrt & Harper (2008).
social status of the family. Parish describes an individual with tarnished *ijjat* who states, "I am equal to dead." (p. 205). The feeling of *lajya* generally represents a manifestation of health in that it guides one to cautiously act in a socially and morally acceptable manner (Parish, 1994). *Lajya* is distinguished from regret wherein an individual feels badly after a moral violation. *Lajya* represents a risk for psychopathology in its absence. If an individual is specifically labeled by others as lacking *lajya* (shame) or is a member of a group seen lacking *lajya*, then she is seen at risk for psychopathology. The individual lacking *lajya* is comparable to the Nepali concept of a psychotic individual in that s/he will do anything disregarding social norms; s/he is *paagal* (mad)! In tier one, *lajya* is identified as “sweating, altered pulse, and blushing” (Parish, 1994, p. 199). It can also be manifested as a sense of coldness, a feeling of death (literally stated as “I am equal to dead”) when one anticipates that a moral infraction could result in social death. At the second tier of analysis, *lajya* is exclusively an interpersonal emotion. Parish’s informants describe how they would never feel *lajya* when alone. Individuals learn the opprobrium of *lajya* throughout childhood often through reprimands from relatives that the family honor will be lost if the child continues to behave without *lajya*.

### 1.3 Rationale for the Research Relevance

There is not any academic psychological study undertaken among Newars to explore this topic so far. In this context, this qualitative research attempts to study the attitudes toward love among Newars in Kathmandu. The data is based on findings from semi-structured interviews conducted with 16 participants including 8 women (4 love marriages and 4 arranged marriages) and 8 men (4 love marriages and 4 arranged marriages) and 6 key informant interviews. This qualitative study might also help to
build up the foundation for future studies in this topic using quantitative or mixed methods.

1.4 Objectives

- To examine the attitudes toward love among the Newars
- To explore the perceptions of love comparatively among love and arranged marriage participants
- To explore the participants' perspectives on interrelationships between love, relationships, and mental health

1.5 Research Questions

Based on the objectives of this study, the following research questions were formulated to guide the research work:

I. What is the attitude towards love among participants (Newars from Kathmandu)?
   I.1. How do the participants perceive romantic love and love after marriage?
   I.2. What is the importance of sexuality in relationships for participants?
   I.3. What beliefs do participants have regarding fate on matters of love and marriage?
   I.4. What are the reactions toward public display of affection?
   I.5. How is love connected to rationality, behavior, and mental health?
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Attitude

Attitude is a stable, long-lasting, learned predisposition to respond to certain things in a certain way (Allport, 1935). It has three major dimensions which are cognitive (belief), affective (feeling) and behavioral (intention). In other words, it is a psychological representation of various features of social, or physical world (Shiraev & Levy, 2012). Psychologists generally agree with a three dimensional structure of attitude and that it serve several universal functions. For example: Attitude help people to make sense of their world, serve an ego-defensive function, and assist individuals to evaluation of themselves. Finally, it serves the function of allowing people to express their values.

2.2 The Need for Belonging

Human beings are born with an innate need to be loved and love others that leads to fulfillment and well-being which the psychologists have called the need for belonging (Maslow, 1970). Unfulfilled need of belonging is linked to variety of adverse effects on health, adjustment, and well-being (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Deci & Ryan (1985) have termed the belonging need as “need for relatedness” in the self-determination theory which is a macro-theory of human motivation, personality development, and well-being. According to them, human beings are intrinsically motivated to fulfill need for relatedness, autonomy and competence. Bowlby's (1969) attachment theory also highlights the need to form and maintain relationships with significant others. Love is an emotion that leads to psychological well-being and happiness in flourishing relationships but the same emotion can also turn out to be dangerous and negative when it is
unrequited or become the source of mental distress when the relationships go ill (Fisher, 2004).

2.3 Romantic love

Romantic love is the interpersonal attraction between two persons which lead to powerful emotional state of longing for union with a desired partner. Reciprocated love (union with the other) is associated with pleasure, fulfillment and satisfaction while unrequited love or separation with emptiness, anxiety, or despair. Romantic love is assumed to have three major components of lust, attraction and attachment which keeps the relationship functional (Fisher, 2004).

Romantic love occurs when an individual falls in love with a person and comes to regard him or her as special, and even unique. The lover then intensely focuses his or her attention on this preferred individual, exaggerating the beloved's better traits or good qualities while overlooking or minimizing the flaws. Lovers experience extreme energy, arousal, sleeplessness, impulsivity, euphoria, and mood swings. They are goal-oriented and strongly motivated to win the beloved (Fisher, 2004). Lovers become emotionally dependent on the relationship, frequently experiencing great deal of distress and separation anxiety when apart. A striking characteristic of romantic love is "intrusive thinking." The lover thinks obsessively about the beloved one and he or she craves emotional union with his or her sweetheart bringing an enormous sense of security and relief when united. However, the intensity of romantic love and its effects tend to decline over time and individuals coming back to original set points of affect.

Psychologists discriminate love into different types according to their theories (Sternberg, 1986; Hatfield, 2002). Romantic love is considered most intense and often the
shortest in duration. Romantic love cannot survive long with the development of companionate love (loving friendship). Romantic love has two additional ingredients. One of them is the sexual intimacy, not present in the loving friendship and the other is attachment, the creation and raising of children in a long-term relationship (Ekman, 2004; Fisher, 2004). Romantic love is regarded as very important in marriage decisions compared to Eastern culture where more arranged marriages are more acceptable valuing the family and communal harmony rather the personal feelings of love (Levine, Sato, Hashimoto, & Verma, 1995). There are a number of perspectives on love from different disciplines such as evolutionary psychology, anthropology, behavioral sciences, economics, and so on.

Jankowiak & Fischer (1992), for example, argued that romantic love is a near-universal human characteristic. They searched for evidence of romantic love in a sampling of Murdock & White's (1969) Standard Cross-Cultural Sample (SCCS) representing 186 societies. They relied on five indicators to ascertain whether or not romantic love was present in a given tribal society: (1) accounts depicting personal anguish and longing; (2) the existence of love songs or folklore about such love; (3) elopement due to mutual affection; (4) native accounts affirming the existence of passionate love, and; (5) the ethnographer's affirmation that romantic love was present. They found clear evidence of passionate love in 147 of the 166 tribal cultures. They were able to document the occurrence of romantic love in 88.5 per cent of the sampled cultures which stood in direct contradiction to the popular idea that romantic love is essentially limited to or the product of Western culture.
Evolutionary psychologists view romantic love as a strategy for mate selection that varies both across gender and within gender, depending on cultural markers for success or attractiveness. According to this perspective, psychologists distinguish between emotions and motivations, which are brain systems oriented around planning and pursuit of a specific want or need (Fisher, 2004).

Lust, attraction, and attachment are considered to be three brain systems for love. Each of these primary brain systems evolved to play a different role in courtship, mating, reproduction, and parenting (Fisher, 1998, 2004). The sex drive (lust) evolved to motivate our ancestors to seek coitus with a range of appropriate partners. Attraction (romantic love) evolved to motivate individuals to select among potential mates, prefer a particular individual and focus courtship attention on this favored mating partner, thereby conserving courtship time and energy. Attachment evolved primarily to motivate individuals to sustain an affiliative bond with this reproductive partner at least long enough to complete parental duties. Moreover, these three brain systems interact in myriad ways to direct many behaviors, emotions, and motivations associated with human sexuality and reproduction.

Cross-cultural researchers and psychologists point out that culture can have a profound impact on people’s perceptions, experiences, and feelings about love, and about what is permissible and appropriate in their expression of romantic and passionate feelings (Hatfield & Rapson, 2002). The association between love and ‘irrational’ behavior in many cultures also raises questions about how love is associated to wellbeing and mental health. While loving and being loved is a sign of emotional wellbeing in
many cultures, extreme and uncontrolled passion associated with love is seen as a sign of impaired cognition and social irrationality as well as the cause of passion at its extreme. Dion & Dion (1996) have described differences in the interpretation and meaning of romantic love and intimacy across cultures. Culture also influences the characteristics that make up our representations of romantic love (Buss et al., 1990; Buss, 2003; Hatfield & Rapson, 1999).

Donatella Marazziti, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Pisa in Italy has studied the biochemistry of lovesickness. Marazziti has done studies exploring the similarities between love and obsessive-compulsive disorder. Marazziti and her colleagues (1999) did an experiment and compared the lovers' serotonin levels with those of a group of people suffering from Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and another group who were free from both passion and mental illness. The main finding of the study was that subjects who were in the early romantic phase of a love relationship were not different from OCD patients. She found out that levels of serotonin in both the obsessive’s blood and the lovers' blood were 40 percent lower than those in her normal subjects. The study suggested that love and obsessive-compulsive disorder could have a similar chemical profile and love and mental illness may be difficult to tell apart.

Psychologist Robert Sternberg proposed a triangular theory of love and conceptualized love in terms of three basic components: intimacy, passion, and commitment. Different combinations of these three components result in different types of love. For example, a combination of intimacy and commitment results in companionate love, while a combination of passion and intimacy leads to passionate love.
According to Sternberg, relationships built on two or more elements are more enduring than those based upon a single component. Sternberg uses the term *consummate love* to describe the complete form of love, representing an ideal relationship toward which people strive with good combination of intimacy, passion, and commitment. Sternberg suggests that this type of love is rare although it is the strongest and most desirable.

2.4 Newar people of the Kathmandu valley

Newar are the historical indigenous inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley in Nepal. According to Nepal’s 2011 census, there are 1,321,933 Newar in the country which makes it a nation’s fifth largest ethnic group, representing 5.0% of the population, out of 125 caste/ethnic groups (CBS, 2012). Although the Newars are spread throughout the country and beyond its boundaries in different parts of India, the majority of them are still concentrated in the Kathmandu valley, the capital of modern Nepal. Previously, only Kathmandu valley was known by the name ‘Nepal’ for many people outside the valley. The Newars speak Nepal bhasa, a Tibeto-Burman language with a rich ancient and modern literature going back to the fourteenth century. The bulk of the rich tradition of Newar art and architecture, ritual and culture, dates back to the Malla reign, from the 13th century till its downfall in 1769 (Shrestha, 1999). Newar as a whole are considered an ethnic minority group; however, there is a caste system within Newar sub-classifying them at different levels of the caste hierarchy (Hofer, 2004). In the traditional Newar caste hierarchy there were basically six types of caste: 1. Priests, 2. Nobles and merchants, 3. Agriculturalists, 4. Various ritual and artisan specialist caste, 5. Water-unacceptable butchers and death specialists, and 6. Untouchable sweepers (Gellner and Quigley, 1995).
The Newar have a strong sense of cultural identity representing themselves as a dominant cultural group of the Kathmandu valley. The Newars are the one of the groups in Nepal with a truly urban tradition and it is no coincidence that the famous temples and artwork of Nepal that are produced by Newar artisans. The sites with those magnificent artworks have been embraced as World Heritage Sites by United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO) since 1979.

From the religious point of view the majority of Newars follow Hinduism and Buddhism inseparably. There are also Muslim and Christian Newars in minority.

Among Newars, there is a complex division of the self into mind, body and other components (Parish, 1994). For Newars, the nuga is the seat of morality, desire, emotion, and thinking. Divinity and god dwell in the nuga. The bibek filters the processing of the

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<td>Sweepers (Dyahla; Np. Pode)</td>
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Table One: Main Newar caste blocs, with most common surnames (Table reproduced from Gellner et al., 2008, pp. 160).
nuga before behavior is manifest. Bibek is an abstract entity encompassing the cognitive power to assure that one acts responsibly.

2.5 Marriage in Nepal & Newar Culture

In the past, marriages were almost always arranged by the parents who did all the negotiation with the family of the future bride or groom before informing their child (Ahearn, 2001). It was not that romantic love or love marriages did not exist in the past, but it was viewed with a good deal of shame and embarrassment. Love had no positive effect to it; in fact, it brought only pain and trouble (Ahearn, 2003). This pain and trouble could mean that the lovers were banished by the family when the lovers openly expressed their personal desire for each other or when it was found out by accident and rejection of their marital relationship by the society as a whole when it occurs without family consent and outside social norms. To show and act according to one’s own emotions and desire without respecting the social norms and expectations was seen as a form of deviant behaviour and as a sign of rebellion against family values, esp. in a large and joint families. However, desire itself came to be seen as desirable as it is associated with being modern, developed and successful in life. Young people now want a companionate marriage with someone of their own choice (Ahearn, 2001).

In Newar culture, romantic love and intense emotional attachment is seen as a threat to the family order/structure and the organization of the traditional community as a whole. The immediate reaction to that is social criticism aimed at the lovers and their families by the society. Marriages are often arranged by the families through a go-between person called lami. The lami facilitates the communication between the two
families and if the would-be bride and bridegroom give the final consent, the marriage is fixed. The role of bride and bridegroom in the decision making process is often minimal and comes towards the end. Divorce, remarriage and marriage by elopement is taken easily and accepted by the society at large. However, mostly marriages are arranged based upon the consent of both families and individuals. The forced marriages are uncommon as the families are well-aware that such marriages do not work out and might finally end up in separation or divorce. Child marriages are no longer in practice at all. The primary reason for marriage in traditional collectivist cultures is, often to have children, who will then take part in expanding the collectivity which is also true in Nepal and Newar culture like in other collectivist societies (Levine et al., 1995).
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Method

Semi-structured interview was used as a primary data collection method. It allows setting a clear list of topics to be addressed, while being flexible in terms of the order in which the issues are considered. It involves a series of open-ended questions based on the topic areas the researcher wants to cover. The open-ended nature of the question defines the topic under investigation but provides opportunities for both interviewer and interviewee to discuss some topics in more detail. In a semi-structured interview, the interviewer also has the freedom to probe the interviewee to elaborate on the original response or to follow a line of inquiry introduced by the interviewee. In this study, a researcher used the semi-interview format (see Annex).

3.2 Sampling

Purposive sampling method was employed for data collection, whereby participants and key informants were selected according to the criteria of relevance to the research questions. All participants were Newars although their castes varied and all of them were married. The key informants had in-depth knowledge of Newar culture.

3.3 Sample

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with sixteen participants (eight women and eight men) and six key informants who were well-known experts belonging to Newar culture. Participants were recruited from communities at the centre of Kathmandu Valley through informal contacts and word of mouth. They were asked to participate in a study exploring ‘Perceptions of Romantic Love among Newars in
Participants ranged in age between 25 and 50 years. Interviews ranged in length from 45 minutes to around three hours with the majority of interviews lasting around one hour.

The key informants for this study included: Durga Lal Shrestha (Nepal Bhasa poet); Dr. Sumitra Manandhar Gurung (Social Worker); Prem Shanti Tuladhar (Chairperson, Central Dept. of Nepal Bhasa, Patan Multiple Campus); Malla K Sundar (Political Activist); Satya Mohan Joshi (Historian); Laxman Raj Bansi (Newar writer). Detailed information about the participants can be found in the record book included at the annex of this thesis.

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<td>Time Period of Relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Marriage (\text{Mean (Range)})</td>
<td>10.7 (1-27)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Love affair (\text{Mean (Range)})</td>
<td>3.5 (1-9)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLC</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors and above</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration of Interview</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Time (Mean)</td>
<td>19 hours 45 mins. (1 hour 15 mins.)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table Two: Description of the sample
3.4 Procedure

3.4.1 Recruiting participants

All male participants were met randomly without prior contact and recruited for study based upon their willingness to participate on the spot. The total of 10 male participants was interviewed and 8 of them have been included here in a final sample.

There was difficulty in recruiting female participants who were unfamiliar so, they were first met through word of mouth and social contacts. We then briefed them about the nature of the study and their participation. They were then recruited for study based upon their willingness to participate. The total of 18 female participants was interviewed and 8 of them have been included here in a final sample. All participants were interviewed for just one time. The interviews were done in Newari and Nepali languages. The male participants were interviewed by the principal researcher (male) whereas female participants were interviewed by the female research associates keeping in mind the issue of gender sensitivity.

3.4.2 Data analysis

The interviews were fully transcribed and carefully checked by the researcher along with the recording. All the transcriptions were treated as raw data. And then, content analysis method was used to analyze the data. This approach is exploratory “content-driven” in nature that uses codes and analytic categories. Codes are derived from the data and themes emerge from the coding and categories that are used for interpreting the results. Content analysis is considered the most useful in capturing the perspectives and meaning within a textual data set. It is also the most commonly used method of analysis in qualitative research.
3.5 Ethical Considerations

All participants gave verbal informed consent and the study was approved by the Central Department of Psychology at Tribhuvan University. The copy of letter of reference (see annex A.1) from the department was provided to all the participants and key informants. The verbal informed consent was taken from all participants to ensure that they participated willingly in the study. They were allowed to withdraw from the study if they wished and could choose not to answer the question(s) they did not wish to. Enough information was provided about the nature and objectives of the research project prior to their participation in the study. They volunteered their time for the study. The data (audio) was electronically recorded and notes were taken with permission. Two participants refused recording but allowed note-taking of the interview. All the data obtained during the research are kept anonymous and confidential.

3.6 Limitations of the Study

There are a number of limitations to the study of this kind which has limited sample coming from certain socio-economic background. Therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalized to all the Newars in the Kathmandu. It represents their attitudes, perceptions and opinions on love in relation with the marriage. On the other hand, the qualitative data could not be triangulated through quantitative measure, (because of the lack of culturally validated and reliable tool), which is one of the other important limitation of this study. Another important limitation is that the participants had to rely upon the memory to share their experiences of love which could have been changed over the years.
CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Results and findings presented in this chapter have been discussed under the following sub-headings:

4.1 Perceptions of love
4.2 Perceptions of the community on love
4.3 Expressions of love
4.4 Belief in fate
4.5 Love, marriage, and sexuality
4.6 Public display of affection
4.7 Love and well-being

4.1 Perceptions of Love

Participants were asked questions about their attitudes toward love and most of them felt it difficult to articulate the experienced emotion in words. They shared an opinion that love is completely personal experience and feeling which is hard to express in words. They also emphasized on the fact that there are different kinds of love beside romantic love.

I fell in love with her before marriage and was motivated to develop the relationship into marriage. Love is an essential part of our lives and has made our marriage successful. Yes. Love between husband and wife or man and woman...there is again different kinds of love. The love which a father has for a child or mother has for a child. There is love for one’s parents. There is a love between siblings. (LM-02, Male, 39)

Romantic love plays an important role in bringing two people (strangers before) together and providing ample opportunity to know each other better to the extent that
they can make a decision if they want to have a lifelong relationship or not. Love is the foundation for the good relationship with a partner/spouse.

Falling in love was seen as a natural phenomenon that happens in life at certain point of life. Newars described the circumstances in which people are likely to fall in love such as while working together, during the festivals, social parties, and so on. Sometimes, the certain qualities of a person also attract the other person such as talent in playing musical instruments, and possessing socially valued abilities/characteristics. However, to be found engaged in romantic affairs and expressing affection was seen as mischievous (hisimaru) and indecent behavior in public.

I think love is something that happens to everyone at some point in life like me. I don’t think there is anything wrong about falling in love and being in a relationship. As one comes of age, might it be boy or girl, it occurs naturally. Two people cannot live together if they do not have love for each other. There are some people who think it is wrong to express love for a spouse but how can a marriage be sustained if there is no love. So, I think the people who themselves have gone through the experience of love understands it well and take it as natural. Others think might that they are being naughty people (nyasaychapee). But there is indeed nothing wrong with it. (LM-05, Female, 33)

Key informant Prem Shanti Tuladhar recalled the days of her time during 1970s when there used to much social distance between men and women and they retained the sense of curiosity towards the other sex. The man and woman used to get the chance to know each other intimately only after the marriage.

In the past, the men went to see the women in the watertaps (hiti) when they would go to fetch water. During festivals, they checked the women in the windows. It has been 40 years now, they knew some English and they could say, “You see there is a beautiful woman in the window.” They saw
the women when they went to temples, water taps. In our times, they would come outside the Padma Kanya college (ladies only). There was not much socialization between two sexes. They had to wait for festivals…now there is co-education system in the colleges. So, there is no longer the curiosity that existed before, they naturally get to know each other. (LOVE-KII-03)

Similarly, Malla K Sundar, another key informant recalled how men and women used to attract the attention and invite one another in love.

To arouse the romantic feelings, women dressed up, did make up (aja ula, cina tina, tisa tina), and displaying various body parts like the pilako (lower leg), gwali (sole), etc. Men also wore tapali (caps) putting some hair out, putting the flower on the side. There are different ways of expressing romantic feelings, by writing love letters, singing the songs, flying the pigeons and kites and so on. To attract the girls, the boys would stay at terrace in name of flying pigeons and look at girls. During the festivals, they could interact and meet each other by engaging in religious activities like going to the temples, dhala danegu (fasting), going to Swoyambhu during gulas and so on. Men flirted with girls by throwing pebbles at them when they would go to fetch water. That was how the love interest were expressed. Those forms of expressing romantic love are non-existent now. (LOVE-KII-04)

The expressions of love are now changing with time. Old ways have been replaced with new ways seen and learnt from the mass media. Some participants viewed romantic love as merely attraction, immature and temporary phase of life, baisa ko unmmad.

Love is a natural law, it happens with the age. The love that happens at young age is the one that takes place among youth which is immature and momentary. They might think it is true love but it is just a phase, the period of excitement during youth, baisa ko unmad. It does not mean true love does not exist, true love is also there. But 90% love is momentary and just the attraction. (AM-04, Male, 50)
Participants emphasized upon different kinds of love in our lives besides romantic love like parents' love for their children, love between friends, relatives, and so on. However, they said the concept of romantic love is developing like fashion among the younger generations. People are getting into relationships for reasons other than true feelings and emotional bonding. Participants thought love is being taken lightly, not seriously as it used to be in the past. Some even said it is very difficult to find the true love these days.

Before it was not like that, if a man and woman fell in love and had their relationship ended tragically through separation or interference, it would be a question of their life or death. Many of them committed suicide. Some never married in their lives until they would have the person of their choice. They would remember and dedicate their life to the love. Now, it is so different. (Laughing). They think if one goes, another will come. They even have multiple love interests at a time. The intensity of attraction and devotion that used to be present in romantic affairs before must be very scarce now. (LOVE-KII-04)

Poet Durga Lal Shrestha expressed how difficult it is to understand and explain love. Love is mysterious, hard to describe in words but necessary in our lives.

The highest mountain of the world Mt. Everest has been measured, we know its height. There are oceans deeper than that height, some have not been yet measured…we don’t know how deep, deep they are…if there is anything deeper than them, it is love. (LOVE-KII-01)

4.2 Perceptions of the Community on Love

Participants were also asked about the perceptions of love at the community level. Majority of the participants agreed on the fact that community does not still have favorable attitude towards romantic love. Even today, it is a matter of concern to be caught in public display of affection and dating though the things are slowly changing.
Marking a paradigm shift, romantic relationship is now more accepted than ever before in the cultural setting. The attitudes toward public display of affection have been explored later in this chapter.

In our community, romantic love is not seen positively. Recently, people are starting to view it little more positively than before. I have travelled aboard, in other countries it is just natural. People don’t make it an issue. In Newar culture, it is not easily accepted. (LM-02, Male, 39)

Some participants said that community's perception towards romantic love might not look positive but it was seen as a pragmatic approach to control independent romantic relationships between young people by segregating them or other means in the society like limiting the movement and activities of females outside the community. To maintain social decorum, community takes it very cautiously and has often been harsh upon emotions and private choices to make sure that the marriage decision is made communally to ensure the protection of the relationship by the families from both sides and the society as a whole. However, it does not guarantee the inevitability of worst case scenarios like long-term separation or divorces. Even in the same caste marriages, divorce rates are on ascending trend due to various social factors and increasing autonomy among females backed up education and employment.

Talking about the community’s perspective, community approaches this phenomenon in a caste-based manner and allows the affair in which the caste is same. I think our society is very practical regarding this matter. You know we have different culture and rituals than other people. We have *dev puja*, we need a partner of same caste in marriage if she is to be allowed and accepted by our community. The marriage should be in line with the cultural practices and knowledge. If the bride comes from the different caste and culture, she will find it very difficult to adjust in our culture which might cause marital and family disputes leading to the
divorce ultimately in worst cases. (AM-02, Male, 40)

Most of the participants who had love marriages reported to have loose associations with traditional guthi systems or not at all. They exclaimed that their marriage process could have been much difficult had their families been in guthis and traditional social associations. Even after marriage, couples do not feel comfortable to openly express the romantic feelings for each other. Romance is seen as a private matter that should be kept to themselves.

Our society is very conservative. What is said is that in past even wife and husband did not go out together. I say that the younger generation is lucky because they are getting to go around with their partners so freely and even hugging in the bikes. In the past, the husband walked forward and the wife followed. There used to be distance between them. Sometimes they used to get lost not seeing each other. Now the time has changed. In my case, I did not know anything about romance when I was young. But when love develops in marriage after many years of relationship together, it becomes so romantic. (AM-05, female, 32)

However, as the rate of love marriages are on ascending trend, it would be interesting to explore if the attitudes are really changing or on what terms, they are being tolerant of such practices which are to be considered socially deviant which brought the harsh and adverse consequences in the society. Interviewing the people from the community itself could shed more light on it and further research in the future can be recommended.

4.3 Expressions of love

Media bombards the images of love affairs and expressions of love. The study tried to explore the manners in which participants express their love and affection. Participants emphasized upon the practical and social considerations of everyday life
which they thought important. Participants said there is no need to express love explicitly. Respecting each other, taking care, communicating, and helping one another indicates presence of love between two partners involved.

It is the understanding between us that matters, which I call love. To show our love, we don’t need to kiss each other. In my experience, the most important thing is mutual understanding which harmonizes the relationship. (LM-07, female, 38)

One of the best ways of expressing love is through the helping behavior towards the partner. I help her by buying vegetables, bringing milk to home from market in morning. I also help her fetch water. When the responsibilities are divided in a just manner, she becomes very happy and does not feel burdened. Similarly, it is also very important to have dinner together, this makes her feel loved. (AM-01, male, 40)

Some love marriage participants talked about the language of eye, the special way of looking at one’s partner (*nazar*).

She just loved when I looked in her eyes. We felt special and were destined for each other. I never messaged or called her on phone. It used to be like this, we were in the group of four friends, two of us were male and two of them were female. We used to have simple conversations but mutual gazing used to make it very exciting. I used to visit her home and we just spent most of the time looking at each other. (LM-01, Male, 28)

Researchers have found that mutual eye gazing (but not gazing on hands) produced rapid increases in feelings of both liking and loving in total strangers in the experimental setting (Keller et al., 1989). Barbara Fredrickson's research on love has shown that the micro-moments of love that people feel when they truly connect with each other can be positive source for nourishment and growth in a relationship (Fredickson, 2013).
Communication process was reported to be very important in expressing love and maintaining good relationship with the partner. Being open about one’s opinion and sharing it with a partner was considered significant to maintain harmonious marital relationship.

Communication is the most important part. When my husband shares all his thoughts and feelings then, I feel loved and trusted. There is no use keeping dissatisfactions in mind. Rifting in relationship comes when we hide our emotions and don’t express it. So, sharing thoughts and feelings is the important part and best way to express love. (LM-06, Female, 33)

Some participants described sex as an over-rated way of expressing love towards one’s partner. Sex can be important part of love but sex in itself is not the love. Sex is physiological need for human beings which fulfills the psychological need for belonging and intimacy when engaged in mutual consent and pleasure. Sex can have an impact on body, mind and relationship.

When we think about expressing love, most of us usually have a thought of sexual intercourse. We think about expressing love sexually, mostly that is the understanding among male. But expressing love is not always sexual in nature, there does not have to be sexual intercourse all the time. One of the important ways of expressing love for a partner in day-to-day life is by treating each other nicely, taking care of each other and helping in all circumstances. (AM-02, Male, 38)

Interestingly, in the above passage, the male participant shares his observation of over-emphasis on physical contact for expressing love but he thinks that it is just a part of it, there is a lot of other ways of expressing one’s affection for a spouse.

A female participant who had love marriage tells that the ways of expressing love adopted from movies do not work in real life. The language and manners of expressing
love in movies were reported to be superficial. It might have been completely different before when they were in relationship and after getting married. The stage of the relationship has a strong influence on it.

Hahaha (laughing). How to say it? We express our love by quarrelling. It depends upon the mood, if we talk in a fresh mood and have a smooth talk, it becomes alright, everything is easy. There is no use of filmy styles. Like hugging, kissing. If I give a gift to my husband, he will just look at it. He won’t even take it on his hand. He says keep it over there. Hahaha (laughing). He never says thank you. They are not important. Please, remember this. You will realize it after you get married. Women have those feelings and expectations from their men but men do not have such mentality. (LM-08, female, 32)

The female participant was trying to express her love towards her husband by giving him a gift which can be considered romantic and loving but her husband is unresponsive but she accepts it as his nature and says there is a level of mutual understanding putting more emphasis on covert aspect of individual nature. An external observer might see her husband is detached, ignoring, non-accepting, not appreciating and ask how could she justify such rude and insulting behavior as normal and acceptable for her.

Contrary to the above statement, there are also some evidences that people are getting modernized and expressing love in a different way from one's culture.

He knows how to make me happy. In my birthday, he had brought a cake and ornament one day earlier. He had planned it without my knowledge to surprise me. He had informed the family but not me. It was such a big surprise. He woke up me at 12 and wished me, ‘Happy birthday kali’ and kissed me. I did not know whether I was dreaming or it was real. He wished me and we had the cake. He gave the necklace as a present. Then, I asked him whether it is real one or the fake because real ones are so
expensive. (Laughing). I was like a kid. (LM-06, female, 25)

Participants who had love marriages were more likely to share about expressing love whereas arranged marriage participants were found to be shy and implicit in their approach of expressing love.

In our case, he does not express love. We do not talk about love. It happens in the love marriages. We are not verbal about our feelings. I don’t know if it happens like that in arranged marriages. Others usually express it. People who get married after falling in love, they express it. They try to fulfill each other’s wishes. They go out together. They give gifts. With us, it is there inside our hearts but we do not express it outside. (AM-07, female, 31)

Above, the participant says that as she had an arranged marriage, they do not express love or act romantic but claims to have much love for each other. Bierhoff (1991) claimed that the ideas about love that are present in our culture affect how we give meaning to our own experience. As discussed in Newar Ethnopsychology framework in the introduction earlier, lajya (the feeling of shame) might have influenced the way participants expressed themselves and was a cause of inhibition of feelings they have but are unable to express openly for fear of shame and social judgement (Parish, 1994).

4.4 Belief in fate
‘Lekhe ko painechha, dekhe ko painedaina’, (We get what is written in our fate, not what we see in our lives). Popular Nepali proverb about fate.

I believe in fate. It happened because of the fate. Nothing happens without fate and luck in our lives. It would not have been possible to love and then get married with her had it not been written in my fate. I cannot imagine it without fate. You must have heard a saying “dekheko paudaina, lekheko paeinchha” (we get what is written in our fate, not what we see in our lives). I believe in it. (LM-02, Male, 39)
Many participants recalled above mentioned popular saying among Nepalese who believe in fate when asked about their belief in fate in relation to love and marriage. Most of the participants expressed belief in fate in general. Sometimes, they expressed mixed reaction regarding fate and said that karma is also important. Fate might play some role but effort is equally significant.

It must be in fate but just fate is not enough, karma/action is also necessary to make it a reality. For e.g.: She was in my fate but had I not dared to express my feelings for her, she would not have been mine. I think 25% is fate and the rest 75% depends upon our action. (LM-04, Male, 38)

Participants mostly connected the belief in fate with their religiosity. The more they felt religious the more likely they would also affirm their belief in fate.

People believe in fate because they believe in god. Fate is linked with faith in gods. I think it is because of our karma what happens in our life. I think the only fate that is written is the death, that is the only thing which is certain and nothing else. (LM-04, Male, 38)

Most of the participants had expressed belief in fate and the fatalistic outcomes related to their love relationships and marriages. Choosing one person over others among millions is a matter of fate they said. Even regarding love and marriage, participants excitedly asserted their faith in pre-written destiny.

It is very much about fate. It is said “lekhe ko painchha, dekheko paindaina” (we get what has been pre-written, not what we have seen). I believe it is because of my destiny that I have got him as a husband. Otherwise, there were so many guys who liked me, and tried to win my heart. They even came up with a marriage proposal for me but I rejected all of them because it did not feel right. Why should have a guy from Pokhara call me on phone and then, loved me resulting in our marriage. It is about bhagya (fate). (LM-06, Female, 25)
However, some participants totally disagreed upon existence of fate and its role in the way life events unfold. They completely attributed it to one's own actions rather than upon pre-written destiny.

They talk about fate. They say I married a lucky girl, after marriage I got a job, this and that. What actually happens is, after marriage, the person have to take the responsibility to look after themselves and the family. It is humiliating for a person to ask for money with parents even after marriage. Now it is his responsibility to look after his wife. So there is a feeling of a need for a job now because there is a responsibility, and as he goes on looking for it, he gets it! It is a coincidence. (AM-04, Male, 50)

According to Satya Mohan Joshi, key informant, “Ko ju wo shema ko hru pa lagu”. It is not actually fate which makes things happen. It is more about the matter of coincidences. “Juwa oie chhonî bela thayka milejugu jaka kha”. (It is more the matter of co-incidence rather than pre-design).

Malla K Sundar, another key informant explained how belief in fate helps people to take things more conveniently. He said people unknowingly compromise in life that helps them to readjust themselves.

That’s why (because of belief in fate) they compromise. Even if the husband is not good or wrinkled, she accepts him. She says it was written in my fate. The belief in fate is actually compromise. It is a means of self-assurance. It makes it easier to take the things. There is no more resentment towards that person, object or event. It is one of the ways of helping people to adapt. (LOVE-KII-04)

Laxman Raj Bansi, the key informant warned about the trap of believing in fate. He thought fatalism could imprison in the belief that they are not in control of their lives which ends their agency and taking of the responsibility.

Fatalism is a very dangerous thing. When the science had not developed, human were fatalistic. One of the beliefs people had was their fates of
present lives is pre-determined and written based upon their past lives. That is one of the philosophies. When this philosophy emerged, people believed in fate and thought their lives and future was beyond their control. It ended their initiatives. Then how could they advance. On top of it, politically it is even more dangerous. We are poor. Why? We did not have fate they say. That means we cannot identify the one who is suppressing us. In such situation, one becomes one’s own enemy. Then why would people make an attempt.

I don’t believe in it at all. But still because this belief in fate has existed for a very long time across many generations, sometimes we get confused and wonder if it is there. It feels as if fate exists. Again psychologically, it is a big relief. Otherwise, he rebels or feels pain. But when he thinks my fate is like this. It provides the psychological consolation. That consolation is again very costly. There is a sense of consolation but it acts as a massive barrier to his progress and his perception. It provides psychological relief. But these days we find people on the crossroads of traditionalism of fate and modernity for justice. For eg: if he gets unequal share of property, he files the case against his brothers. Why did he not think that was all in his fate and accept it? (LOVE-KII-06)

One participant who previously never believed in fate told how her attitude changed upon a chance meeting with an astrologer.

I have heard everything is already ready. I met a lady astrologer from Scotland who did not know anything about me. She just asked me my time and date of birth. She told me exactly about my past events. We were twin sisters, she passed away at the age of 4. She did not tell it directly, she said family had a big loss when I was 4. It was her. She said many things accurately. She wore only white clothes. She had told me that I would have to compromise a lot in my life.

I believed after I met her. Otherwise, people who are open-minded, they think they themselves can make things happen. Instead of thinking oneself as passive and just accepting things, they like to think they are actively engaged. They think fate is what we make ourselves. There is an age for that, we don’t believe in such things. Even after meeting her i thought ok she told me about the past but what about the future? I think it also depends upon the age. The more we mature and we age, we consider the
importance of fate in life. We think fate is also necessary in our lives. At that time, she had predicted one thing about my future that I would have a love marriage. She had said it would happen with the family’s consent. I was fond of thinking about elopement and getting married. I felt it would be so exciting. I did not like the musical troupes and being decorated as bride. I felt it like being a doll. Doing make up and all that. I think it is because of fate, my marriage. My sisters were so eager to make my marriage ceremony grand one but it did not happen. (LM-08, female, 32)

Participants tended to think of incidents as pre-written or expressed belief in fate also when things happened without conscious effort or wishing those things to happen, surprises and unexpected events in life.

I believe 100% in fate. Because I got married, though I was not interested at all. I had to leave school even if I did not want to. I got the job in school, which I was not interested in. I landed here in the FM station which I had never thought so, I believe in fate for all these happenings. (LM-08, female, 32)

Above, the participant thinks it was all because of fate whatever happened in her life so far. She has been easy thinking it was pre-written so, she could not change it by will.

There have been no problems and challenges till now. So I believe in fate for all this. There should have been at least few problems but we have faced none so, I think this is because of the fate and luck. In the beginning, I was afraid to tell my mother about my marriage but after I told my mother, it was all easily done. There are many men and women in the world but it is matter of luck to meet and love one another. (LM-01, male, 28)

Above, the participant thinks he is fortunate for not having to face any big challenges in his life until now because of his fate.
They say *bhagya ko khel* (the game of destiny). They think it is already written in their fate so, they have to take it. I don’t think what is written is destined to happen. If one can work hard, anything can happen. One should work hard, should not go on the wrong path. If one drinks and is indulged in bad habits, he will only meet similar friends. He will not meet good friends who will suggest him and show the right direction. If we are on the right path, we will definitely meet the right people. One is responsible for what happens in our lives. (LM-03, male, 37)

This participant expresses his view that it is merely coincidences what we call the game of destiny. He emphasizes on going on right path with right people at right time for good life.

### 4.5 Love, Marriage, and Sexuality

Love is very necessary in our lives. Love must be there to have a good relationship with wife. We become successful and happy in whatever we do only if there is love in our lives. There must be love in the family. The conflicts arise. If there is love, there is a good environment in the house. Otherwise, many problems and troubles come up. (AM-01, Male, 40)

Participants said that it would be better if the would-be spouses know each other and have affectionate feelings toward each other before marriage but falling in love or being in a romantic relationship was not considered very important. Participants said it is difficult to accept somebody unknown as a life partner. One of the participants said she did not engage sexually with her husband for the first six months because she needed time to develop a relationship. Her husband respected her feelings and gained her trust gradually.

Many participants shared the view that the intensity of attraction and devotion in romantic affairs as compared with the past cannot be found now. People are taking love
lightly and with the advancement of technology, it has become easier for younger generation to find the new potential partners easily.

Now, the romantic affairs have become more advanced and very technical. In the past, it was more human, only face to face. Now, the interaction is more through technology. They communicate via email and sms. The interaction between men and women has become very normal. It has become so easy. In the past, even when their eyes met, they would get so much excited. But now even if they are together in the hotel and doing everything, there is no such excitement. Now the romantic affair ends in sexual affair but before romantic affair was about mate selection and choosing a lifelong partner. (LOVE-KII-04)

Participants said love played an important role in maintaining their marital relationship. Female participants asserted that love in marriage is very crucial especially for the women because they leave behind their natal home and family to be with somebody unfamiliar she has married and his family. Love in arranged marriage develop gradually and was reported to be more mature and secure. Having children put the couples in need to co-operate and support one another which further strengthens their relationship. Participants experienced the increase in love for the spouse more after having the children, attachments are reported to be more secured due to the children.

Love is even more important after marriage. There is nothing/nobody greater than wife for husband, and husband for wife. When my partner is missing, I feel as if I have lost one of my hands and cannot work well. After marriage, the love deepens. Love deepens in small matters after marriage. I have left behind my parents and family to live with him. We take care of each other. (LM-07, Female, 25)

Inadequacy of love in marriage could lead to disruption in existing relationship and seeking of extramarital relationships outside. According to Baumeister & Leary
(1995), people seek to substitute the non-effective relationships for fulfilling the need for belonging.

Love is as important as it is before marriage. We have seen that some women have the extramarital affairs in absence of their husbands. Why did it happen? Is not it because of the lack of love in their lives? Love is more important than sex. When we don’t have anybody to talk about our joys and sorrows then, we are missing love in our lives. The emotional intimacy is very essential. (LM-03, Male, 39)

The love that develops after marriage was seen to be more mature and lasting. It was also socially approved by family and society.

Love after marriage is good. If it is an arranged marriage, there is less chance for break up. Love is fleeting, it is not like what they see in the films. They have to take it lifelong. It is easier when you are familiar with culture and environment in which you get married, it can go lifelong. When it is very different, it might be difficult to give up what they know and accept completely new things. When people from two different poles come together, there is less chance of staying together. It is a social binding that keep them together and when it is not there, the marriages break up. Even here if there was no social binding, many marriages would end. (LOVE-KII-03)

It is interesting to note that the practice of elopement is not being practiced so much as before as the love marriages are being accepted in the society. Known as paena wanegu, biske yankigu in Nepal Bhasa (the act of elopement), less couples now elope as they can get married with family consent. There are many costs of elopement, first and foremost, it disgraces the concerned families (negative impact upon their social status-ijjat) and on the other hand, there is less social support for such marriages. In some cases, the couple lives isolated from family and society after the marriage for rest of their lives. They lose their social status (ijjat) and are cut off from possible support. Another reason
why it is now practiced less and less is that the intensity of romantic feelings are pretty much stabilized over time as the people have more time for interaction and planning for the future together.

It used to be love at first sight in the past. But now, it is after long time they have known each other, they have experienced a lot together that they decide whether they want to get married or not. In our times, we often used to hear that this person’s son took away that person’s daughter, they eloped (Ka wude yana enkala). Now, the practice of elopement is disappearing. Before, they would be forced to elope because they would not get chance to see and meet one another. A girl from here would be taken and hidden in another city like Dharan and Pokhara. After many days, they would return and upon doing some rituals their marriage would be formally accepted. Now, there is a lot of chance to meet and interact. There is no need of taking that risk. That’s why that tradition is no longer in practice.

Now, even the parents are aware that their children should be married to ones they love and have chosen. It might be difficult if the castes do not match. Otherwise, in case of educated people, it is no longer a problem. Love marriage is accepted now. They would have to elope for the love marriage before if the castes are not same. Woman would go to fetch the water, the man would be waiting for her there and they would run away. And then the news spread- this person’s daughter ran away with that person. (LOVE-KII-04)

Sex is not seen positively in Newar culture though it is found to be presented differently in art and religion. There are sacred temples in Kathmandu valley where erotic cravings can be found and in the traditional Newari art called Paubha, nudism is well accepted and is associated with divinity (Majupuria & Majupuria, 2009).

Malla K Sundar tells in detail regarding the contradictions found in Newar culture in relation to sexuality. It reveals that sex is portrayed as sacred but treated as profane in practice.
I think since ancient times, Newars have been romantic people. If you see the art of Newars (Paubha), there are symbolic expressions of such feelings. They are the most romantic. Like the Roman art, our art is also very romantic. Nudism is also there. In Paubha (traditional Newari art practice), they paint the Tara whom they call goddess but there is a nude woman. They (god and goddess) can also be seen engaging in the blissful sexual union. In other cultures, such things would have been most prohibited. For Newars, it is easily acceptable. We can keep it anywhere we like in our house. There is no feeling of discomfort even if there are mother and sisters. That is also romanticism. Talking more about romanticism, you can see the wood carvings in the temples where you can see the erotic images. There are displays of sexual activities. What could be more romantic than that? Talking about romanticism, if you listen to old Newari songs (lok mae), they are the most romantic. If you listen to dapa bhajans, they call it Krishna lila where Krishna is flirting with radha or gopinis, we don’t understand them now and consider them very vulgar. Such songs are there to express the bhakti feeling (devotion) to gods. These are the examples and symbols of romantic love. There are nakha-chakha…gathemuga (one of the Newari festivals), that is also explicitly sexual. Symbols of sexual organs are kept at display publicly at crossroads.

However, in practice, sexuality is taboo. Publicly, it is very much forbidden, to talk about it, to act inappropriately. Among the Newar social ethics, this one is the strongest and the strictest. Sexuality is one of the main issues in our ethics. That’s why polygamy is not accepted in our society. Polygamy is not acceptable. Virginity is also highly regarded, it is seen as a symbol of purity. Male virginity…how to keep it, how to justify it. Female virginity is very important, it is ranked highly in social ethics. If it is not there, she is over. She is syanma, khataam, (characterless). She is regarded as a prostitute. So, sex…sexual behavior is highly constrained by social ethics in our society. That is the reason we cannot accept in our normal everyday discourse (dialogue). To talk about it is the violation of the norms. If we go to Europe…no, we don’t have to go so far, even in Nepal in some Janjati ethnic groups like magar, thakali, polygamy is accepted. One man has many wives. Even if a woman has been married with somebody else, she can remarry. Virginity is not a big deal for them. It does not come under their ethics. It is also like that in Europe. (LOVE-KII-04)
Some participants were completely unaware about basic facts related to sexuality. They do not have sufficient information related to need of satisfying sexual relationship with a partner.

I did not know anything about sex even after I got married. For many days it was just like that, nothing happened at all. I studied science. But I had a concept that a frog gives birth to another frog pressing its stomach. I was very afraid to be with my husband because I felt scared that I would get pregnant by being around him as I did not know anything about sex. It was because we are not given the sex education (in our society). We don’t talk about such matters. They started telling me about it later on afterwards. I realised everyone have sex, I felt it was natural. (AM-05, Female, 32)

Sexual relationships and satisfaction with the partner are seen as a crucial factor in maintaining good marital relationship and forming deep attachment and increasing intimacy between the partners.

The love deepens more after the sexual relationship is established. I loved him more than before the marriage. He also used to say the same thing. After the sexual relationship, love and bonding becomes deeper. That is very right. I also felt the same. I don’t know what the reason is for that but it happens. I love him so much after having sex with him, I care so much about him. (LM-06, Female, 25)

However, as the relationship matures and more time is spent with the partner, sexual relationship becomes less important and companionship is taken as more significant. On the diminishing nature of the sexual desire and activities, a participant said:

I think sexual pleasure is very important for us. You know one of the important leading causes of divorce is the lack of sexual satisfaction from one’s partner. In the early days of marriage, sexual intercourse is very frequent. It happens 2 or 3 times per night. Slowly, it goes on decreasing with time and age. Then, it happens once in a week or two weeks' time.
The interest in sex goes on decreasing. It is like when you order a chowmein in a restaurant, the first time you eat it, it is most delicious, the second time you have, it is still delicious and ok but the more you eat it, you get used to the taste, satisfied with it and ultimately lose interest/liking. There is a point of satiation; it is also same with sex. The more you have it and get enough of it, you will lose interest in it. It becomes less important. (AM-01, Male, 40)

Sexual behaviour is highly controlled and not accepted prior to the marriage. Premarital sex was viewed with a great deal of shame and embarrassment. Virginity was compared with Nilaa (fresh water) required for offering while worshipping god and other rituals.

One of the reasons why our society has put restrictions [on romantic love] is the fear of the sexual involvement of the young people. She said her daughter can hug and touch the boys but should remain like nilaa (fresh water), which means she should not have sex with anybody because that would make her marriage life difficult later on. If she has sexual relationship with anyone before, she will be in trouble. (AM-05, Female, 32)

Sumitra Manandhar Gurung, one of the key informants recalls her days of the youth and compares it with her own daughter's now.

In the past, things were so difficult. I was not allowed to go in a picnic. I had to argue with my father so much. When there is a resistance, people rebel against it. Now there are dramatic changes, we know young people are falling in love and even sleeping together outside our knowledge. It does not change the truth even if they act innocent in front of us. Times have changed. Sometimes my daughter challenges me. She asks why she cannot stay outside at night if she can go out in the noon and asks what guarantees she won't do in day that she would do at night. She questions me,`` what do you think that I cannot do at daytime that I would do at night time?`` (LOVE-KII-02)
Even if it is frowned upon by the society, it is a fact that pre-marital sex is increasing among the younger generation. It has become like a sort of fashion these days. One participant went so far as to declaring that it will be difficult to find the virgin partner for marriage in the future.

My young brothers have got so advanced these days. They have reached the third step already. They come and ask for money with me. I ask them why. They say I have got to go out this girl. They say, brother I have reached the last step now, I am getting bored of her so, I am looking for another girl. First step means touching on her body, second step means kissing and hugging and the third step is getting physical (having sex). So, I think in next generation, virgin partners cannot be found for marriage. In this matter, I was very shojo (innocent). (LM-01, Male, 28)

In Newar society, men are allowed to express their sexual desires and invite the partner to satisfy their needs. However, women cannot freely express their sexual needs and ask their partners for sexual fulfillment. It can have an adverse impact upon their sexual lives.

As men freely express their sexual feelings, women cannot do that. Even if they are married, they do not express. It is only after men initiate, the women take part. Even if she has sexual desires, she cannot express them. They suppress them. Even if they say men and women are equal outside, there is still inequality in that regard. There are social constraints. I have seen that if the men don’t take initiatives, the women remain silent and unfulfilled. (KII-03)

This could be interesting to relate here because it is about romantic love, one learned person said that I wish my wife to be very beautiful when she appears in public, but when she comes to my bed I wish her to be like the prostitute. Men wish like that in the sexual affair. It is very interesting that he wants her to be as beautiful as an angel in front of others and when he is in bed with her, he wants her to be like a whore. You can imagine what kind of satisfaction he is looking for in public and in private. It happens like that in sexual affair. (AM-05, female, 32)
Men are in control of women’s sexuality. They set the standards how they should look in public and how she’s supposed to provide satisfaction in private. It raises the question on female’s agency and their own sexual satisfaction in the relationship.

Female are submissive and take part only if men take the initiative. There is a psychology of fear working among the women, they fear the blame that they are full of uncontrollable desires and the negative way their husbands might see them. Female participants said that men are very much interested in sex and often demanding. Many women also felt the pressure to fulfill their husbands' sexual desires due to the fear that they might go looking for the satisfaction outside the marriage.

Yes, men are like that. It is not just him, I have seen other men as well. My husband used to say women need it twice as much as men do but you are so different. I went home tired so maybe that was the reason. Then again we have to do all the works in the house, we get so tired at the end of the day. I did not have interest because I used to be tired. Sometimes he said to me why you say you feel tired, I help you so much with the work. He used to cajole me. Later I realised one of the motives behind his help was to have sex with me. At first, i thought he loved me very much that’s why he is helping me but it was to take the favours. Anyway, that is also love. But he never went out to satisfy his desires. He used to say frankly if he wished to go out and have fun, he could but he did not. There are so many facilities.

After having a baby, I stayed here for a month and then, I stayed at my natal home for two months. I have seen it with my own eyes, my friend’s husbands when their wives have the babies and are away from home, they go out with other girls and have fun. They fall in love and have sex. Even he says his friends go to massage parlour. He did not go, instead he used to keep on calling me often. (LM-06, female, 25)
The female perspective here sheds the light on sexual desire of men and their coercion or cajoling to fulfill their desires but women seem to have a lot of other responsibilities to take time to engage in sexual experience freely and with ease.

Key informant Malla K Sundar says that sexual satisfaction plays an important role in developing love between partners in arranged marriages. Pleasant sexual experiences between couples help to build relationship and maintain love.

In arranged marriages, sexuality comes first. Sexual attraction comes and it gradually develops the love. So, we often hear that the more time it has passed, the more mature love becomes. Psychologically, that is a fact. As love develops gradually, the more they get older the love deepens even more. It may not happen like that in a formulaic manner in all the cases. It depends. In love marriages, there is already physical attraction. There is also possibility of pre-marital sex, which happens in most cases. The lust factor. It should reach to the peak and change into affection but when it is already over at the very beginning, there is less chance for affection after that. Having said that, it does not always happen like that. It depends upon the individual. If the person’s main motive is merely fulfillment of sexual desires, then the relationship cannot develop further. It is over. But if that is one of the parts of the whole motivation, besides sexual needs there is also a psychological need for companionship which can be fulfilled only by love. Sexual desire is momentary, it is fleeting. Companionship is for lifetime (LOVE-KII-04).

Prem Shanti Tuladhar adds how sexual relationship can protect the marriage from marital disputes and sees it as a remedy for the conflicts that occur between them. Besides, sexual intimacy, children and family bonding also act as protective elements in maintaining the relationship. The key informant emphasizes on ‘compromise’ to keep the relationship intact.

Sex is very important. Even the couple who fight with one another, they sleep together and they forget about their fights. When their sexual
relationship is not good, then, their relationships also suffer. One reason for compromise and what keeps the relationship intact is the sex. That is the need so, for that reason they are ready to tolerate. Husband forgives wife’s mistakes and wife forgives men’s mistakes. They sleep together, they forgive and forget...when their sexual relations is not ok, the distance between two of them increases. So, sex is important in a husband and wife relationship. Children are equally important. In many circumstances, they have to compromise and get along for the sake of children. I have seen many cases in which the couple do not have good terms but are staying together for the sake of children. They think the children's future will be adversely affected if they separate or marry somebody else. And, some keep the relationship intact unwillingly to save parents’ reputation. The tie between husband and wife is sex. Sex helps to maintain love. Second, children also help and third is the family bonding. She might think if I go away angrily mother might be hurt. So, she tolerates. Then the other day, she forgets it little by little. Time is a great healer. (LOVE-KII-03).

Most of the participants in the study thought that the arranged marriage is still the right way to establish the marital relationship with the consent of family. Even the love marriage participants did not think it the wrong way but nevertheless, they did expressed preference to love marriage.

Arranged marriages fare better because there is a lot of social support for them. If a man has economic problems, he can borrow some money from his relatives and solve the problems. It is not like that in case of love marriages. (AM-02, Male, 38)

Laxman Raj Bansi says the society and parents now have to follow the wishes of the actors (man and woman to be married). As a result, divorce rates are increasing. Paarpachukegu (getting separated with social approval) was almost nil before. It was easy process. The women could decide to leave the husband by returning jhiga gway (ten beetle nuts) in jyapu, syami, and uray societies. There was that provision and the women had right but there were no divorces even if they had the rights. But now, people are
marrying in court and again going back there to get the divorce he said. How is love going on? It is on the reverse gear now. Many factors interplay in the case of the divorce. Children strengthen marital bonds, thereby reducing the probability of divorce.

Laxman Raj Bansi further illustrates the case he came across and helped the couple from getting divorced due to women's parents’ dissatisfaction with the son-in-law.

While I was working in Nagarpalaki (metropolitan city office), if the couple wanted to get the divorce they first had to get the recommendation letter from there. Without it, the divorce process did not move ahead. Let me share about one case. One case was filed, it was by the Jyapus from Kalimati. I talked with man separately. Why do you want divorce? He said, “I don’t like her.” “What is the reason behind this?”, I asked. He said, “She does not listen to me.” I kept on cross-questioning and ultimately, he told me after few days of marriage, she did not come back. I was surprised. “Why? Did you beat her? No. Did you have fights?” “No.” “then what happened?” “I have sent so many times to take her but she did not come.” “Ok.” After that, I called the woman. I talked separately with her too. I went on questioning her in the similar manner. What she said was nobody came to take her back. “But your husband said the other thing.” You say, ‘No’. The basis of the conflict here between you is whether she was called back or not. I called him. He said I sent so and so to take her. Later we found out, what was happening was the woman’s parents did not like the jija bhaju (son-in-law). He had sent the persons but the parents did not tell her. I found that the situation of communication gap had been created. Then I asked her, “Would you go back if he sends to take you?” She said “yes.” I asked him, “Will you send to take her back again.” “Ok, if she comes back.” After that, I sent them in a taxi to man’s house. That is also pressure. This is negative pressure to divorce without the knowledge of daughter. It also happens like that when the parents don’t like the person. (LOVE-KII-06)
4.6 Public Display of affection

“Hagne lai bhanda dekhnay lai lajj”. – Popular Nepali Proverb (It is shameful for a person to witness the act of shitting than for the one doing it.)

Privacy was highly emphasized in matters of expressing love and affection for the partner. They said only animals are supposed to do whatever they like openly, people are civilized.

Public display of affection is not good in any perspective. We can see the young people around in the temples embracing and kissing which cannot be considered good in any way. They do whatever they like, such behaviour should be prohibited in a civilized society. It does not mean they cannot behave like that but what is the need of doing it so publicly, at the temples. There should be some secrecy; people should have some feelings of shame, the feeling of lok-laaj. It is hampering the freedom of others, they should be careful while using their own freedom. When people are displaying their affection in public, sometimes mother and daughter or father and daughter will be passing by which might cause them embarrassment when they see them embracing, kissing and whatever. Government should bring rules and regulations in such matter. Such acts should be punished by law. They can do whatever they like when they are in private but they should behave properly because we are living in civilized society. All these things are becoming unmanageable like this city itself. They see in the movies and TV and do like what they see. Actually, the freedom they see in the TV is not real, the people in other countries are not as free as they seem to be. There are a lot of restrictions and don’ts. Public display of affection is not good so, the civil society and people should reject this practice. (AM-04, male, 50)

Almost all the participants, regardless of gender and type of marriage, disapproved of the public display of affection. The most common argument against is that it leaves negative impact on the children and their thinking. They were afraid that they would imitate their behaviour and act proactively (become sexually active before time).
Holding hand and hugging are okay because it has limited contact but kissing and other explicit sexual behaviour was considered unacceptable. The impact of mass media and movies was said to be main reasons behind this behaviour, and the other significant point is that non-locals behave in an inappropriate manner and not the local people.

Being married offers a lot of opportunity to express the intimate feelings in privacy and acceptable place in homes. Even if they once liked displaying their affection publicly before marriage, the behavior changes after marriage due to social norms and values. One participant who had love marriage shared her opinion like this:

Before marriage, it is so romantic and enjoyable. We want to get lost within ourselves and feel love. That moment we want to forget who we really are, ourselves. It happens. But after marriage the behavior changes automatically because of social norms and values. (LM-08, female, 32)

Married people do not do such things. It does not matter to them because they have a lot of opportunities. It only happens in case of unmarried people. They see each other for some time and they have a lot of desire so they lose control. (LM-04, Male, 38)

Holding hands is normal, being friends. That is ok but I don’t like hugging and kissing on the streets. I feel it disgusting. That is too naughty. *Hisi maru.* I can see it. And my son asks mummy look there what is uncle and aunt doing? It is embarrassing. (LM-07, female, 38)

In our culture, that is not acceptable. I feel like holding hands and hugging my husband sometimes publicly but he gets angry. Those feelings come naturally and unconsciously but the society does not like that kind of behaviour. It is common these days but what we should understand that it is actually the people who belong to other places and culture. When they get back to their places, they do not behave like that. Mostly people do not behave like that. They act differently in their places. (AM-05, female, 32)

It would have been interesting to hear what unmarried and young people in relationships think about this matter. Given the condition that all the participants were
married and had enough opportunity to express their emotions privately, their opinions could be biased and not representative of other people like young and unmarried.

4.7 Love and Well-being

Love was seen as an important factor that enhances the sense of well-being. Participants describe the importance of love in their own words as follows:

Romantic love does enhance the sense of wellbeing. It makes us happy. Imagine you had a lot of wealth and reputation but no love, would you be happy? Definitely no, there will be a lot of tension and emptiness in absence of love. Love makes us happy! (AM-01, Male, 40)

I have felt that it enhances the sense of wellbeing. It has improved my habits. After marriage, my responsibilities has increased so, I am on the track and am not distracted elsewhere like before. So, it is a nice experience. (LM-01, Male, 28)

Participants emphasized that there is an important relationship between mental health and love. In absence of love, mental health is negatively affected. According to Maslow, love is one of important belonging needs of human beings which if unfulfilled has an adverse impact upon both our mind and body.

It definitely has a lot of impact upon our mental health. If our spouse does not care about me, then of course, I have a lot of tension in such case. I feel excluded from the family ties and there will be disputes. There will be always chaos at home. It affects us mentally and the absence of peace can disturb our mind a lot. So love is very important for our mental health. At home there will be peace. (LM-02, Male, 39)

Love can cause a lot of distress as well, esp. before marriage if the relationship has to overcome the parental pressure, social (guthi) sanctions and other factors.

It causes more tension than enhancing well-being. People think it is just fun and enjoyment in love, they don’t understand how serious it is and
how much pressure is there. This happens usually during the seasons of marriages when there are lagans for marriages. Boys feel more pressure than girls. It is difficult to get a good night’s sleep. She comes and tells, ‘My parents were talking about a boy. Should I say it to you or not? I am worried.’ (LM-01, Male, 28)

The participants were also asked, “Is it possible for people to get mad in love?” To this, almost all the participants answered that it is possible to get mad in love and it could have dangerous consequences such as suicide at its extreme. Participants emphasized that one-sided love can be very dangerous for the person whose love is not reciprocated. There is also risk for such persons of getting into alcoholism and drug addiction. There is also problem when love marriages fail.

Self-harming like cutting with blades, flaming (polnay) with cigarettes, and so on. They do not feel the pain. Later they realise they had uselessly done such things. It happened with one of my friends, he was in love with a girl, it was one-sided, he used to burn himself with the cigarettes whenever he felt bad. (LM-01, Male, 28)

Yes, it is possible when the love is not fulfilled. When the desires are not met and love is not returned back, a person might go mad in love. If a person is deeply in love with someone and it ends up in a tragedy, it might also have a psychological effect upon the person. It might be so extreme that a person might commit suicide and end up the life. Love is blind. The person cannot think of anything else, he is too concentrated upon love. He cannot change the perspective and look at the situation in a different manner. (AM-01, Male, 40)

If the mind is tortured, people might get mad because their minds are unable to work properly. When there is a deep love and excessive attachment between the partners and if their love becomes unsuccessful, they could get mad. If the family separates them, they have a lot of distress and in order to forget it they might get into addiction and alcoholism. Addiction and alcoholism again gets them in other troubles. And when the troubles combined from both unsuccessful love and addiction has an effect on a person, they could get mad. (AM-04, Male, 50)
People can get mad in love. They can also get mad after love marriage when it fails. In such relations, there is no family and other social support so, if it fails badly, they are held responsible and nobody cares. So, the man can become insane because of his wrong choice of spouse. (LM-02, Male, 39)

Some participants thought being in love itself is a manifestation of madness. One participant shared his experiences as follows:

I used to spend a lot of money for calling her on mobile when I could not see her. In that way, I spent even about Rs. 1000 a night, recharging my mobile balance and talking with her all the time. The talking habit would get compulsive and I would talk with her from night to early morning. Now, it feels so foolish. Instead of sleeping at night, I would be talking like crazy. (LM-01, Male, 28)

In relation to above response, it would be interesting to recall what Marazziti and her colleagues (1999) found out, according to them love and obsessive-compulsive disorder have a similar chemical profile and love and mental illness may be difficult to tell apart. Love has a lot of psychological impact upon people. People are prone to such madness in one-sided love. People with passionate feelings might display a range of seemingly irrational behaviour and thoughts such as self-harming, being depressed, committing suicide, and thinking life is impossible without a desired person. Love and lust are powerful emotions in the heart–mind that need to be controlled through the brain–mind. Overwhelming love is thought to make one irrational and thus impair his or her mind making him or her do “crazy” things (Kohrt et al., 2012).
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Most of the participants expressed the difficulty of articulating in words the emotion and experience of romantic love. They remarked it as a completely private matter. Nevertheless, all of them agreed that love is a human need and hence emphasized upon its importance in life and marital relationship. Falling in love was seen as a natural phenomenon that happens to almost all people at some point of life. According to evolutionary psychologists, attraction (romantic love) evolved to motivate individuals to select among potential mates, prefer a particular individual and focus courtship attention on this favored mating partner, thereby conserving courtship time and energy. The Nepali phrase 'baisa ko unmad' was often used to describe the fleeting phase of youth in which people fall in love and lose their rationality temporarily. Other forms of love beside romantic love such as companionate love, parental love and compassionate (spiritual) love were mentioned to be equally important. Participants assumed that younger generations are taking love lightly as fashion.

Both types of participants who had love marriage and arranged marriage agreed on the point that love is necessary in the marital relationship. Love is at the core of the relationship which keeps it functional in terms of emotion and support. However, they differed on whether romantic love is necessary or not before the marriage, love marriage participants thought it is better to marry somebody one knows and is confident enough to establish the relationship whereas arranged marriage participants thought that it is not necessary to be in love before marriage. Female participants highly emphasized that love
is more important after marriage. They strongly expressed that the love that develops after marriage is more mature and long-lasting. Some of them also gave vivid examples of love marriages that did not work out well or in which compromises were more than love in later stages of the relationship after marriage. Love marriage participants also agreed on such instances and pointed out that it is actually over-expectations on the partner and failure to adjust in the new social roles they need to play in family and society. As both types of participants are past the age for romantic love, they emphasised more upon companionate love for stable relationship with the partner and within the family. It is even more so after having children and the added responsibility to care of the family. Research in Western societies show that the experience of parenthood adversely affect the couple relationship as they have extra burden to look after new-born babies rather than giving importance to passion in relationship like before. Whereas in collectivist societies like among Newars, there are often joint families to share the task of child-rearing often eagerly accepted by grandparents which make it easier for the couple.

Community does not have favorable attitude towards romantic love, instead it takes protective approach towards marital relationship with great emphasis on social order and harmony. Community also has the in-group bias with regard to social representation and identity which results in rejection of new members from different cultural background due to probable inter-group conflict (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The cause for unfavorable attitude often mentioned was that the couple would have adjustment problem in the family and society due to cultural differences. However, the families with loose association with guthis facilitated and welcomed the inter-caste
marriages compared to the ones who are tightly bound by the traditional *guthi* (social organizations).

The love marriage participants think community is still conservative towards romantic love and not open towards it while the arranged marriage participants take it as a practical approach. The fear of having to bear the consequences alone is one of the reasons why people fear love marriages. If it failed, the responsibility would fall upon two concerned persons unlike the collective responsibility of families who got the partners married in arranged marriages. Most of the participants having arranged marriage reported to have had a good relationship with a spouse and many of them have seen many cases in which love marriages have failed miserably in the society so, they said they would rather prefer arranged marriage. However, there is consensus that love marriages are good if all parties mutually consent for it. In the mean time, which type of marriage endures better could be another research question?

What is noticeable is that the expansion of opportunities for non-family experiences such as education, employment, and contact with different groups will further increase the probability of marital relationships based on an emotional bond between partners rather than sole family arrangements (Hoelter, Axinn, & Ghimire, 2004; Ahearn, 2001). The settings of interpersonal interaction and choices for mate selection have remarkably widened the trend of love marriages (often including family consent) increasing among Newars. Six out of eight love marriage participants reported to have had family consent in this study.
The pattern of interaction among youngsters and mate seeking behavior is changing rapidly over time. In the past, there used to be scarce opportunities for socialization while today with the introduction and use of modern technology and internet in addition to more mobility for various purposes such as education, employment and others, the opportunities are increasing beyond one’s community and culture. As a result, inter-caste marriages are on increasing trend and society is also beginning to accept it. It has started to accept the wishes and decision of the would-be married couples rather than simply imposing the previously held social norms and regulations. The declining rates in elopement indicates that though there might be conflict of interests and values between individuals and family/society, they think it better to come to acceptable and negotiable terms and conditions without severely disrupting the existing relationships.

Psychologists have hypothesized that the need to belong is found to some degree in all humans in all cultures, although naturally one would expect there to be individual differences in strength and intensity, as well as cultural variations in how to express and satisfy the need. In each culture, there are also different ways of expressing love. Here, we discuss some common opinions expressed by the participants. Understanding and supporting each other was placed high in importance while expressing love for the partner. Fair division of labor and shared responsibility helped to maintain satisfactory relationship. Mutual eye gazing (called Nazar) was reported to increase the feelings of mutual affection and trust which has been scientifically studied by the psychologists (Keller et al., 1989). The introversion was observed and reflected in the interviews regarding the expressions of love for the partner. Participants shared more instrumental ways of expressing love for each other which also strengthens commitment in the
relationship rather than merely behaving nicely or in manners adopted from the mass media. Some participants thought it not necessary to express love externally and openly among others. The response to this question could have been biased as to the level of rapport between researcher and participant where participant might not have felt comfortable enough to share about it openly. Love marriage participants emphasized upon expressing love and thought it would increase love while arranged marriage participants shared the view that it did not come to them or was not applicable in their context. That makes it obvious that there exists the extent of shyness between husband and wife like Parish has discussed about *lok laaj* between an individual and the society in his study among Newars (Parish, 1991). *Lajya* helps to inhibit and filter socially inappropriate behaviour in order to maintain one’s *ijjat* (social status).

The public display of affection was completely disapproved by the participants. They mentioned that there is no need for that with ample opportunity to exchange love in private and secure setting at home. It was seen as negative effect of mass media which could possibly harm the children’s mind evoking them to behave inappropriately. This indicates that they have high morals regarding certain unacceptable behaviour in the society which might adversely their social status.

Sex was said to be important part of marital relationship. It was called the life-giving energy to relationship and life-saving remedy to ailing relationships helping partners to forgive and forget. It creates an intimacy and sense of special attachment with the partner. Sexuality however has been portrayed as sacred in art and religion while it is treated as profane in practice (Majupuria & Majupuria, 2009). The followers of Hindu
religion who worship the act of sexual union publicly (*shiva linga and yoni*) talk dirty about sex in the society. Pre marital sex is highly forbidden but it is on increasing trend among the younger generation due to the exposure to related explicit content in media.

Though this topic is under-explored in academic research, love and marriage form a major theme of modern Newari literature. Let’s take example of famous work by one of the famous poet, *Kavi Keshari* Chittadhar ‘Hridaya’ published under the title of *Mimmanahpau* (Letter from a Lhasa merchant to his wife), the letter which did not burn in the flames that consumed her remains and is discovered by the ones who performed the last rites for her. It is then recited (to the readers). A story is a man’s testimony of desperate longing for his wife, whom, in early youth, he had abandoned in necessity and gone for trade in Lhasa. Key informants Durga Lal Shrestha and Laxman Raj Bansi have published several works on the theme of love and marriage.

Newars believe in fate and think many things are pre-destined and written in advance to happen. Even in the matters of love and marriage, they think fate plays a significant role. According to personality psychology, the participants have external attributional style because they tend to attribute events to other factors than self like fate. Regardless of the type of marriage, almost all participants expressed belief in fate completely or with karma. The reason behind such faith is hard to explain but many think it has to do with the belief in gods and religion. However, they did not completely attribute it to fate alone, most of them thought karma is also important. Many of them were in favour of a view that both fate and one’s effort (karma) plays equally important role in life. However, key informants did not express belief in fate and instead seemed to
be in opposition to it. They called it the matter of co-incidence and the way of consolation for general people. It helps them to move forward. According to Dor Bahadur Bista (1991), Nepalese people grow up in the culture of fatalism which causes them to attribute anything beyond their understanding as happening because of a pre-written fate that everyone must accept. This study also shows that belief in fate plays protective role for love and relationships. Most of the participants repeated the popular Nepali saying ‘Lekhe ko painchha, dekhe ko painedaina’ meaning what we get in life is written rather than what we wish happened (or have seen happen).

Love directly affects the state of mental health and psychological well-being. In absence of love, people reported to have a lot of stress, feelings of frustration and lack of motivation in life whereas the feeling of love makes people happy, help to cope effectively with stress and frustrations in life. The failure in love, and unreciprocated love can lead to madness and tragic situations like suicide (Fisher, 2004).

This study explored the attitudes of love among married Newars from Kathmandu. However, there is a limitation to the study of this kind which has limited sample coming from certain socio-economic background. Therefore, the results of this study cannot be generalized to all the Newars in Kathmandu. It represents their attitudes, perceptions and opinions on love in relation with the marriage. This study provides support to beliefs that love is an important foundation for marital bliss and positive interrelationships with others. Newars take love as significant for marriage and psychological wellbeing.
REFERENCES


Appendices

A.1 Letter of reference

मलेर, केन्द्रीय मनोविज्ञान विभाग, तिमिन्दा, नेपाल

मिति: कार्तिक २०, २०६६

उपरोक्त सम्बन्धमा यस त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालय केन्द्रीय मनोविज्ञान विभागमा अध्ययनरत छौँ

सुज्ञे मान माहितीले "Perceptions of Romantic Love among Married Newars in Kathmandu"

विषयमा सबूतमा गरिरहेको हुनाले निजलाई तथ्याङ्क संकलन प्रक्रियामा आवश्यक पर्ने सहयोग गरिनिछ हुन

हाम्रो अनुरोध गरिए।

[Signature]

प्र. डा. विश्वेश बुझा

प्रमुख, केन्द्रीय मनोविज्ञान विभाग

त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालय

काठमाडौं, नेपाल
A.2 Semi-structured interview guide

-Student, as part of Masters Degree in Psychology, undertaking research about the attitudes toward love among Newars in Kathmandu Valley.
-Would like to talk about the attitudes toward love
-This research might help inform the people interested to know more about this topic, however cannot promise any specific benefits.
-All information will be kept confidential: would like to record, quote and publish, but without naming or identifying details.
-If you don’t want to talk about some issues, that is fine; you can choose to stop whenever you like.

-Any questions?
-If you have understood this information and if you would like to be a participant in the study, you can now verbally provide consent.

Time:
Date:
Place:

Personal information

-Name:
-Age:
-Sex:
-Education:
-Occupation:
-Marital status:
-No. of children:
-Family type:
-Period/year of romantic relationship (if love marriage):
-Period/years of marriage:

Interviewer:

Duration of Interview:
List of Questions

1. Could you please tell me about yourself? For example: your work, your community, or just anything you would like to say.

2. What do you think about love? How is it perceived in the community?

3. What are the desirable qualities in a partner?

4. What are the undesirable qualities in a partner?

5. What are the ways to express love for a partner?

6. How does a partner make his/her beloved feel loved?

7. How important love is before marriage? Is it necessary to fall in love in order to get married?

8. How important love is after marriage? Do you think it is necessary to love your spouse for maintaining a happy marital relationship?

9. Would you like to tell us / narrate your love story? (For Love Marriage only)

10. How was romantic love in the beginning and how is it now? Has time brought changes in the quality of the relationship? (For Love Marriage only)

11. Did you ever fall in love with others before the current partner?

12. Do spouses in arranged marriage develop the love? What contributes to the development of romantic love in/after the arranged marriage? (For Arranged Marriage only)

13. What are the problems/challenges that might appear in the relationships? Could there be times when there is a possibility of break up or termination of the relationship?

14. Do you/others think yourself/themselves responsible and active for the romantic relationship? How much do you think you were in control of it? Or, external forces like family, friends, and fate were more active than you?
15. Do you/others think fate has played any role? Do you/others feel these things were pre-written in fate to happen in life? Do you think you were destined to meet each other or were it just because of development of events that led to your meeting?

16. How would people deal with sexual feelings in relationship? Is it fair to have such feelings? Or, it is wise to wait until marriage? Do people in love have pre-marital sexual experiences?

17. How was the decision making process regarding your love relationship and marriage? Who actively participated in this process? Like who supported and who were against?

18. In your opinion, how does Newar culture influence love in general and did in your case particularly?

19. Does love enhances the sense of wellbeing? Could it lead to more distress and have negative impact upon the heart mind?

20. Is it possible for people to get mad in love? What level of irrationality is expectable in love? What kind of irrational behaviour and thoughts are expressed by the lovers?

21. What do you think about public display of affection for a partner? Does our culture permit it?

22. Do couples fall out of the love? Can love end? Or, change to different kind of relationship? If yes, under which circumstances?
A.3 Key informant interview guide

-Student, as part of Masters Degree in Psychology, undertaking research about the attitudes toward love among Newars in Kathmandu Valley.
-Would like to talk about the attitudes toward love
-This research might help inform the people interested to know more about this topic, however cannot promise any specific benefits.
-All information will be kept confidential.
-Would like to record, quote and publish with proper acknowledgements.
-If you don’t want to talk about some issues, that is fine; you can choose to stop whenever you like.

-Any questions?
-If you have understood this information and if you would like to be a participant in the study, you can now verbally provide consent.

Introduction

(self, community, work, experiences and others)

Newar Culture

(about various aspects of Newar Culture; Past, Present and Future; the psychology of newars; newari concepts of mind (nuga, bibek)

Love

Personal perception
Community perception
Ways of expression (privacy, shyness)
Past vs. present
Desirable vs. undesirable qualities in a partner
Social permissiveness vs. restrictions

Marriage

Basis of marriage (terms and conditions: love included??)
Love vs. arranged marriages
Jata/horoscopes (jaata kyanaygu)
Development of love in marriages
Changes in relationship over time
Challenges and remedies in relationships

**Love & sexuality**

Is love & sexuality intertwined?

Newar attitude towards sexuality

Gender differences: men-sex; women-love

**Rationality, well-being & mental health**

Can people get mad in love?

Ask about irrational thoughts expressed and weird behavior displayed

Does love enhance the sense of well-being?

Newars and mental health

Concept of madness and Remedies

**Fatalism**

Belief in fate and destiny. Why?

The causes and consequences

**Agency & decision making**

Free will/ freedom to act

Agency: limited or…

**Decision making: authority? Who is in charge??**

**Public display of affection**

Open expressions- why unacceptable?

Is it ok now? Why?

**DOES LOVE END??**
### Appendix 4 Record Book - Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Participant-type</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Interviewer</th>
<th>Record</th>
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<td>LOVE-LM-01</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bhaju Rajoupadhaya</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>Chhetrapati</td>
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<td>39</td>
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<td>Bhaju Shrestha</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Arranged marriage</td>
<td>Jhochhen</td>
<td>20.déc.09</td>
<td>70 minutes</td>
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<td>37</td>
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<td>Thamel</td>
<td>21.déc.09</td>
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<td>LOVE-AM-04</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Bhaju Shakya</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>Itumbahal</td>
<td>20.déc.09</td>
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<td>Sujen M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOVE-LM-04</td>
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<td>Ason</td>
<td>21.déc.09</td>
<td>70 minutes</td>
<td>Sujen M.</td>
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<td>Maiju Maharjan</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>Huemat</td>
<td>11.apr.10</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
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<td>Maiju Suwal</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Arranged marriage</td>
<td>Huemat</td>
<td>11.may.10</td>
<td>2 hr 35 mins</td>
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<td>25</td>
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<td>Brahma tole</td>
<td>13.may.10</td>
<td>1 hr. 9 mins</td>
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<td>35</td>
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<td>Maru</td>
<td>15.may.10</td>
<td>1 hr. 3 mins</td>
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<td>Gurjudhara</td>
<td>15.may.10</td>
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<td>Chikamugul</td>
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<td>12.nov.10</td>
<td>1 hr. 35 mins</td>
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<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Maiju Sayami</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Arranged marriage</td>
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<td>03.jun.10</td>
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### Record Book - Key Informants

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<td>Durga Lal Shrestha</td>
<td>22.jun.10</td>
<td>poet</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOVE-KII-02</td>
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<td>Dr. Sumitra Manandhar Gurung</td>
<td>20.jul.10</td>
<td>activist</td>
<td>Sujen M.</td>
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<td>LOVE-KII-03</td>
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<td>Prem Shanti Tuladhar</td>
<td>7/21/2010; 06 jan 2011</td>
<td>teacher</td>
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<td>Sujen &amp; Silu</td>
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